



Lost Opportunities:

The Reality of Latinos in the U.S. Criminal Justice System

Lost Opportunities: The Reality of Latinos in the U.S. Criminal Justice System examines the available data on the status of Latinos in the criminal justice system. It offers an extensive look at how the U.S. criminal justice system works, the factors underlying the overrepresentation of Latinos in the system, and the specific problems associated with the prosecution and treatment of individuals with substance abuse dependency issues. The discussion also provides an analysis and recommendations for replacing the downward spiral of incarceration and recidivism with smart solutions leading to positive outcomes for Latinos and community safety.

If you wish to understand the trends, inequities, policies, and special problems endemic to the plight of Latinos in the criminal justice system, READ THIS BOOK. If you wish to help shape the solutions, TAKE IT TO HEART. This book is a must-read for anyone involved in the administration of justice.

—Judge Ricardo M. Urbina, United States District Court Judge

The future economic and social prosperity of the U.S. is largely dependant on the well-being of the Latino community. Therefore, we cannot afford to lose a generation of Latinos to incarceration. I urge my colleagues in Congress to read this groundbreaking book, which so clearly speaks of the challenges of the U.S. criminal justice system in addressing the root causes of crime and protecting public safety.

—Congressman Ciro Rodriguez, U.S. House of Representatives
Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus

Our nation's juvenile justice system has become a purgatory for youth of color, and the National Council of La Raza's newest publication is a vitally important vehicle for challenging our society's unquestioning acceptance of the status quo. Coming from one of our nation's most respected civil rights organizations, it serves as a wake-up call to Americans that Latino youth can no longer be blithely funneled into our nation's juvenile facilities and that there is a better way to deal with troubled youth than just 'locking them up and throwing away the key.'

—Vincent Schiraldi, Justice Policy Institute

This book begins a national conversation . . . and calls on leaders, treatment professionals, and concerned individuals to make a commitment to understand [the current system] and create a hybrid system that links the nation's largest minority group to opportunities in their lives and communities. It combines an authoritative and comprehensive look at addiction, immigration, poverty, racism, and other social influences that propel Hispanics toward involvement in the criminal justice system.

—Mary Shilton, National TASC (Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities)

"Lost Opportunities" highlights the problems that Latinos face daily in the U.S. criminal justice system, and points the way to reforms necessary to create a more fair and just system for all.

—T. Jaime Chahin, Ph.D., Dean of the College of Applied Arts, Texas State University.