

## Evaluations of Conflicts Between Latino Values and Autonomy Desires Among Puerto Rican Adolescents

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Puerto Rican adolescents ( $N = 105$ ;  $M_{\text{age}} = 15.97$  years,  $SD = 1.40$ ) evaluated hypothetical situations describing conflicts between Latino values (family obligations and *respeto*) and autonomy desires regarding personal, friendship, and dating activities. Adolescents judged that peers *should* prioritize Latino values over autonomy, which led to greater feelings of pride than happiness. However, they believed that teens *would* prioritize autonomy over Latino values, which led to greater feelings of happiness than pride. Adolescents reasoned about autonomy desires as personal issues, whereas reasoning about Latino values was multifaceted, including references to conventions and concerns for others. Furthermore, judgments and reasoning depended on the type of autonomy desire and Latino value and sometimes, by participants' age and sex.

Although it is projected that by 2020, one in four adolescents ages 13–18 in the United States will be Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014), we still have much to learn about how Latino adolescents experience normative processes of adolescence, such as autonomy development. With age, Latino adolescents, like teens from other ethnic backgrounds, experience increased behavioral autonomy (Fuligni, 1998). However, few studies have directly examined how Latino adolescents' desires for autonomy interact with their cultural beliefs. The present study used social domain theory (Turiel, 2006) to investigate how Puerto Rican adolescents balance and prioritize Latino values (family obligations and *respeto*) versus desires for autonomy (regarding personal, friendship, and romantic relationship activities) in hypothetical situations where they conflict. We also examined how adolescents reason about Latino values and their autonomy desires in these

situations, as well as adolescents' feelings associated with their decisions.

### *Autonomy Development and the Personal Domain*

Autonomy development is a normative and important aspect of adolescent development. Extensive studies show that adolescents from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds (including Latinos) desire, expect, and experience increased behavioral autonomy as they grow older (Darling, Cumsille, & Martinez, 2008; Fuligni, 1998). Studies using a social domain theory perspective have shown that adolescents' autonomy development occurs primarily around personal issues (Smetana, 1988). Personal issues are defined as issues that pertain to privacy, control over one's body, and personal preferences and choices (e.g., regarding leisure activities). As they do not affect others, they are therefore not legitimately socially regulated (Nucci, 2001). Personal issues have been contrasted with moral issues (which pertain to others' welfare and rights, like hitting someone or stealing) and conventional issues (which pertain to arbitrary social norms, like dress, manners, and modes of address). In contrast to personal issues, both moral and conventional issues are seen as legitimately regulated by parents and other adults. Extensive research has shown that

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This research is based in part on the first author's dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the PhD at the University of Rochester. We would like to thank our undergraduate research assistants (Erica Williams, Makia Green, Genesis Ciprián, and Juan Roldán) for their assistance with the project, the participants for their cooperation, and Patrick Davies and Dena Swanson for their feedback. This project was supported by a Dissertation Research Award from the Society for Research in Child Development and a dissertation grant from the Department of Clinical and Social Sciences in Psychology at the University of Rochester.

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DOI: 10.1111/cdev.12687

children from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds create a sphere of personal jurisdiction and desire to engage in and have control over personal activities (Nucci, 2001; Smetana, 2011). As adolescents develop, they treat more issues as personal, or as individual prerogatives, harmless, and not legitimately controlled by parents or other adults (Darling et al., 2008; Fuligni, 1998).

Peer issues are also central to the development of adolescents' autonomy (Smetana, 2011). During adolescence, youth start spending more time with friends, and romantic relationships take on increasing importance for American adolescents from diverse backgrounds (Updegraff, McHale, Whiteman, Thayer, & Crouter, 2006). The U.S. adolescents often claim authority over peer activities because they regard them as personal issues, whereas parents tend to see the prudential aspects (pertaining to harm to self; Daddis & Randolph, 2010). Moreover, with age, adolescents tend to claim more authority over peer issues (Darling et al., 2008; Fuligni, 1998), although they continue to distinguish among personal, friendship, and romantic activities. For example, one study found that adolescents' views of authority over friend activities, opposite-sex activities, and personal issues are empirically distinct (Darling et al., 2008). In fact, ethnically diverse teens believe that parents have greater legitimate authority over friend activities than opposite-sex relationships, and in turn, more authority over these than over personal issues (Darling et al., 2008; Fuligni, 1998).

