

Latino, Latinx,
Latine...What's in a name:
Who we are and why it
matters.

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“What you see and what you hear depends a great deal on where you are standing. It also depends on what sort of person you are”

C.S. Lewis

A brief note about numbers...



U.S. Census Data (2023)

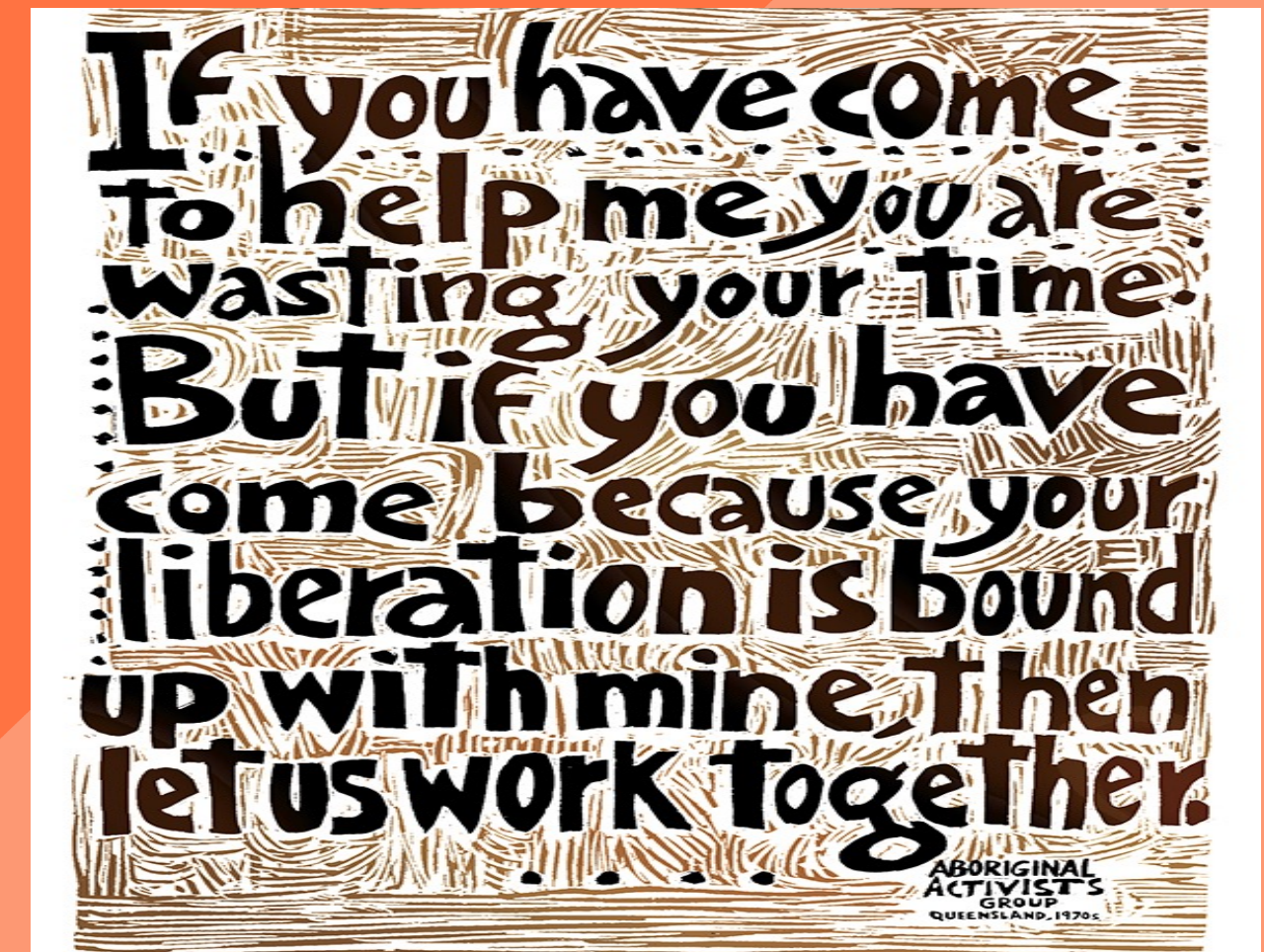
- As of July 1, 2022, there were 63.7 million Latinos in the U.S., making us approximately 19.1% of the population and the largest racial/ethnic communities.
- There are 13 states with one million or more Hispanic residents in 2022 — Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington.

