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THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION: CULTIVATING RACIAL JUSTICE FOR LATINX STUDENTS

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Abstract

Though the liberal arts has its roots in elitism, that does not mean that that is where it should stay. The Romans did create a good system that incorporated all the subjects at the time that were needed to enlighten people and make them well-rounded. Likewise, the Yale Report of 1828 did make very good arguments as to why the liberal arts curriculum should have been kept as is, including that it created good and balanced people. While the Yale Report of 1828 is still relevant today in its arguments for a liberal arts education, it does need to be reexamined so that the curriculum can be accessible and inclusive to all people. By creating a curriculum that is appealing and accessible to all, perhaps the liberal arts can be the part of higher education that is the great equalizer, as the Truman Report wished. Whereas vocational education, only prepares students for one specific job, liberal arts education prepares students for multiple jobs and for life. The question that will be examined is: what is the purpose of education, is it to obtain skills to get a job or to better understand the world and oneself? It will be argued that the liberal arts satisfy both parts of it. So yes, the liberal arts should be more heavily implemented in colleges and universities all over the world, however, it does need to change what authors are covered in the curriculum as well as what students are targeted to pursue these degrees; that is the only way in which the liberal arts will be able to cultivate racial justice. By closely examining the opportunities available to Latinx students within the liberal arts from past to present, is one way that we can understand what cultivating racial justice can really do for this community. It is only through diversity that we will be able to create real humane change in the world in 2020. After all, what is the liberal arts if not for creating more humane people.

Introduction

Throughout history, a liberal arts education has always been more accessible for the elite. Beginning with only white males, the demographics have shifted to include women and people of color, however, it has not changed enough. With a growing Latinx population in the 21st century in the United States, it is essential for this community to be represented in the liberal arts in order to stop the perpetuation of racial privilege. With vocational education on the rise, it is vital for the liberal arts to shift to become more accessible and more inclusive of all students, especially for minority students. In the midst of the liberal arts/vocational education debate, it is important to ask: What is the purpose of education? Is it to obtain skills to get a job or to better understand the world and oneself? This paper will argue that it is both; however, it is only through obtaining a liberal arts education that one can achieve the goal of education. By examining the accessibility and opportunities available to Latinx students in the liberal arts from past to present, it can be understood how to cultivate racial justice in the 21st century. In order to do this, the paper will examine four eras in history.

The first section begins in Ancient Rome, the birthplace of the liberal arts curriculum: trivium and quadrivium. Next, medieval and renaissance periods, which is the rise of the study of humanities, are included. Moreover, this section discusses when the liberal arts/vocational education debate began, with the introduction of electives at liberal arts colleges in the nineteenth century. The Yale Report of 1828 is closely examined at this time in order to support the claim that a liberal arts education satisfies both parts of the purpose of education. Furthermore, the accessibility and opportunities available for Latinx students in the United States from 1848- 1920s are explored.

The next period explores the changes that occur in higher education before and after World War 2; with special attention given to the liberal arts and Latinx community. The implementation of the GI Bill indicates why the levels of Latinx students rose in higher education. The reasons why veterans did not use the GI Bill are also explored. Next, the Student Personnel Point of View of 1937 illustrates principles of the liberal arts and vocational education can and should be applied to all institutions. Lastly, the Truman Report is discussed through the three goals of higher education that the Commission set.

The third focus is on the Civil Rights Era. This is the period in which the shift to focus on vocational education occurred. *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano Plan for Higher Education* is examined to understand what Latinx students, faculty, administration and staff need in order to cultivate racial justice. This is also the period where the most opportunities were presented to Latinx students. Some of these opportunities were in the form of programs such as Talent Search and Upward Bound, but they were also in the form of legislation passed such as the Educational Opportunity Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1984 is also examined as it was geared toward low-income and/or minority students.

The final stage takes place from the 1990s to present day. This stage is divided into three sections using David Labaree's purposes of education: democratic equity, social efficiency and social mobility. These three purposes of education will be used to examine the current state of a liberal arts as well as how the purposes relate to the Latinx community.

To conclude, recommendations are offered for the liberal arts to begin cultivating racial justice instead of fostering racial privilege. These recommendations include: being accessible

and inclusive to all, changing the curriculum to be more relevant and reflect the students, and creating better techniques to target students for a liberal arts degree.

Classical Beginnings

The liberal arts were first established by the Romans.¹ The Romans were “masters of the liberal arts” with the “mission to preserve, in the face of the barbarian threat, the civilization and culture, which had become largely synonymous with the classical literary tradition.”² With this Roman mindset, the liberal arts can be viewed as only for the elites as other, non-Roman, civilizations are noted as barbarians. As this is the beginning of the liberal arts, it is no wonder that it stayed within the elite community. They believed that it was through the study of Latin, in all ways: logic, grammar and rhetoric, was the basis in becoming human because this allowed one to study the three philosophies of Aristotle: natural philosophy (physics), moral philosophy (ethics), and mental philosophy (metaphysics) which was needed to become truly “human.”³ All of this, to say that the liberal arts curriculum was created with the purpose of being able to understand one’s surroundings as well as oneself.

