

STAFF EDITORIAL

Hispanic is not a race, but a box no one fits in

HOW WE SEE IT

"Race" and "ethnicity" are not interchangeable, nor are "Hispanic" and "Latino"

Hispanics are currently the largest ethnic minority. According to the U.S. Census Bureau as of 2017, roughly 58 million people in the United States identify as Hispanic – about 18 percent of the total population. But racially, Hispanics almost don't exist in the United States.

In the 2010 U.S. Census, 37 percent of Latinos checked off their race as "some other race" and wrote in responses such as "Hispanic" or "Latin American." That's because Hispanics more often than not don't feel as if they fit into just one of the six categories of race broken down on the Census. These categories are defined as "White," "Black or African American," "American Indian or Alaskan Native," "Asian" and "Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander." How Hispanics tend to define "race" is a little more

ambiguous than these categories allow.

In a Pew Research study conducted in 2015, two-thirds of Hispanic adults attribute their racial background to their Hispanic background. Within that statistic, 56 percent of Hispanic adults consider their Hispanic background as part of both their racial and ethnic background.

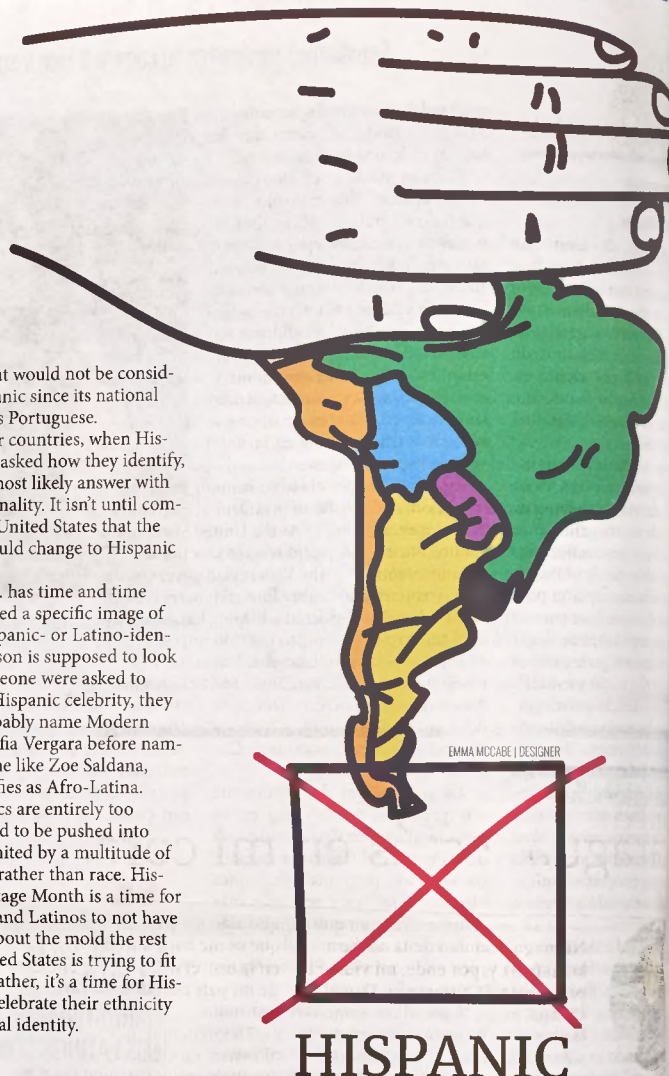
Hispanic identity could not be more complicated if it tried. The term "Hispanic" is tied to language and typically means a person can tie their heritage back to a Spanish-speaking country. Latino or Latina identity means someone has ties to one of the 33 countries that make up Latin America, including those in the Caribbean and North and South America. Spain would be considered Hispanic but not Latino. Brazil would fall into the Latino

identity but would not be considered Hispanic since its national language is Portuguese.

In other countries, when Hispanics are asked how they identify, they will most likely answer with their nationality. It isn't until coming to the United States that the answer would change to Hispanic or Latino.

The U.S. has time and time again pushed a specific image of what a Hispanic- or Latino-identifying person is supposed to look like. If someone were asked to identify a Hispanic celebrity, they would probably name Modern Family's Sofia Vergara before naming someone like Zoe Saldana, who identifies as Afro-Latina.