#### *Latino Culture and Values*

Although children and adolescents from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds maintain an area of personal jurisdiction involving discretionary control over at least some behaviors, the specific issues and the breadth of the personal domain, as well as the timing of autonomy development, vary by culture (Nucci, 1996; Smetana, 2006). Latino adolescents' cultural expectations as well as their sex appear to impact autonomy over dating and romantic relationships (Collins, Welsh, & Furman, 2009). Latina (including Puerto Rican, Mexican, and Chilean) girls report more parental control over their activities with opposite-sex partners and believe that this parental control is more legitimate than do Latino boys (Darling et al., 2008; Villarruel, 1998). In addition, Latina (female) adolescents report that they begin to date later than Latinos (male) and that they kept their boyfriends a secret from their families because they feared being forced

to end the relationship (O'Sullivan & Meyer-Bahlburg, 2003; Raffaelli, 2005). Research has not yet examined whether autonomy over friendships varies by ethnicity or sex.

Several developmentalists have stressed that to truly understand minority youth development, cultural aspects, and their impact on children's development must be directly assessed (McLoyd, 2006). Research has identified *familism* and *respeto* as cultural beliefs highly endorsed among diverse Latino adolescents. Developmental science research with Latinos has primarily focused on *familism*, which is defined as the valuing of family ties and relationships (Marín & VanOss Marín, 1991). Three distinct *familism* dimensions have been identified: family obligations (perceived obligation to provide material and emotional support to extended family members), support from family (family members as reliable providers of help), and family as referents (relatives as behavioral and attitudinal referents; Marín, 1993; Rodríguez & Kosloski, 1998; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, & Marín, 1987). In the present study, we focus on family obligations, which have been more frequently examined than the other dimensions of *familism* in adolescent development research. *Respeto*, the other important cultural belief, refers to the need for individuals in lower power social positions to show deference and obedience to authority (including children's unquestioning deference, as well as obeying and listening to parents; Marín & VanOss Marín, 1991).

Extensive studies using various methods and operationalizations show that Latino youth and parents highly endorse family obligations and *respeto* (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Villalobos & Smetana, 2012; Villanueva Dixon, Graber, & Brooks-Gunn, 2008). In fact, studies suggest that Latino adolescents express greater duty to their families than to their peers, especially as compared to their European American counterparts (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999). Furthermore, adolescents endorse *familism* more strongly than *respeto* (García Coll & Magnuson, 1999; Vázquez García, García Coll, Erkut, Alarcón, & Tropp, 2000; Villalobos & Smetana, 2012). However, it is unclear whether Latino adolescents' endorsement of these values changes with age. Although some studies suggest that endorsement decreases from middle to late adolescence (Phinney, Kim-Jo, Osorio, & Vilhjalmsdottir, 2005), others do not (Fuligni et al., 1999). We also do not know how Latino adolescents reason about family obligations and *respeto*, and whether these are considered personal, moral, or conventional issues.

Latinos in the United States are a diverse group. Puerto Ricans are the second largest Latino group in the United States after Mexican Americans, but they have been studied less than Latinos of other nationalities. There are more Puerto Ricans living in the mainland United States than in Puerto Rico, and the rates of migration from Puerto Rico to the mainland United States have skyrocketed in the last 5 years (Pew Hispanic Center, 2014). Therefore, more attention to the healthy psychosocial development of this group is warranted. Puerto Ricans are American citizens by birth, and therefore, no laws obstruct their entry to the country. Puerto Ricans in the United States tend to have somewhat higher levels of education and income than the Latino population overall, although the percentage who live in poverty is similar to the rest of the Latino population (24% and 23%, respectively; Pew Hispanic Center, 2013). In addition, Puerto Ricans in the United States are less likely to be married and have higher rates of unwed motherhood than other Latino groups (Pew Hispanic Center, 2013), perhaps because of a history of consensual marriage among this group (Pérez y González, 2000). Although Latinos are a heterogeneous ethnic group, they share certain common and distinct cultural values, including endorsement of family obligation and respect. In fact, previous qualitative analyses show that Mexican American and Puerto Rican parents share a common understanding of respect and closeness to family (Arcia, Reyes-Blanes, & Vazquez-Montilla, 2000). Finally, research shows the same dimensions of *familism* (family obligations, family as referents, and support from family) among Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans (Rodríguez & Kosloski, 1998).