The liberal arts stayed within the elite community throughout the medieval period.⁴ The clergy and nobility were the only ones that were educated using curriculum that came from 6th century Rome: the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy).⁵ In Latin, these words mean: the place where three (tri)/ four (quad) roads (via) meet. The idea is that by learning multiple subject one would be well-rounded

¹ Pearl Kibre, *Scholarly Privileges in the Middle Ages*. (Speculum, 1962), 37:4, 629-630.

² Kibre, 4.

³ Frederick Rudolph, *Curriculum A History of the American Undergraduate Course of Study Since 1636*. (Jossey-Bass, 1993).

⁴ Simon Newman. “Education in the Middle Ages.” The Finer Times, 2013. <https://www.thefinertimes.com/Middle-Ages/education-in-the-middle-ages.html>.

⁵ Christopher Perrin. “The Trivial Trivium... or The Trivium at The Crossroads.” Inside Classical Education, November 10, 2010. <https://insideclassicaled.com/the-trivial-trivium-or-the-trivium-at-the-crossroads/>.

and be more “perfect” in the image of God, since God is the being who created these subjects. During the renaissance, those who were educated remained the same, the only difference is that the work of Francesco Petrarch was introduced. Petrarch is known today as the “father of humanism.”⁶ Petrarch lived in the early renaissance period which was tumultuous time. Petrarch believed that only through the study of humanities, *studia humanitatis*, was how Europe was able to be saved from self-destruction.⁷ The term *humanitatis*, at its root, meant kindness, humane nature, or sympathy for others whereas now it means to behave in a civilized conduct. Humanists of the time believed that humans (rulers) could be changed through education to create a better society. Since then, the liberal arts have included the humanities for the same goal of creating a better society.

For the next 500 years, the liberal arts curriculum did not change much; however, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the debate began between supporters of the classical liberal arts and vocational education. The argument for the supporters of vocational education was that the times were changing, because of the industrial revolution and the increase in agriculture, so students needed to focus on learning the skills needed to acquire an occupation.⁸ The Yale Report of 1828, that was written by a committee of the corporation and the academical faculty⁹ laid out all the arguments supporting the liberal arts curriculum. The Report argued that the liberal arts curriculum could, not only, teach students the general knowledge of the world, but it could also teach the “dignity of character, which gives him a commanding influence in society,

⁶ James Hankins, *How Not to Defend the Humanities*, (American Affairs, 2017).
<https://americanaffairsjournal.org/2017/11/not-defend-humanities/>.

⁷ Hankins, 1.

⁸ Kern, Julie. “A Review of the Yale Report of 1828,” (University of Notre Dame, 2019).
<https://www3.nd.edu/~rbarger/www7/yalerpt.html>.

⁹ Herbst, Jurgen. “The Yale Report of 1828.” *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 11, no. 2 (2004).
www.jstor.org/stable/30221966.

and a widely extended sphere of usefulness.”¹⁰ Just like Petrarch, the authors insinuate that by using this classical liberal arts curriculum is how intellectual culture is created which is described as the “discipline and the furniture of the mind.”¹¹ The *discipline* refers to teaching students “soft skills” such as: grit, tenacity, delayed gratification, self-discipline, and self-control. The *furniture of the mind* refers to opening up the mind to new information; in psychology terms, creating new schemas to input (remember) new information. Because four years isn’t nearly enough time to teach everything that is needed to know in a profession, as the committee argues, the goal of a classical liberal arts bachelor’s degree is to teach students how to learn. The authors continue by describing that the bachelor’s degree is a steppingstone for the various occupations that can be obtained. This is to say that by learning how to learn, then students can teach themselves more in depth of any subject needed to acquire an occupation. The Report goes as far to claim that, “the mere divine, the mere lawyer, or the mere physician, however well informed he may be in his particular profession, has less chance of success, than if his early education had been of a more liberal character.”¹² Clearly, the classical liberal arts curriculum teaches how to obtain skills to get a job *and* to better understand the world and oneself.

Though the committee made several good points in the Yale Report of 1828, there are still issues that would need to be addressed in order to stop fostering racial privilege. To begin, the Report was written only with white men in mind, curiosity arises with the committees’ sentiments towards other groups of people (low-income, minority and women). It would take more than one hundred years to even admit students of those groups. It is important to note that even though women and African Americans were restricted from attending, there was never a

¹⁰ Herbst, 10.

¹¹ Herbst, 4.

¹² Herbst, 26.

ban placed on Latinos from attending.¹³ The admissions process of this time was placed on whether the student's family could afford the tuition. Because of this, Yale admitted international students¹⁴ from North America (including Mexico) and Europe.¹⁵ Moreover, the second section of the Report focuses on the importance of the classical languages. The committee believed that "the classics afford materials to exercise talent of every degree... every faculty of the mind is employed; not only the memory, judgment, and reasoning powers, but the taste and fancy are occupied and improved."¹⁶ Yes, the classics are examples of great literature but what the committee fails to realize is that other literature from other parts of the world are just as valuable and can generate the same results. One may even argue that there is still room for minds to open at these colonial universities as the literature that is taught in all of the subjects is still mostly from "old dead white guys". So though the liberal arts were meant to open up people's minds, the committee at Yale was very close-minded in these regards.

