



**MÁS que
MACHO**
LATINO MEN LISTENING SERIES

Wednesday: August 19, 2026

Más que Macho: 36 Miles from the border

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Research by America's Future Project

Photo: ACLU of Arizona

The Yuma Session

Overall Findings:

We are back for round two. This time in Yuma, Arizona. Just under 36 miles from the border, these men had different things to say compared to their counterparts in Tucson. As this session took place in a border community the issues of the border cannot be ignored. **These men have a deep and personal understanding of what it is like to exist within two countries which shapes their attitudes and the way in which they engage with politics.** As anyone who grew up in the borderlands will tell you, they are more accustomed to interaction with CBP and other types of immigration enforcement. Many of them have family or friends who work in law enforcement and this makes the politics of being Latino a bit more complex.

Identity:

To start this round, we asked these men what being a Latino man meant to them and if they felt that the label informed their decision-making. **Interestingly, they made it evident that they did not identify themselves with the label of “Latino” and more strongly identified with their nationality as people who were of Mexican descent.** They consistently brought up that Latinos are not a monolithic group.

“I’ve never identified as Latino. I would probably say Mexican-American...” One man said, “I have never related to being Latino. **I think there is a difference between someone who says they are Latino and someone who says that their parents came from Mexico** but they were born here [the US].”

Another one of these men said that the government created the category of Latino to be able to categorize Latinos into a “one size fits all” category that is not necessarily applicable to each and every person within the category.



The Economy

Next, we began to delve into their opinion on our current democracy. This group of men grew up in a United States that is very different to the one we know today, and it shows. They recognize that there is a generational difference, but also pressures that come from being Mexican-Americans. **They pointed to generational clashes between first and second generations as they feel as though there is an added pressure on those who are second generation to move up in the social stratosphere in a worsening economy.**

“Some people change the way they vote because they think they are gonna get some [economic] benefit.”

“We struggled, and we want to help, and sometimes the other generations don’t see that other people need help.”

Problems with Democracy:

The conversation then turned to the issues that these men care the most about as well as Latino men's ability and willingness to turn out. These men talked about the issues that would push them to vote for one candidate versus the other. Issues of the economy and affordability came up as expected. However, there were some interesting things these men brought up:



One man said that he had never voted for a candidate solely because immigration was their top campaign issue.



Others reaffirmed concerns about the economy with their focus being on which candidate is going to **actually help their communities** and positively impact those that are less fortunate.

Immigration:

With Yuma being at the border, the topic of immigration was bound to come up. **The relationship of people on the border with immigration enforcement is more complex than in other parts of the country.** Many of the people that live in these communities have family members that are part of immigration enforcement as customs or border patrol officers.



One man brought up the fact that his parents were afraid to go to quinceañeras across the border in San Luis even though they had their papers in order because they weren't sure if something would happen. ^[1]



They also talked about how issues with discrimination by CBP officers had increased from when they were kids.



Gender and Mobilization:

Differently from our previous session the Yuma group brought up the issue that Latino men do not mobilize as much as Latina women. They acknowledge that movements had largely been carried by the women in the community. Their openness to talk about the issues that we encounter with mobilizing Latino men came as a shock to us.



They talked about the scarcity of men in protests and how they see more young women involved in community advocacy than young men.

[1] San Luis, Rio Colorado borders San Luis, Arizona which is just under 24 miles from Yuma.

Next Steps

> As we move through our listening sessions in Arizona it is important to remember that the purpose of these conversations is to understand where Latino men are at. Some of their ideas may be more controversial than others, but in order to develop strategies to turn out Latino men to community events, protests, and more importantly to the polls, we need to understand how they view the world. We understand the urge to want to debate or change their views, but we cannot successfully do that if we do not understand what those views are.

For our next session we are heading to Maricopa county. The fourth largest county in the U.S. with almost 5 million residents. With just under 1.5 million Latino or Hispanic residents, according to the Pew Research Center, **Maricopa county is central to not only Arizona politics but also to National politics.** Stay tuned.