#### *Intersection of Latino Values and Autonomy*

The studies discussed previously suggest that Latino adolescents simultaneously desire greater autonomy and feel an obligation to help their families and respect their parents, but how they prioritize and balance these interests remains unknown. Although autonomy desires and Latino values may coexist peacefully (Fuligni et al., 1999), Latino values may sometimes be in conflict with adolescents' increased desires for more personal freedom and choice. For instance, fulfilling family obligations (like helping taking care of siblings) may preclude teens from engaging in other autonomy-related activities (like hanging out with peers) when adolescents desire to do both. Qualitative and ethnographic studies have shown that adolescents' cultural values sometimes conflict with their desires

for autonomy. For example, Latina adolescents sometimes use partial disclosure and lying to carve out some autonomy while trying not to explicitly violate their parents' cultural expectations (Gallegos-Castillo, 2006). Moreover, in focus groups, Latino (Mexican American) parents have indicated that Latino cultural norms make it difficult for them to negotiate autonomy granting (Bean & Roller, 2005). Little research has examined how adolescents handle internal conflicts between their cultural values and autonomy desires, but such studies could provide a more detailed picture of the complexity of adolescents' daily lives, where cultural values and autonomy-salient issues are frequently intertwined.

An fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) study (Telzer, Masten, Berkman, Lieberman, & Fuligni, 2010) examined Latino and White adolescents' neural reward activity while making decisions to earn money for themselves or their families (but with a cost to themselves). All adolescents, even Latino youth and those who reported higher family obligations, contributed more to themselves than to their families. However, Latino adolescents experienced more reward activity after helping their family than when they contributed to themselves, whereas the opposite was found for White adolescents. Thus, this study suggests that among Latinos, highly endorsing family obligations affects the emotions associated with decisions to help the family over pursuing individual interests. However, these results do not necessarily translate into decisions to actually prioritize the family. Furthermore, this study shows that White and Latino adolescents experience conflicts between family and personal interests in distinct ways. Given the dearth of research on Latino youth, a culturally sensitive examination of Latino adolescents' experience with such conflicts is needed.

#### *The Present Study*

Social domain theory (Turiel, 2006) provides a useful theoretical and methodological approach to studying how autonomy and cultural values coexist (McLoyd, 2004). It proposes that different types of reasoning or considerations coexist in social interactions and that individuals' decisions about which concerns take priority depend on their salience. Thus, using methods from previous research (e.g., Wainryb, 1995), the present study examined Puerto Rican 13- to 18-year-olds (an understudied but sizable and growing population of Latinos in the United States) and how they reason about hypothetical

situations, including a conflict between their own autonomy and cultural desires. More specifically, we examined Puerto Rican adolescents' thinking about cultural values (family obligations and respeto) and their desires for autonomy regarding personal, friendship, and romantic relationship issues. We compared adolescents' prescriptive judgments (what individuals believe they *should* do) with their expected behaviors (what individuals expect *would* actually happen), as these often differ due to fear of the consequences, like social ridicule (Tisak & Turiel, 1988) or punishment for engaging in prescribed actions (Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). Using a within-person design, we also examined differences in the desirability of each choice and the difficulty of making decisions as a function of type of autonomy desire (personal, friendship, or dating activity) or cultural value (family obligations and respeto) included in the hypothetical situations. Sex and age differences in these variables were also tested. Finally, we looked at differences in type of justifications adolescents used and in feelings associated with choices to prioritize culture versus autonomy desires.