Less than 50 years later, on the other side of the country, the University of California opened in 1868 as a university "that would serve equally the children of immigrants and settlers, landowners and industrial barons"¹⁷ in 1870, two dozen Mexican-born and Californio students were admitted.¹⁸ Also, in that year the UC Regents agreed that women should be admitted as well.¹⁹ Though the founders of the university valued the importance of a liberal arts education

¹³ Victoria Maria MacDonald and Teresa Garcia, "Historical Perspectives on Latino Access to Higher Education 1848-1990," in *The Majority in the Minority: Expanding the Representation of Latina/o Faculty, Administrators, and Students in Higher Education* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Pub., 2003), pp. 15-46)

¹⁴ Yale University. "Admissions Landing Page." Admissions Landing Page. Yale University, 2018. <https://world.yale.edu/admissions>.

¹⁵ MacDonald and Garcia, 20.

¹⁶ Herbst, 24.

¹⁷ University of California. "The University of California Is Born." University of California, March 23, 2018. <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/university-california-born>.

¹⁸ MacDonald and Garcia, 20.

¹⁹ MacDonald and Garcia, 20.

and included it in the curriculum, the university focused on vocational education, specifically in agriculture and mechanical arts since it was founded with the aid of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862.²⁰ Students just had to pass an entrance exam to attend. However, in 1874, the university terminated the preparatory department which led to the severe decline of Latinx students.²¹ This is an example of why the institution should be held responsible for creating opportunities for Latinx students.²² Without opportunities, then the accessibility for Latinx students decreases.

Though state and Ivy League universities didn't provide the necessary support for Latinx students, the Catholic universities did. They provided a liberal arts education and many targeted Spanish-speaking students. Notre Dame College for women was one that offered parallel courses in both languages and even provided report cards and bills in Spanish.²³ Santa Clara University (then college) was another that enrolled over 400 Latinx students between 1851 and 1876.²⁴ It is important to note that these Latinx students were identified via their Spanish-surname, which means that some Latinx students may have been excluded and some non-Latinx students may have been included.

Although not many students, of any race, sought higher education pre/post the Civil War, Latinx students did find avenues to obtain a liberal arts education. One example is the founding of The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)²⁵ in 1929. Its mission was to ameliorate the Latinx experience. The organization challenged educational segregation and awarded students college scholarships; thus indicating that even when the institutions did not

²⁰ University of California, 1.

²¹ MacDonald and Garcia, 20.

²² Jeremiah J. Gonzalez, "The Role of Social Capital and School Structure on Latino Access to Elite Colleges." *ProQuest LLC*, 2013.

²³ MacDonald and Garcia, 22.

²⁴ MacDonald and Garcia, 22

²⁵ MacDonald and Garcia, 26.

provide opportunities, the Latinx community sought to cultivate racial justice through the formation of this organization.

While the genesis of a liberal arts education began with the elite (wealthy white males), when given and creating opportunities and access, Latinx students did succeed in achieving a liberal arts education in this time period. Since the US census didn't begin until 1902, it is unclear exactly how many Latinos resided in the United States but it is estimated to be less than 20,000 people.²⁶ Clearly, only a small portion of the population was represented in higher education during this time period. Though it was still considered a rarity at this time, it did not discourage those Latinx student pioneers.

Pre/Post- World War 2 Period

The period before and after World War II was a tumultuous time. Before the war, institutions began shifting to include vocational education. This is demonstrated in the Student Personnel Point of View of 1937. The GI Bill, which was passed in 1944²⁷, allowed more students, including Latinx students, to attend an institution of higher education and more opportunities were available for Latinx students through programs and organizations. These sentiments were also described in the Truman Report. The Truman Report (1947) advocated that education was the great equalizer and recommended institutions and society overall to drastically change. Evidently, this period was filled with changemakers who sought to cultivate racial justice.

²⁶ Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californias, 1846-1890*, (University of California Press, 1999).

²⁷ Social Security Administration, The G.I. Bill of Rights: An Analysis of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/ssb/v7n7/v7n7p3.pdf>.

The technological revolution swept the nation from the late 19th century and into the 20th century.²⁸ With it, liberal arts colleges were forced to shift to include vocational education to adequately prepare their students. Institutions were doing this in different ways. In 1925, representatives of fourteen higher education institutions met to “discuss problems of vocational guidance in college.”²⁹ The group then formed the Committee on Problems and Plans in Education which wrote the *The Student Personnel Point of View of 1937* to establish a uniform approach to deal with the changing landscape of higher education.³⁰ In the report, the purpose of education is outlined as: “the preservation, transmission and enrichment of the important elements of culture.”³¹ This purpose of education falls in line with the liberal arts, indicating that the liberal arts were still a focus in this period. The report then goes on to elaborate on the purpose of education by insisting that institutions are responsible for guiding students to maximize their potential to contribute to the betterment of society.³² Once again, this is still a goal of the liberal arts, as it focuses on the students’ development as a person; however, it also includes vocational education, as the scope goes beyond the students’ intellectual capacity and includes a vocational aspect. The committee realizes that this is a lofty goal to place on the faculty alone, hence the need for student personnel officers. While the faculty focuses on teaching the liberal arts, the student personnel officers will focus on vocational aspects to fully develop and prepare the student after graduation.³³ The committee also makes recommendations

²⁸ Claudia Goldin, and Lawrence F. Katz. 1999. “The Shaping of Higher Education: The Formative Years in the United States, 1890 to 1940.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 13 (1): 37–62. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.13.1.37>.