2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH):

- Approximately 22% of Hispanic and Latino Americans reported having a mental illness, compared to 23.9% of non-Hispanic Whites
- Only 36% of Hispanic and Latino Americans received mental health services compared to non-Hispanic Whites (52%)
- Past year substance use disorder among Hispanic and Latino Americans was 15.7%, reported rates of illicit drug use was 19.4%, and unmet treatment needs 15%
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among Hispanic and Latino Americans 10 to 24 years old, and men 25-34.

NSDUH (2021): Barriers to Care

- Experiences of racism and discrimination stemming from structural and systemic factors
- Mental Health stigma which hinders Hispanic and Latino Americans from seeking help
- Language access issues, and negative encounters with care providers
- Provider shortage due to the lack of providers from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds
- Lack of culturally competent resources and providers to meet cultural, social, and language-related needs





Family Pictures

“The Packaged Picture of Culture”



- Current view of culture and groups sustains a consistent pattern of characteristics that is based upon a binary or dichotomous view of the population—Whatever we are, they are not and vice versa
- Use cultural characteristics to create a “just” outcome for client/community
- We have moved away from providing information, and instructions, that contains stable behavioral characteristics of various groups, usually based on race and ethnicity
- Understanding of culture within what has been a “fixed” lens, limits our capacity to examine the intersectionality of other variables such as class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, immigration, etc.

Culture Re-examined

- Culture is dynamic and changing, not static; it changes as the condition of the people change and as their interaction with the larger society changes
- Examining culture as a stable element minimizes any social, historical and political processes that shapes how a tradition or practice occupies a central place within a culture (Warrier, 2008)
- Culture must include an analysis of power structures and historical context
- In essence, we are always “in culture”