Past findings (e.g., Fuligni, 1998) led us to hypothesize that adolescents would more often prioritize Latino cultural values over desires to engage in friendship and dating activities than when cultural values were pitted against personal issues. In addition, participants were expected to rate decisions to engage in autonomous activities as more desirable when they involved personal rather than friendship or dating issues. Based on studies showing that adolescents endorse family obligations more highly than respeto (García Coll & Magnuson, 1999; Vázquez García et al., 2000), it was hypothesized that cultural values would be prioritized over autonomy desires more for family obligations than for respeto. In addition, ratings of the desirability of pursuing the culturally appropriate behavior were expected to be higher for family obligations than for respeto. Previous research (Smetana, Tasopoulos-Chan, et al., 2009) led us to expect that adolescents who prioritized autonomy desires would use personal justifications, including the harmlessness of the act, benefits to the actor, and privacy, whereas adolescents who prioritized Latino values would refer to conventional justifications such as role responsibilities.

We hypothesized that adolescents would rate actors as feeling more guilt and happiness when prioritizing autonomy over cultural activities (Smetana, Tasopoulos-Chan, et al., 2009), whereas we expected that they would report stronger feelings of

pride for decisions to engage in cultural activities than autonomous activities. It was expected that older adolescents would prioritize autonomy desires over cultural values more and use appeals to personal choice more to justify their choices than would their younger counterparts (Darling et al., 2008; Wainryb, 1995). Sex effects were examined, but given the inconsistent findings of sex effects on adolescents' autonomy and cultural values (Fuligni, 1998; Smetana, Tasopoulos-Chan, et al., 2009; Wainryb, 1995), these analyses were considered exploratory.

## Method

### Sample

Participants in the present study were 105 self-identified Puerto Rican adolescents living in the United States. Participants ranged from 13 to 18 years of age ( $M = 15.97$  years,  $SD = 1.40$ , 48% boys). For analysis purposes, the sample was divided into two age groups: 13- to 15-year-olds ( $n = 38$ ;  $M_{\text{age}} = 14.40$ ,  $SD = 0.73$ ; 50% girls) and 16- to 18-year-olds ( $n = 67$ ;  $M_{\text{age}} = 16.86$  years,  $SD = 0.75$ ; 46% girls). These groups correspond to middle and late adolescence and were chosen based on research showing that Latinos have slightly later autonomy expectations than European American teens (Fuligni, 1998).

Adolescents were recruited between 2012 and 2013 from school and after-school youth programs targeting urban adolescents living in a midsized city in upstate New York, where Puerto Ricans make up 13% of the population. Participants were of lower socioeconomic status, with combined parent education averaging a little less than high school; 33% of mothers and 50% of fathers had not completed high school, 31% of mothers and 21% of fathers graduated high school, 20% of mothers and 7% of fathers had some college education, and 14% of mothers and 4% of fathers completed their bachelor's degree or graduate education. Data on parents' educational attainment were missing for 2% of mothers and 19% of fathers. On average, participants lived with two siblings ( $M = 2.03$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ). Seventy-one (68%) participants completed the measures in English, and 34 (32%) completed them in Spanish.

Most adolescents were first (52%) or second (36%) generation, the rest (12%) were third generation; the two age groups did not differ by sex or generation. Reflecting differences in generational status,  $\chi^2(2, N = 105) = 26.43$ ,  $p < .001$ , participants who



completed the interviews in Spanish were more likely to be first and second generation than were participants choosing to be interviewed in English.

### *Procedures*

Researchers visited the program sites to provide information, recruit students, and obtain parental permission (in English and Spanish). A snowball technique also resulted in the recruitment of 12 participants. Students were scheduled for an interview and completed a questionnaire at a convenient time and location once permissions were returned. Participants were given \$15 as a thank you.

### *Measures*

#### *Demographics*

Participants indicated in a questionnaire if they identified as Hispanic or Latino, and if so, whether they were Puerto Rican, Mexican, Dominican, or other. Teens who were not Puerto Rican ( $n = 12$ ) were not included in the present study. Participants were also asked where they, their parents, and their grandparents were born to establish generational status.