²⁹ George Zook, H.E. Hawkes, Edwin A. Lee, and W. H. Cowley. 1936. “American Council On Education The Student Personnel Point of View.” *American Council On Education Studies* 11 (3): 201. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00001888-193605000-00008>.

³⁰ Zook and Hawkes, iv.

³¹ Zook and Hawkes, 1.

³² Zook and Hawkes, 1.

³³ Zook and Hawkes, 3, 4, 7, 12.

to create handbooks for student personnel officers in order to create uniformity amongst higher ed institutions.³⁴ By outlining the role of student personnel officers, higher ed institutions were able to still focus on the liberal arts while including important vocational aspects. This was a major shift in higher education because it insinuated that higher education was for middle class students, not just for the elite, as they had more options in entering the workforce in order to bring the United States out of the Great Depression.

A few years later, after *The Student Personnel Point of View* of 1937, the United States entered the Second World War. When the war broke out in 1941, thousands enlisted and over the four years of the war, over 500,000 Latinos served and countless others, including Latinas, were part of the war effort from home.³⁵ With the Latinx population at 1.6 million, they accounted for 1.4% of the total US population.³⁶ The student population in higher education did not reflect that. After the war, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (The GI Bill)³⁷ began to be implemented. The GI Bill gave all veterans, including Latinx and other minority students more opportunities and access to attend a higher ed institution. With the GI Bill, thousands of Latinos took advantage of this opportunity.³⁸ With that said, many Latinx students were not able to take advantage of the GI Bill for they had not been properly prepared in their primary and secondary education. Some Mexican Americans didn't even reach the eighth grade because the students had to endure racism and classroom harassment, while the schools lacked enforcement of school attendance laws and language support.³⁹ So although many Latinx students had access and given

³⁴ Zook and Hawkes, 11.

³⁵ The National WWII Museum, "Los Veteranos—Latinos in WWII", (New Orleans, LA, 2017).

³⁶ US Census, 1940.

³⁷ Social Security Administration.

³⁸ Carlos Muñoz, *Youth, Identity and Power: The Chicano Movement*, (London: Verso Books, 1989).

³⁹ Dionicio Nodin Valdes. *Barrios norteños: St. Paul and Midwestern Mexican Communities in the Twentieth Century*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000.

new opportunities to attend college with the GI Bill, there still wasn't enough infiltration of Latinx students in higher education.

It was also after World War 2 that the purpose of education shifted again. Through the Commission of Higher Education, appointed by President Truman, report "Higher Education for American Democracy" was written in 1947.⁴⁰ The purpose of the report was to examine the current nature of higher education in the United States. In the document, the goals of education are listed as: (1) Education for a fuller realization of democracy in every phase of living; (2) Education directly and explicitly for international understanding and cooperation; (3) Education for the application of creative imagination and trained intelligence to the solution of social problems and to the administration of public affairs.⁴¹ Each of these goals alludes to the role that a liberal arts degree can have in the cultivation of racial justice for all minorities, including Latinx students.

All three goals seek a more just and accessible higher education for all students. The first goal advises that higher education is needed for all citizens in order to have a more perfect democracy. At this time, restrictions existed that prevented minorities from voting, such as poll taxes and literacy tests.⁴² Since the literacy tests were in English, Spanish-speaking Latinx citizens could not vote. The Commission was aware of these injustices and though they couldn't directly change the law, they could create opportunities for everyone to vote. This would be done through higher education. It has been demonstrated, through the census, that citizens with higher education attainment are more likely to vote.⁴³ The first goal not only wanted democracy, in a

⁴⁰ George Zook. *Higher Education for American Democracy: A Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government, 1947.

⁴¹ Zook, 8.

⁴² Ari Berman, *Give Us the Ballot: the Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America* (New York: Picador/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016)

⁴³ <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/visualizations/time-series/demo/a2-educational.jpg>

voting sense but in *every phase of life*. This is why the Commission continuously cited higher education as being the “great equalizer” in this report. It was believed that through higher ed, that one could increase their social mobility which would be represented in all aspects of life, including overcoming voting restrictions. A liberal arts education could give students, especially Latinx students more empowerment to feel as though they could make a difference by getting involved politically, whether that be through voting or running for office in the United States.

The next goal, international understanding and cooperation, reflected what the nation had experienced abroad in World War 2. Truman was deeply ashamed that there were “increasingly overt signs of racism in a country that had just a year earlier won a global victory against racism and massive human rights violations.”⁴⁴ This goal was an attempt to bring what was learned abroad to the United States to hopefully create a more peaceful society. It was a hope that racism would cease in America through this goal. By understanding individuals from other countries including Latin American countries and “embracing [their] cultural heritage,”⁴⁵ then Latinx students were more likely to be accepted in public places, including higher education. A liberal arts education, supports this goal as cooperation and understanding are characteristics that are learned with the liberal arts curriculum. These characteristics are part of the humanities and are discussed in the Yale Report of 1828. The Commission stated that students in 1947 were not aware of national and world problems, which is what the Commission wanted to change. The Commission believed that all citizens were responsible for being informed of local, national and international issues. The Commission was convinced that these recommendations would prepare

⁴⁴ Gugin, Linda C. *The American Journal of Legal History* 46, no. 1 (2004): 101-03. doi:10.2307/3692429.

⁴⁵ Zook, 15.

the next generation to solve future world problems as well as be informed and help with the problems of the 1940s/50s.