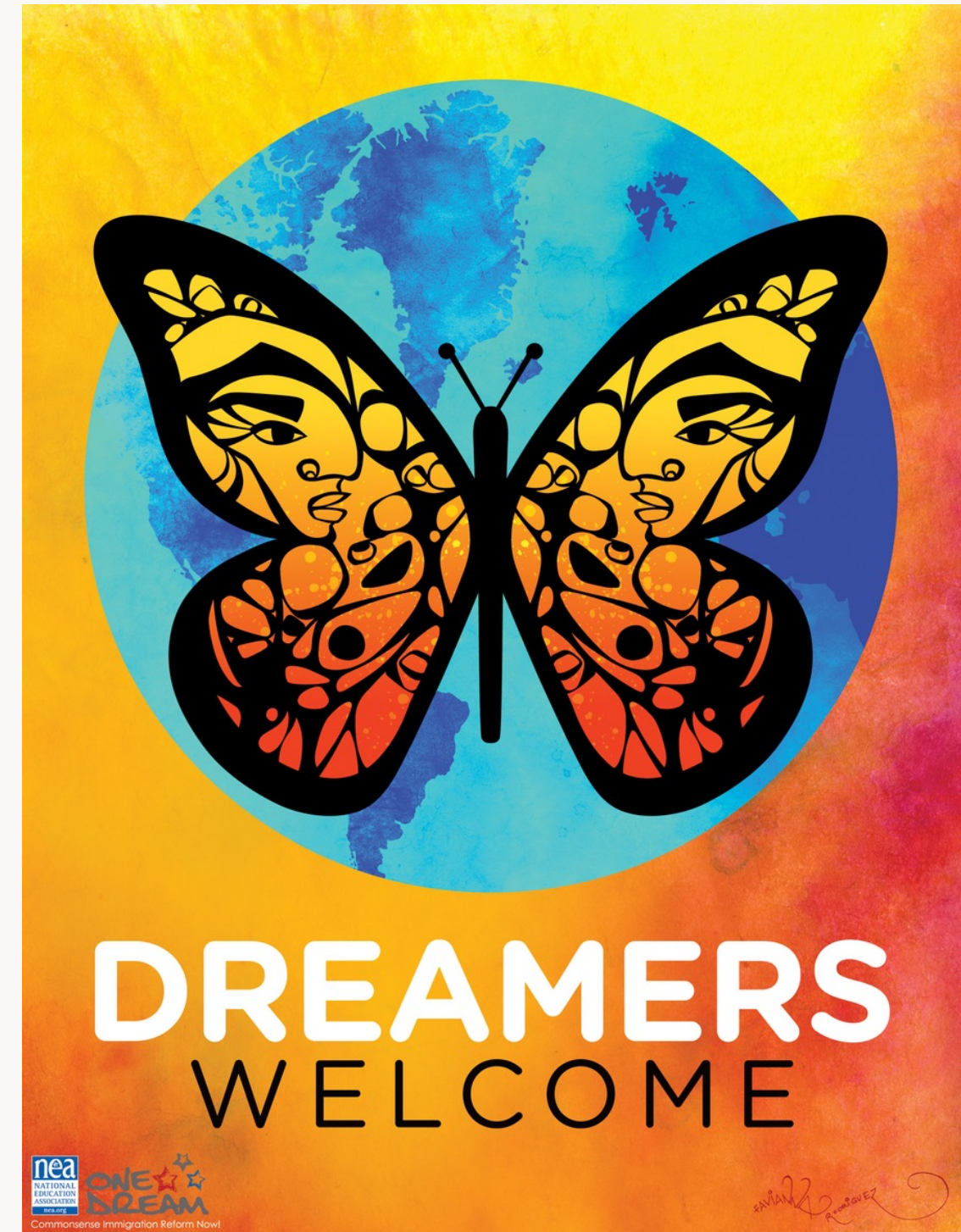
Intersections of Culture



- Lower income Asian American woman experiences of familial stress in San Diego might have certain elements in common with how a lesbian Italian American experiences familial stress in Iowa, but not have much in common with how another Asian American woman might experience familial stress in New York
- A fourth-generation Latino American man growing up in Texas may share something in common with a young Latina American lesbian living in Los Angeles and a young Iberian mother who just immigrated to New York City. As a group, these three may also share something in common with a Chinese American gymnast who is an atheist living in Des Moines, Iowa or with a disabled 10-year-old Chinese American girl growing up in Minneapolis, Minnesota (Warrier, 2008)

Why Language Matters.

Example: Latino male who uses substances, from a positivist perspective, is simply machista. Leaves out the complexity of their essence/being and how their historical, social, and economic factors affect his role as an individual who uses substances.