#### *Semistructured Interviews*

Adolescents were individually administered a 30-min semistructured interview, which was audio-recorded. The interview included six short vignettes describing situations where an adolescent faces a conflict between an autonomy desire (regarding either a personal, friendship, or dating activity) and a Latino value (either family obligations or respect); the stories are presented in the Appendix). Type of autonomy desire and Latino value were fully crossed to yield six types of hypothetical conflict situations. The vignettes were pilot tested with eight Puerto Rican adolescents and young adults to ensure that they were relevant, everyday situations for Puerto Rican teens. In each story, the age and sex of the teen protagonist were matched to the participant, and the stories were presented in counterbalanced order. Puerto Rican names were used for all story protagonists. The first author, who is bilingual and extensively trained in semistructured interview methods, interviewed the participants.

After hearing each story, participants were presented with two behavioral alternatives, with the concern that would be fulfilled and the one that would be violated both explicitly stated. For example, in the conflict between a personal desire and a

family obligation, participants were asked whether José (a) should use his free time to listen to music and relax like he wanted, even though he would not help his family by cleaning the living room, or (b) whether José should help his family by cleaning the living room, even though he would not be able to relax and listen to music like he wanted. The order of the autonomy and Latino value options presented in the stories and questions were counterbalanced. Responses to the prescriptive judgment question were coded as 0 (*should fulfill the cultural value*) or 1 (*should fulfill the autonomy desire*).

Next, participants provided justifications for their decisions ("Why should X do [chosen behavioral alternative]?" and then rated the desirability ["How good or bad would it be to . . ."] of each behavioral alternative on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*extremely good*) to 7 (*extremely bad*), which was illustrated visually. Then, adolescents were asked what they believed the protagonist *would* actually do ("In real life, what do you think X would actually do?"), coded as 0 (*should fulfill the cultural value*) or 1 (*should fulfill the autonomy desire*) and justified the expected decisions ("Why?"). These were coded using the same coding system as for prescriptive choices, described below. Participants also rated the degree to which the protagonists would feel happy, guilty, proud, and conflicted after deciding to engage in the expected activity on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Finally, participants rated the decision difficulty ("How difficult would it be for X to choose what to do?") on a scale from 1 (*easy*) to 7 (*very difficult*). Ratings were recorded on a checklist.

#### *Justification Coding*

Audiotaped and transcribed justifications were coded in categories based on past research (Phinney et al., 2005; Smetana, Tasopoulos-Chan, et al., 2009; Wainryb & Turiel, 1994; see Table 1). To obtain interrater reliability, two coders were trained on the coding system using a small set (10%) of responses (equally balanced by adolescents' sex, age, and language of the interview). These responses were also used to refine the definition and clarity of the categories. Up to three justifications per response were coded. Given that the number of coded justifications varied by participant, scores were calculated as proportions of total responses. For analysis purposes, responses were collapsed into broader categories: conventional, family system perspective, concern for others, psychological, personal, prudential, moral, and pragmatic or alternative