The third goal is: Education for the application of creative imagination and trained intelligence to the solution of social problems and to the administration of public affairs. To echo the first goal, the Commission felt that it would be through education that social problems would be solved, as education is the great equalizer. It was believed that education would prepare the youth to be able to solve the time's problems. Whereas the second goal viewed education at the global level, the third goal viewed it at the national level. The Commission felt that this was the time, more than ever, to come together and be a united nation because of the war. They argue that "we cannot pin our faith on social drift, hoping that if each individual pursues his own ends with intelligence and good will, things will somehow right themselves."⁴⁶ The solution is to educate students of all backgrounds, including Latinx students, in "creative imagination and trained intelligence" in order to combat the current and future social problems of the United States. This type of education can only come from the liberal arts, which is why it was still widely taught during this time period.

Through the writings of George Zook on the reports: *The Student Personnel Point of View of 1937*, the "Higher Education for American Democracy" of 1947 and *The Student Personnel Point of View of 1949*, which just added the three goals that the "Higher Education for American Democracy" outlined, as well as the GI Bill, give historians a clear understanding of higher education in pre- and post-world war two era. All three of these documents have helped pave the way for an increase in enrollment for Latinx students. Likewise, the goals of the documents have also supported the liberal arts (and vice versa) which indicates that there was

⁴⁶ Zook, 22.

more of a focus on the liberal arts than on vocational education, though vocational education was beginning to be included as well.

The Civil Rights Era

The Civil Rights Era, identified as the years 1960 to 1980, was an era filled with movements that led to new legislations and programs that benefited minorities. During this time, the Latino population increased from 3.5% to 14.6%.⁴⁷ By the end of this era, while 16.7% of all Americans were receiving a degree, 7.6% of them were received by Latinx students.⁴⁸ Though Latinx students were still not adequately represented in higher education, they have still come a long way from when higher education was reserved only for the elite. Along with the changes in the law and the creation of programs, the biggest change in higher education came from the major shift from liberal arts to the focus on vocational education. This is the era when Latinx students took a stand about the inequalities (college access, Latinx faculty, etc..) in higher education. Several Latinx organizations, including the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO), the United Mexican American Students (UMAS), the Mexican American Student Association (MASA), were founded in the fall of 1967 to combat these inequalities. Less than a year later, the first Latinx protest occurred during the commencement ceremony of the class of 1968 at San Jose State College.⁴⁹ Hundreds of graduating seniors and their families walked out to raise awareness of the inequalities (underrepresentation of Latinx students enrolled in college and the lack of bilingual and cultural training for those working in “the community”).⁵⁰ After this incident, several protests followed which initiated scholars and community members to form the

⁴⁷ US Census of 1990, We the American...Hispanics, US Department of Commerce, 1993.

<https://www.census.gov/prod/cen1990/wepeople/we-2r.pdf>

⁴⁸ US Census of 1990, 5.

⁴⁹ MacDonald and Garcia, 29.

⁵⁰ MacDonald and Garcia, 29-30.

Chicano Coordinating Council of Higher Education. In 1969, they organized a conference at the University of California, Santa Barbara to write “El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano Plan for Higher Education. This was the first written document that outlined a call for a change in higher education specifically for Chicano students.⁵¹

The authors sought change in a variety of ways within higher education such as the need for Chicano student, faculty, administrators and staff as well as programs to support the students and a change of curriculum; however, it was stated to be done through the liberal arts. The document begins by indicating that this era is the time for the Chicano renaissance.⁵² The last one hundred years of oppression were seen as the medieval ages and now was the time to flourish. The authors suggest that for too long Latinx people have been the “suppliers of cheap labor,”⁵³ with their education, rooted in vocational training, and so now is the time that Latinx people are going to fight to have access to the liberal arts by changing the curriculum. By changing the curriculum, it is meant that courses should, not only, reflect and include Latinx students, but should also be taught by Latinx faculty. The Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education goes on to say, “At this moment we do not come to work for the university, but to demand that the university work for our people.”⁵⁴ The institution should provide structures so that students can succeed. It is only in this way that the liberal arts can cultivate racial justice. In this new curriculum, that the Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education seeks, students would have the opportunity to learn about their cultural heritage through the humanities (history, literature and writing) and social sciences (economics,

⁵¹ Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education. *El Plan De Santa Barbara A Chicano Plan for Higher Education*. La Causa Publications, 1971.

⁵² Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 9.

⁵³ Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 9.

⁵⁴ Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 11.

psychology, and sociology),⁵⁵ which is exactly what the classical liberal arts seeks to teach students.⁵⁶ This council recommends that this be done by introducing a new major: Chicano Studies. In 2019, it has expanded to many universities as Chicano/a and Latino/a Studies and is now recognized in over 30 colleges around the nation. The authors of the document believe that by adding this piece, then universities “will truly live up to their credo, to their commitment to diversification, democratization, and enrichment of our cultural heritage and human community,”⁵⁷ which was outlined in the Truman Report. It was during this era, with this document, that the recommendations of the Committee of the Commission of Higher Education of 1947 were beginning to be fulfilled. It is important to note however, that to this day in 2019, the recommendations made by the Committee are yet to be fully implemented.