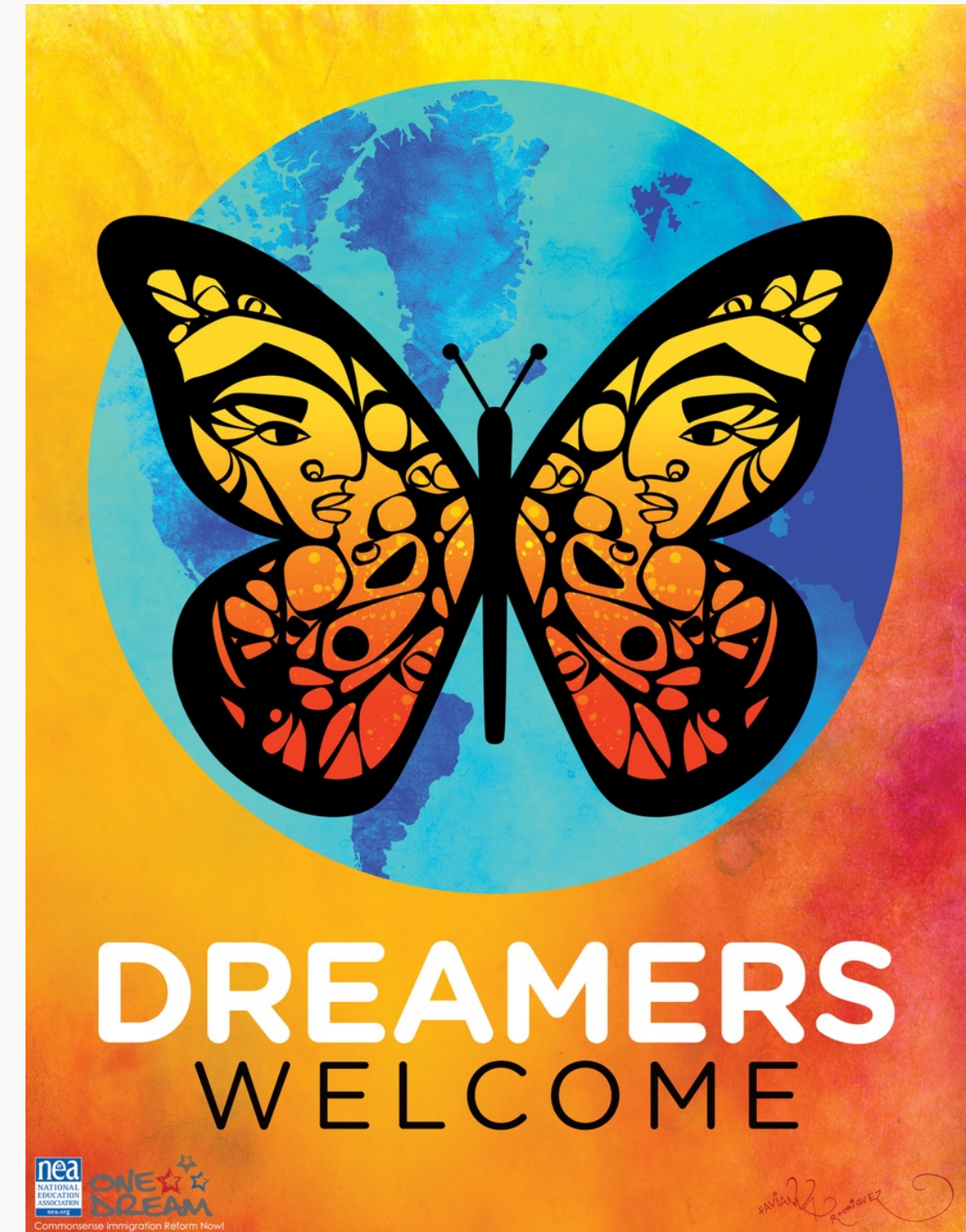




Latinx Intersectionality

Latinx (Latin-ex)/Latine – Why it's important.

- We cannot truly understand Latinx communities in static, rigid, or based on absolute markers.
- Spanish is the language of the conquistadores. There were several thousand indigenous languages spoken before colonization.
- Many indigenous languages range from genderless to multigendered, extending the binary.
- In addition to Spanish, many Latine people in the US speak other languages, including Portuguese, English, etc.
- Language can serve simultaneously as oppressor and liberator.



Intersections beyond social identities...

- Various cultural and sociopolitical lived experiences:
 - Formative schooling years
 - Varied SES levels, particularly those who may come from working class.
 - Immigration status, being first generation, levels of acculturation, gender languages spoken.
- Identity is fluid. Culture is fluid. Language is fluid.