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Table 1  
Coding Categories

Categories	Description	Examples
Conventional Authority	Obedying parental authority.	"You're supposed to do what your parents tell you."
Respect	The need to be respectful or polite.	"Because kids should have respect for their parents."
Hierarchy/role responsibility	Assertion of the person's position in the hierarchy. Concern with the roles and obligations stemming from relationships or the need for the actor to function responsibly within the family or society.	"Because it's your responsibility. You live under the house."
Role-related competence	References to a special competence, expertise, or know how associated with a specific role in the hierarchy.	"Because parents do know best."
Social (non)conformity	References to the personal-social consequences of acting contrary to group norms or the need to maintain conformity to group norms.	"So that they don't talk bad about him and criticize him."
Punishment avoidance	The actor should follow parental rules or expectations to avoid punishment. References to force, actual or implied, by parents, to obtain compliance; to avoid parental anger or punishment.	"Because he doesn't want to be punished."
Family systems		
Family system perspective	Importance of and commitment to the family. Reference to meeting the needs of the family or the need to consider family obligations or duties.	"Family always comes first." "Cause usually they're (family) the ones who are always there for you."
Familial reciprocity	References to the need to help the family because they have done a lot for you and cared for you.	"Cause they did so many things for you . . . so least you can do is like clean the living room."
Concern for others	Reference to caring for others (including the family) and meeting other's needs, or fostering other's achievements or accomplishments. Appeals to the interests of others. Also includes the importance of not harming others, or being selfless.	"It will make her improve in homework and make her get better grades." "He should help her because she needs help."
Psychological		
Interpersonal/relationship maintenance	Appeals to friendship, affective bonds, the effects of acts on interpersonal relationships, or the need to have strong and healthy relationships.	"If she doesn't do what her parents say she could lose their trust."
Psychological	Appeals to the effects of actions on individuals' psychological characteristics, development, or emotional maturity.	"The mom wants to mold her into the proper woman."
Personal/decision inconsequential	Act is a matter of personal choice or privacy. Statements about an individual's priorities or desires. The decision (or the consequences) is unimportant or will not really affect others.	"Because that is her passion." "It probably doesn't really matter what I do."
Prudential/benefits to actor	References to the nonsocial negative consequences to the self, such as harm to the self, safety, comfort, health. Importance of meeting the actor's needs or concerns for the wellness of the actor.	"Because something may happen to her when she's outside." "Take care of themselves first, then take care of other people."
Fairness	References to the fairness or unfairness of the act or request. Includes references to the need for fair distribution of work.	"He has probably helped a lot already; others in the home should help out."
Instrumental reciprocity	Engaging in the act will result in rewards or benefits in the future.	"So next time she asks for permission her parents will say yes."
Pragmatic/alternative inconsequential	References to practical needs or consequences. The alternative decision (or its consequences) is unimportant or will not really affect others.	"If she doesn't clean, then she won't be able to sit down later on." "It is not really a big deal, she could always postpone."

inconsequential. Interrater reliability was obtained for the interviews conducted in English by an English speaker and by a bilingual native Spanish speaker, and the latter coded the Spanish interviews. Interrater reliability, calculated as kappa, was obtained by having two coders code 20% of responses for all six stories. When both coders agreed that statements included codable justifications, kappa was .89. When also including instances in which only one coder applied a justification category, kappa was .72.

**Results**

*Preliminary Analyses*

Means and standard deviations for adolescents' prescriptive and expected judgments, ratings of choice desirability and decision difficulty, and justifications for engaging in the autonomy and culturally appropriate activities are presented in Tables 2 and 3. Preliminary analyses examining order effects for stories and choices within stories yielded very few significant effects (9 of the 132 effects examined) and therefore were not considered further.

*Variations in Judgments, Choice Desirability, and Decision Difficulty*

*Prescriptive Versus Expected Judgments*

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) has been found to be robust with dichotomous data (Wainryb, Shaw, Laupa, & Smith, 2001). Therefore, a 3 (autonomy desire: personal, friendship, dating) × 2 (Latino value: family obligations, respeto) × 2 (sex) × 2

(age: 13- to 15-year-olds, 16- to 18-year-olds) × 2 (type of judgment) ANOVAs with type of judgment, autonomy desire, and cultural value as repeated measures were performed on adolescents' prescriptive versus expected judgments. Analyses revealed an Autonomy Desire × Latino Value × Type of Judgment interaction,  $F(2, 202) = 6.64, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .06$ . Post hoc ANOVAs showed that adolescents were significantly more likely to judge that protagonists *should* than *would* engage in the cultural activity rather than the autonomy activity for all stories, except for when personal interests were pitted against respeto, which was only marginal ( $p = .06$ ).

In order to further explore the Autonomy Desire × Latino Value × Type of Judgment interaction and to more comprehensively examine effects, below we describe the results of 3 (autonomy desire) × 2 (Latino value) × 2 (sex) × 2 (age) ANOVAs on adolescents' judgments, choice desirability, and decision difficulty, separately for prescriptive and expected judgments. We also conducted analyses to determine whether generational status significantly influenced results. These analyses revealed that only one of 14 higher order effects became nonsignificant when generational status was included as a covariate in ANOVA, and two effects became marginal. Due to sample size considerations and the limited effects, generational status was not included in subsequent analyses, although we note below where results differed as a function of controlling for generational status.