Overall, the Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education sought to create an environment within higher education where Latinx students, faculty, administrators and staff were not only accepted but welcomed into the liberal arts. The authors of the Yale Report of 1828 believed that the liberal arts must contribute to the development of a person.⁵⁸ The council echoes this sentiment but elaborates on it by stating that “higher education must contribute to the formation of a complete man who truly values life and freedom.”⁵⁹ This encapsulates how the liberal arts must change if it is to cultivate racial justice. Without the value of life and freedom, how can Petrarch’s, the father of humanities, thought really be applied? The purpose of education, then, is to mold the minds of students who are willing to be open-minded and help change the world through learning how the world works, which is taught in the liberal arts.

⁵⁵ Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 45.

⁵⁶ Herbst, 35

⁵⁷ Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 10.

⁵⁸ Herbst, 38.

⁵⁹ Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 10.

Because of El Plan de Santa Barbara and protests during the Civil Rights Era, there were many changes that occurred within higher education through programs and legislation. To begin, the Higher Education Act created more opportunities for low-income students to receive a higher education by not only offering students low-interest loans, grants and scholarships, but also strengthening educational resources of higher education institutions.⁶⁰ Additionally, this act supported the creation of the program Talent Search. This program identified middle and high school low-income students to educate them and their families on ways to attend a higher education institution. The only problem was that minorities, including Latinx students, were underrepresented in this program. Likewise, the Educational Opportunity Act, which was a part of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, was passed to open up the opportunity of education for all. Through this piece of legislation, “work study” was created to give low-income students an opportunity to work while going to school.⁶¹ The program Upward Bound also came out of this act. Upward Bound prepares students for college by intensive mentoring on college entrance exams, admission applications, financial aid, scholarship forms and enrichment courses (literature, composition, mathematics, science, and foreign language).⁶² It is important to note that these enrichment courses are in liberal arts. On the other hand, the act also created vocational programs, such as the Job Corps, which targeted low-income sixteen to twenty-one year olds to provide them “vocational training, useful work experience, including work directed toward the conservation of natural resources, and other appropriate activities” in rural and urban residential centers. This indicates that though programs were developed to give more access to

⁶⁰The Early History of the HEA of 1965. TRIO, 1965.

http://www.pellinstitute.org/downloads/trio_clearinghouse-The_Early_History_of_the_HEA_of_1965.pdf

⁶¹ Economic Opportunity Act -GovInfo, US Government, 1964.

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-78/pdf/STATUTE-78-Pg508.pdf>

⁶² Council for Opportunity in Education. “Resources .” TRIO. Accessed December 11, 2019.

<http://www.coenet.org/trio.shtml>.

all students, the idea was that for those who weren't identified as "college bound" were tracked into vocational training. Because the college-going percentage increased after this act was implemented for all races, but the Latinx percentage didn't increase as much, it is probable that it was minority students that were tracked into these vocational education options.

It is clear that if the Latinx community didn't stand up for their rights in this era (protests, El Plan de Santa Barbara), then the access and opportunities available to Latinx students in 2019 would be largely diminished. Once again, opportunities and access improved with the legislation passed: the Higher Education Act and the Educational Opportunity Act, which includes the programs, Talent Search and Upward Bound. Though Latinx scholars also fought for liberal arts access and they did create the new Chicano Studies major, Latinx students were largely still tracked into vocational education.

Recent to Present Day

From a time when only the elite were able to access a higher education, to when the Commission of Higher Education that declared that education was intended for all, higher education shifted drastically. It has shifted even more as the goals in 1947 were: (1) Education for a fuller realization of democracy in every phase of living; (2) Education directly and explicitly for international understanding and cooperation; (3) Education for the application of creative imagination and trained intelligence to the solution of social problems and to the administration of public affairs,⁶³ and in 1995, the purpose of education was: (1) democratic equity, (2) social efficiency, (3) social mobility.⁶⁴ We now live in a time where vocational education has taken over and the sole purpose of education is to prepare future workers. By

⁶³ Zook, 8.

⁶⁴ David Labaree, Public goods, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. (*American Educational Research Journal*, 34(1), 39–81, 1995).

examining Labaree's three purposes of education in the late 20th century, it will become more clear what is needed for higher education to fully cultivate racial justice in the 21st century. In addition to the rise of vocational education, this era has also seen the rise of community college and Hispanic Serving Institutions.

Following the Truman Commission of Higher Education, Labaree identifies the first purpose of education as being a democratic equity. He believes "that a democratic society cannot persist unless it prepares all of its young with equal care to take on the full responsibilities of citizenship in a competent manner."⁶⁵ Some responsibilities of citizenship are to vote, support campaigns, attend political meetings, protest and run for office. Voting is the least that citizens can do to participate in a democracy. Though the days of poll tax and literacy tests are behind us, still only 32% of Latinx adults vote; compared to the 53% of the White vote.⁶⁶ Many liberal arts colleges have realized this problem and will play an important role in the coming global debate about the success or failures of American-style democracy.⁶⁷ Moreover, White people are also more likely to: support a campaign (23%) more than double than both Asians and Latinx (11%) and attend a political meeting (15%) almost three times the amount than Latinx (6%).⁶⁸ The Latinx community need to feel empowered enough to feel like they have an active role in the democratic process. The Association of American Colleges and Universities also believes that this can be done through a liberal arts education.⁶⁹ Likewise, in 2018, only 46 Latinx were either

⁶⁵ Labaree, 42.