Myths and Misconceptions



NO

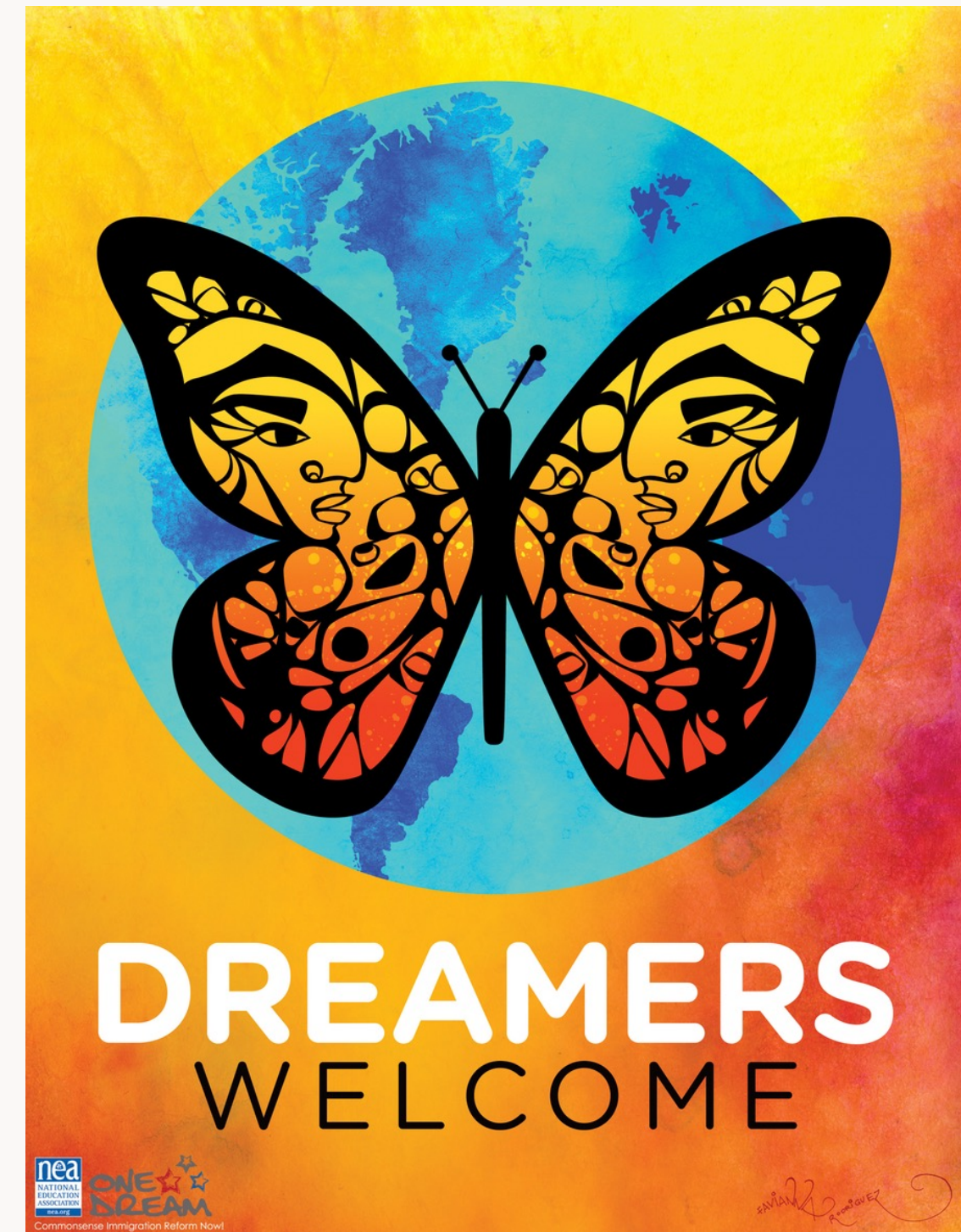
DOGS

NEGROS

MEXICANS

Images and Myths about Latinx/Latine Communities

- To justify the continued subjugation of a people, images/narratives need to be created so that the subjugation makes sense.
- These images/narratives become the identity of the subjugated. There are many images used, but one universal image that was historically identified with many Latinx communities was/is laziness, criminals, etc.
- This image/narrative becomes the explanation for the contextual narrative/situation because without such images the inequitable and unjust behaviors and outcomes would appear shocking.
- It becomes justification for those who hold more privilege and power in society. The image/narrative is that the Latinx/Latine individual/communities are unbearably lazy; in contrast to those who hold power and privilege as always being in action.





Mexican Proverb



THEY TRIED TO BURY US.
THEY DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE SEEDS.



Why it Matters.

- **Counter-stories** (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001) telling stories of those whose experiences are **not often told and understood**.
- Counter-stories **challenge dominant discourses**.
- **Models of community cultural wealth** (Yosso, 2005) **recognizes assets** that individuals from nondominant communities hold and use to navigate systems, including drug courts.
- **Capital:** Aspirational, familial, cultural, linguistic, **resistant**, navigational, and social (Yosso, 2005).