Hispanics are entirely too multifaceted to be pushed into one box, united by a multitude of ethnicities rather than race. Hispanic Heritage Month is a time for Hispanics and Latinos to not have to worry about the mold the rest of the United States is trying to fit them in. Rather, it's a time for Hispanics to celebrate their ethnicity and national identity.



CAMPUS VOICES - SPAIN

Hispanic Heritage Month: A time of reflection and celebration



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ENGLISH

Hispanic Heritage Month begins each year on Sept. 15, celebrating the anniversary of independence of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Mexico, Chile and Belize also celebrate their independence days during the month. This annual observance is a time for reflection and honor the generations of Latinx/Hispanics who have positively influenced, shaped and enriched this nation and society. This year, the Elon Community will have the opportunity to explore and immerse themselves into the Latinx/Hispanic cultures and identities through panel discussions, films, lectures, music, art, cuisine, sports and much more.

Over the last few years, Hispanic Heritage Month's events at Elon University have moved from consideration of the historical to the contemporary, from the way things were to the way things are now and shifting to the way things could be. Hence, we are all challenged to seize the opportunities we have as members of our campus community to get the conversation going, to learn about cultures other than our own and to learn about the contributions of those who share a different skin color than ours.

It is important to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month at Elon to learn about other cultures that will help us expand our horizons

and will allow us to better understand those who are around us. We do this because our increasingly diverse community shows us the importance of how to communicate with each other in a respectful way.

Furthermore, celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month makes a positive impact not only in all the Elon student population but specially in our Latinx/Hispanic students. Why? In the same way that learning about the founders of this country instills pride in American students, learning about the contributions of Hispanic ancestors increases our Hispanic/Latinx student's identity development by making them proud of the role their cultural heritage has played in the formation of this country. Latinx/Hispanic students need to see their own faces reflected in the history of this country because it creates a connection between them and the past, and it motivates them to start thinking about how they can also contribute and make a difference themselves.

Hispanic heritage is American heritage and we need to find a path that includes all people of every background on the journey to a more inclusive country. Thus, let's use this month as an opportunity to become more educated about Hispanic heritage and how it is reflected within America.

ESPAÑOL

El Mes de la Herencia Hispana empieza cada año el 15 de septiembre, celebrando el aniversario de la independencia de los países de Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras y Nicaragua. México, Chile y Belice también celebran sus días de independencia durante este mes.

Esta conmemoración anual es un momento de reflexión y honor a las generaciones de hispanos y latinos que han formado, influenciado positivamente y enriquecido a esta nación y sociedad. Este año, la comunidad de Elon University tendrá la oportunidad de explorar y sumergirse en las culturas e identidades de los hispanos y latinos a través de paneles de diálogo, películas, conferencias, música, arte, gastronomía, deportes y mucho más.

En los últimos años, los eventos que han tenido lugar en Elon han pasado de ser un reconocimiento de lo histórico a lo contemporáneo. Por eso, todos nosotros tenemos el reto de aprovechar las oportunidades que tenemos como miembros de esta universidad para educarnos sobre las contribuciones de aquellos que comparten un color de piel diferente al nuestro.

Es importante celebrar el Mes de la Herencia Hispana en Elon para aprender sobre otras culturas que nos ayudarán a expandir nuestros horizontes y nos permitirán entender mejor a aquellos que nos rodean.

Hacemos esto porque la diversidad en nuestra comunidad muestra la importancia de cómo conectamos entre nosotros de una manera respetuosa.

Además, celebrar el Mes de la Herencia Hispana tiene un impacto positivo no sólo en toda la población estudiantil de Elon, pero también en nuestros estudiantes hispanos y latinos. De la misma manera, este país infunde orgullo en los estudiantes antes americanos. Aprender sobre las contribuciones de los ancestros hispanos incrementa el desarrollo de la identidad de los estudiantes hispanos y latinos. Haciéndonos orgullosos del papel que nuestra cultura ha tenido en la formación de este país.

Los estudiantes hispanos y latinos necesitan ver sus caras reflejadas en la historia de Estados Unidos porque crea una conexión entre el presente y el pasado. Eso los motiva para empezar a pensar en cómo ellos también pueden contribuir y hacer la diferencia.

La herencia hispana es parte de la historia americana y necesitamos encontrar un camino que incluya a todas las personas de diferentes contextos en un viaje hacia un país más inclusivo. Así que, utilicemos este mes para tener oportunidades de aprendizaje más sobre las culturas hispanas como todo ello está reflejado en nuestra propia América.