⁶⁶ John Dobard, Kim Engle, Karthick Ramakrishnan, and Sono Shah. "UNEQUAL VOICES California's Racial Disparities in Political Participation." Advancement Project, June 2016. <https://www.advancementprojectca.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Unequal-Voices-Single-Pages-Low-Res-6-28-16.pdf>.

⁶⁷ Geoffrey Canada, *The Currents of Democracy: The Role of Small Liberal Arts Colleges*. Daedalus, 128(1), 121–32, 1999. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ586112&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

⁶⁸ Dobard, 6.

⁶⁹ E. M. Núñez, *Ensuring High-Quality Learning for All*. *Liberal Education*, 104(1), 2018.

part of the House of Representatives or the Senate out of a combined 535 member Congress.⁷⁰

Once again, it is vital that citizens feel empowered in order to contribute to the democratic process and fully realize the Commission's goal in having a more true democracy. Latinx scholars of the Chicano Cooperating Council on Higher Education tried to do this through the addition of Chicano Studies, but it is not enough. The Latinx community has come far over the years but there is still further to go to achieve true racial justice.

The next purpose of education that Labaree states is social efficiency, which is directly tied to vocational education. Without a doubt, vocational education is vital to the US economy since it needs skilled laborers to thrive. Though this is known, the United States government does not understand the need to invest in major training and education efforts to service the skill needs of private and public sectors to the degree that is needed to still keep the liberal arts alive. In 1991, it was found that 84 percent of graduates with a technical degree were employed.⁷¹ Though this does sound appealing to undeclared college students, it is important to consider that this data only reflects the first year after college. What happens when those technical jobs become obsolete? President Sanford J. Ungar of liberal arts college, Goucher College challenges this misperception by explaining that “the traditional, well-rounded preparation that the liberal arts offer is a better investment than ever—that the future demands of citizenship will require not narrow technical or job-focused training, but rather a subtle understanding of the complex influences that shape the world we live in”⁷² and so by preparing students for jobs that do not

⁷⁰ Jennifer Manning, *Membership of the 115th Congress: A profile*. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2018.

⁷¹ Margaret Cahalan, And Others, and Inc., Rockville Westat MD. 1993. “Occupational and Educational Outcomes of Recent College Graduates 1 Year after Graduation: 1991. Contractor Report. Statistical Analysis Report,” April. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=eric&AN=ED359909&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

⁷² Stanford Ungar, 7 Major Misperceptions About the Liberal Arts. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2010, 56(25),A40–A41. <https://doi.org/Opinion>

exist yet, is actually a better form of career education. Google also agrees when it was found that “among the eight most important qualities of Google’s top employees, STEM expertise comes in dead last. The seven top characteristics of success at Google are all soft skills: being a good coach; communicating and listening well; possessing insights into others (including others different values and points of view); having empathy toward and being supportive of one’s colleagues; being a good critical thinker and problem solver; and being able to make connections across complex ideas”⁷³ all of these skills can be mastered through a liberal arts education. Evidently, the liberal arts education is more accessible to all students who seek it.

With that said, it is important to consider what messages Latinx students are receiving. At the community college level, the program guided pathways has become popular, as it has been implemented into several schools in California. The idea behind it is that if students have identified a career of interest to them then, they have the opportunity to be a part of a program that will guide them to reach that profession.⁷⁴ The problem is that Latinx students and other low-income and/or minority students are targeted for this programs and many don’t achieve a bachelor’s degree in the process.⁷⁵ Although these programs are meant to give Latinx students opportunities to achieve one of the purposes of education, social efficiency, it takes away from the need to have more students in the liberal arts, thus fostering racial privilege. In a way, higher

⁷³ Valerie Strauss, Analysis | The surprising thing Google learned about its employees - and what it means for today's students. (Washington Post, 2017, December 20). Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2017/12/20/the-surprising-thing-google-learned-about-its-employees-and-what-it-means-for-todays-students/>

⁷⁴ Robert Johnstone. Resources. Guided Pathways, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.caguidedpathways.org/resources>

⁷⁵ Thomas Bailey, “Equity and Guided Pathways: Which Practices Help, Which Hurt, and What We Don't Know.” Community College Research Center, March 18, 2018. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/blog/equity-guided-pathways-directors-column.html>.

education is reverting back to only the elite being able to receive a liberal arts education like in the time of the Yale Report of 1828.

Social mobility, the third of Labaree's goals, is a way to show that education can be the great equalizer by Americans having the ability to move up in class. This is the premise of the American dream. In the United States, 62% of people believe in the American Dream; however, 77% of Latinxs believe it. In fact, 51% of Latinxs believe that they have already achieved said American Dream. Moreover, 75% of Latinxs believe that their families have already partaken in social mobility, compared to the 56% of the total US population.⁷⁶ A possibility for this result is that because this community has been oppressed for so long that a small amount upward social mobility means a lot. This is dangerous thinking as it creates a false glass ceiling for Latinx people. The Latinx community needs to be empowered, which can be done with a liberal arts education, so that this false glass ceiling dissipates. Moreover, in support of a liberal arts education, it was found that the liberal arts extend opportunities for social mobility and personal development to students who need remediation, who want careers, and who dream of equality.⁷⁷ It is also claimed that higher education institutions must "(1) examine the class, racial, ethnicity, general, and urban issues that will play pivotal roles in shaping students' futures; (2) enrich and

⁷⁶ Mark Hugo Lopez,, Ana Gonzalez-Barrera, and Jens Manuel Krogstad. "Most Latinos Believe in the American Dream, but Say It's Hard to Reach." Pew Research Center. Pew Research Center, September 11, 2018. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/09/11/latinos-are-more-likely-to-believe-in-the-american-dream-but-most-say-it-is-hard-to-achieve/>.