*Prescriptive Judgments ("Should Do")*

Consistent with hypotheses, main effects of autonomy activity for adolescents' prescriptive

Table 2  
Means (SDs) of Judgments, Desirability of Each Alternative, and Choice Difficulty

	Personal versus family obligations <i>M (SD)</i>	Personal versus respeto <i>M (SD)</i>	Friendship versus family obligations <i>M (SD)</i>	Friendship versus respeto <i>M (SD)</i>	Dating versus family obligations <i>M (SD)</i>	Dating versus respeto <i>M (SD)</i>	Overall <i>M (SD)</i>
<b>Judgments</b>							
Prescriptive judgments	0.20 (0.40)	0.65 (0.48)	0.10 (0.31)	0.19 (0.40)	0.24 (0.43)	0.08 (0.27)	0.24 (0.19)
Expected judgments	0.59 (0.49)	0.75 (0.43)	0.52 (0.50)	0.58 (0.50)	0.70 (0.46)	0.60 (0.49)	0.62 (0.30)
<b>Desirability</b>							
Cultural choice	2.49 (1.32)	3.19 (1.85)	2.06 (1.24)	2.17 (1.27)	2.60 (1.44)	1.93 (1.12)	2.41 (.85)
Autonomy choice	4.72 (1.33)	3.92 (1.73)	5.05 (1.25)	5.44 (1.32)	4.90 (1.41)	5.39 (1.28)	4.90 (.78)
Decision difficulty	3.90 (1.74)	4.40 (1.74)	3.90 (1.60)	4.66 (1.60)	4.69 (1.68)	4.74 (1.72)	4.38 (1.02)

Note. Prescriptive and expected judgments are coded with 0 = cultural choice, 1 = autonomy choice.

Table 3  
Means (SDs) of Justifications

	Prescriptive		Expected	
	Justifications cultural activity (N = 105) M (SD)	Justifications autonomous activity (N = 83) M (SD)	Justifications cultural activity (N = 82) M (SD)	Justifications autonomous activity (N = 97) M (SD)
Conventional	.22 (.16)	.01 (.04)	.20 (.23)	.02 (.05)
Punishment avoidance	.08 (.14)	.01 (.11)	.12 (.22)	.01 (.02)
Family system perspective	.19 (.16)	.00 (.00)	.17 (.27)	.01 (.02)
Concern for others	.17 (.14)	.01 (.11)	.21 (.27)	.01 (.02)
Psychological	.05 (.08)	.11 (.21)	.05 (.12)	.16 (.16)
Personal	.01 (.04)	.59 (.31)	.02 (.11)	.59 (.23)
Prudential	.02 (.06)	.09 (.18)	.03 (.12)	.08 (.10)
Fairness	.01 (.03)	.01 (.06)	.03 (.16)	.01 (.02)
Instrumental reciprocity	.09 (.16)	.00 (.00)	.07 (.17)	.00 (.00)
Pragmatic/alternative inconsequential	.19 (.16)	.00 (.00)	.17 (.27)	.01 (.02)

judgments,  $F(2, 202) = 34.95$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .26$ , showed that, as expected, adolescents were more likely to endorse Latino values when they were pitted against desires to engage in friendship,  $t(104) = 7.45$ ,  $p < .001$ , and dating activities,  $t(104) = 6.75$ ,  $p < .001$ , than when they were depicted as in conflict with personal issues. Also consistent with hypotheses, there was a significant effect of type of Latino value; teens were more likely to prioritize family obligations than respeto over the autonomy desire.

However, these main effects were moderated by an Autonomy Desire  $\times$  Latino Value  $\times$  Age interaction,  $F(2, 202) = 3.01$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .03$ . Post hoc paired sample  $t$  tests showed that older adolescents were more likely to prioritize family obligations over desires to engage in friendship activities than over dating, but effects were not significant for younger adolescents.