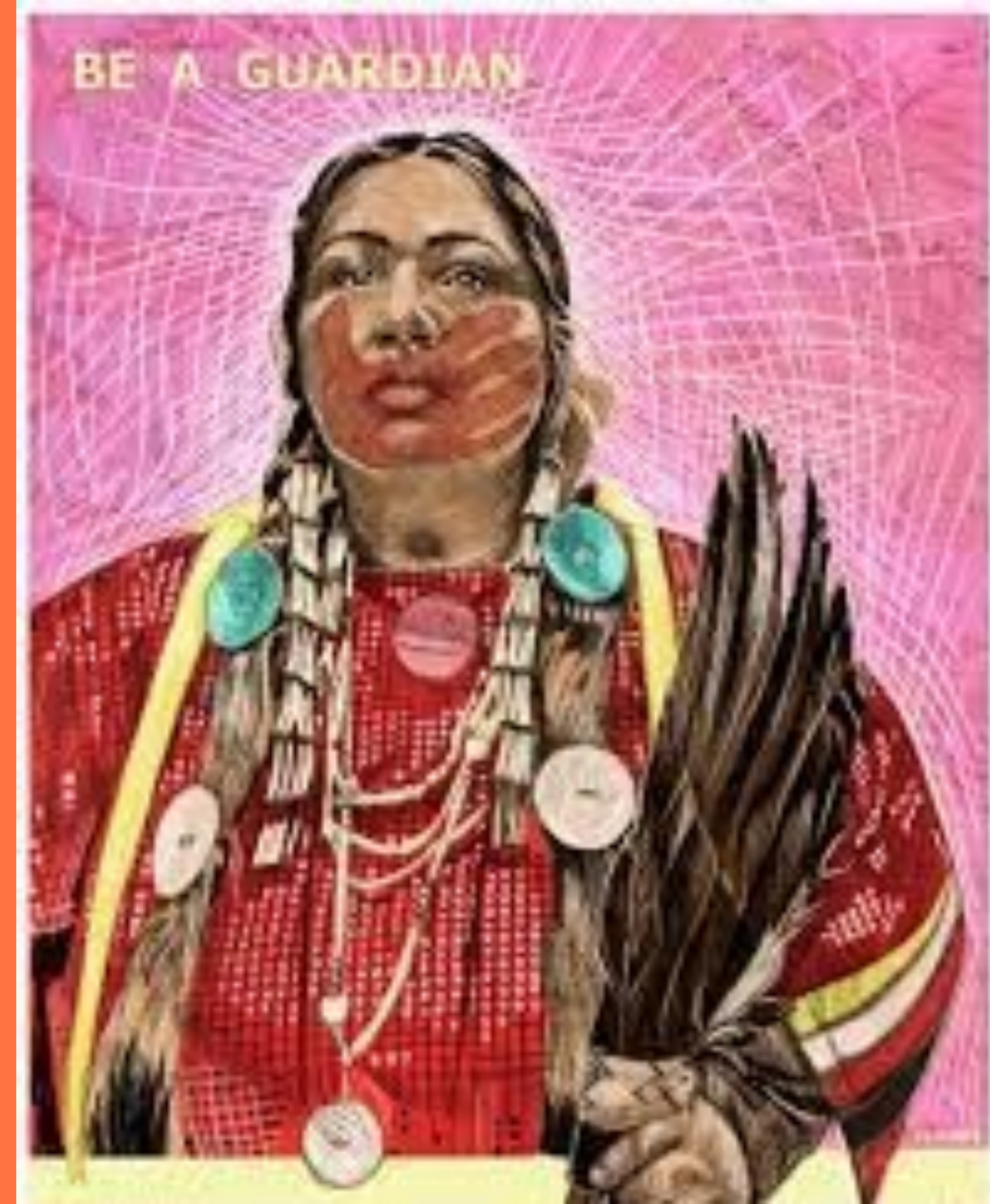


Wellness & Healing

Three primary sets of needs: personal, relational, and collective (Prilleltensky, Nelson, & Pierson, 2001)

- **Personal:** hope, optimism, control, physical health, mental well-being, meaning, and spirituality
- **Relational:** affection, caring, compassion, support, and meaningful participation in family
- **Collective:** Safety, adequate health care, crime-free environments, and just distribution of resources

Each supports one another and relies on the other for fulfillment and they do not compensate for one another (ex: personal growth cannot outweigh societal factors affecting health)



Closing Reflections

How has “culture” shown up in your experience(s) delivering services?

What dilemmas related to “culture” have you experienced in your work?

How have you integrated “culture” into how you work with Latinx communities?





Thank you!

Q&A