⁷⁷ Joanne R. Reitano, "The Community College Mission: Access or Anarchy?," April 1, 1988. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=eric&AN=ED295698&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

enliven the mastery of basic skills while preparing students for college-level courses; (3) break down the perceived dichotomy between liberal arts and business curricula; and (4) enhance the academic quality of life for the commuting student and the community.”⁷⁸ This all needs to be done, so that students can have social mobility and that education can be the great equalizer and the liberal arts can cultivate racial justice.

By closely examining David Labaree’s three purposes of education: democratic equity, social efficiency, and social mobility, it is very evident that the US government and higher education institutions have put an emphasis on vocational education. It is also clear that Latinx students are still being tracked into programs that focus on vocational education. However, there is also no doubt that in order to fully satisfy these purposes of education for all, the liberal arts should be the focus.

Future Recommendations

Undoubtedly, Latinx students have come a long way from 1848, but there is still so much more that still needs to be done in order to fully cultivate racial justice. The three issues that will be examined are: the underrepresentation of Latinx students, the curriculum that is being taught, and the tracking system in place for vocational education. The liberal arts can support these problems if it is willing to shift. The recommendations that are offered will be to create better

⁷⁸ Reitano, 1.

techniques to target students for a liberal arts degree. They include: recruitment and retention strategies as well as changing the curriculum to be more relevant/reflect the students.

Starting off with the underrepresentation of Latinx students in higher ed institutions, the recommendations will include: new recruitment strategies and programs to ensure successful infiltration into college. The problem needs to be tackled at the elementary level with talent identification programs. Talent identification programs lead students to develop a positive or negative school identity. If a student has a more positive school identity then they are more likely to pursue a degree. Counselors in high school also play a significant role in students' path to college. It is imperative that they persuade students to enroll in classes that fit their A-G requirements so that they are eligible to go to college. In addition, students shouldn't be tracked into vocational education courses, but rather should be given the option to take AP/IB courses, if they want to take on the challenge. Furthermore, families need to be included in the recruitment process. Many times Latinx families don't know how to navigate the system, it is the institution's responsibility to relay this vital information in order to enroll more Latinx students and cultivate racial justice. In addition, financial aid officers should also be bilingual and the FAFSA should be offered in multiple languages so that the information is understood by Latinx families. Lastly, once at the university, counselors should be assigned to students to support students with not only navigating the institutions but also to discuss career options with Latinx students. Counselors would only share careers that require a college degree to further motivate the student to finish the BA/BS program. Ways to bring wealth (social and economic) back to the

community should also be explored within the counselor and student. If all of these initiatives are realized in the higher education system, then an increase in Latinx students will be seen in the coming years.

Curriculum is the second major problem within higher education, specifically the liberal arts, that needs to be solved in order to cultivate racial justice. The way that the Chicano Cooperating Council on Higher Education went about solving this issue was by introducing a new major: Chicano Studies. While this new field does introduce a path for Latinx students to follow in order to gain a liberal arts education, it should not be the only path. There should be the Chicano Studies, or at least other ethnic classes, required within other liberal arts majors. This is one way that non-Latinx students could learn more about how to interact with this community in a meaningful way and to help cultivate racial justice as a whole. Moreover, all classes, regardless of the subject, should have readings from diverse authors in order to include multiple perspectives in the discussions, thus opening the minds of students, like the Yale Report of 1828, claimed that a liberal arts education offers. Latinx students would not only benefit from this liberal arts approach but also benefit from seeing their community reflected in the literature they are engaging with. This can also empower Latinx students, which is also needed for retention in college. All in all, all students, including Latinx students, would benefit from a change in the liberal arts curriculum.

Through the changes in recruitment and retention strategies as well as changing the curriculum to be more relevant/reflect the students, racial justice can be cultivated for this community which would be beneficial to all members of society.

Conclusion

All in all, the Latinx community has progressed significantly since 1848, when parts of Mexico were absorbed by the United States after the Mexican- American War, but there is still more that needs to be achieved in order to cultivate racial justice. This historical study closely examined the role that liberal arts has in that cultivation process of achieving racial justice as the liberal arts previously fostered racial privilege.

As a recap, the study was divided into five periods: Classical Beginnings (the roman era to the 1920s), Pre- and Post- World War II (the 1920s to the 1940s), the Civil Rights Era (the 1960s to the 1980s), Recent to Present Day (1990s to the 2010s) and the future recommendations. Through examining these five periods, it has become clear that the Latinx community has fought, and continue to fight, to have access to a liberal arts education and t have opportunities like the elite still have today.

By reshaping the way that students have access (recruitment) to the liberal arts as well as the way that it is taught (curriculum) then the liberal arts can really be a force that can cultivate racial justice for the Latinx community as well as other minority groups that have not previously been properly represented in the liberal arts and in other sectors of society. To answer the

question, what is the purpose of education, it is both to develop the person as well as providing the skills needed to make the world a better place for everyone.

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