#### Expected Judgments ("Would Do")

Judgments about what protagonists *would do* also varied by the type of autonomy desire,  $F(2, 202) = 3.86$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .04$ . Paired sample  $t$  tests showed that, as hypothesized, adolescents were more likely to expect that protagonists *would* engage in the culturally appropriate activity when it was pitted against a friendship rather than a personal activity. Unexpectedly, adolescents predicted that the protagonists would prioritize the cultural activity more when it conflicted with a friendship than a dating desire. However, the autonomy desire main effect was moderated by a significant Latino

Value  $\times$  Autonomy Desire interaction,  $F(2, 202) = 3.98$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .04$ . Post hoc analyses showed that the hypothesized effect of type of Latino value was significant only for stories in which Latino values conflicted with a personal desire. Adolescents were more likely to expect the protagonist to choose the personal desire when it was pitted against respeto than family obligations. In addition, there was a significant Latino Value  $\times$  Age effect,  $F(1, 101) = 7.43$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .07$ . Older adolescents prioritized the culturally appropriate behavior over the autonomy desire more often when the cultural behavior involved family obligations, rather than respeto, but younger adolescents did not differ.

#### Desirability of the Cultural Options

As hypothesized, analyses revealed that adolescents rated the cultural option as less desirable when it was pitted against personal issues rather than friendship,  $t(104) = 6.11$ ,  $p < .00$ , and dating desires,  $t(104) = 4.20$ ,  $p < .00$ . However, this main effect was moderated by a significant Autonomy Desire  $\times$  Latino Value  $\times$  Age interaction,  $F(2, 202) = 4.34$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .04$ . Post hoc tests revealed that significant effects were found only for older adolescents. As hypothesized, when the cultural option was pitted against personal desires, older adolescents rated family obligations as more desirable than respeto. However, contrary to hypotheses, when culturally sanctioned activities were contrasted with dating, the respeto activity was seen as more desirable than the family obligations activity,  $F(1, 65) = 29.91$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .32$ .



In addition, a significant Autonomy Desire  $\times$  Sex  $\times$  Age effect,  $F(1, 101) = 3.26, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , revealed that hypothesized effects were found only among older girls, who rated the cultural option as less desirable when it was pitted against the personal choice than dating or friendship activities. Among older boys, the hypothesis was only partially confirmed. Older boys rated the cultural option as less desirable when it was pitted against personal than friendship desires, but unexpectedly, they did not differ in their ratings of the desirability of prioritizing the Latino value for the personal and dating stories. Moreover, older boys also believed that prioritizing cultural values over dating was less desirable than choosing culture over going out with friends. (Additional analyses showed that this three-way interaction became marginal when generational status was included in the ANOVA as a covariate.) There was also a significant Latino Value  $\times$  Sex  $\times$  Age interaction,  $F(1, 101) = 4.71, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .05$ , but post hoc analyses did not reveal a clear pattern explaining this interaction.

#### *Desirability of the Autonomy Options*

Analyses revealed that adolescents rated the autonomy option as more desirable when it involved personal rather than friendship and dating desires,  $t_s(104) = 7.03, 5.93, p_s < .001$ . However, this effect was moderated by a significant Autonomy Desire  $\times$  Latino Value  $\times$  Age interaction,  $F(2, 202) = 3.65, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , showing that older adolescents rated engagement in personal and dating activities as more desirable when they were pitted against respeto than family obligation activities. Significant effects were not obtained for younger adolescents.

#### *Decision Difficulty*

ANOVAs on adolescents' ratings of the difficulty of the choice showed a significant Autonomy Desire  $\times$  Latino Value interaction,  $F(2, 202) = 3.47, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .03$ . Ratings of decision difficulty varied by the type of Latino value described in the stories but only for the stories involving personal and friendship activities and not for the dating stories. Deciding between autonomy desires and respeto was more difficult than deciding between autonomy desires and family obligations when the autonomy desires involved personal and friendship issues. (Additional analyses showed that this Autonomy Desire  $\times$  Latino Value interaction became

nonsignificant after controlling for generational status.) There was also a significant sex main effect,  $F(1, 101) = 5.02, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .05$ ; on average, girls rated decisions as more difficult than did their male counterparts.

#### *Adolescents' Justifications*

Because participants could choose the autonomy activity for some stories and the cultural activity in others, there were an insufficient number of responses in certain cells to analyze justifications according to the full ANOVA design used in the previous analyses. Therefore, analyses were conducted with stories collapsed. Justifications were analyzed separately for judgments of whether the protagonist *should* (prescriptive judgment) or *would* (expected judgment) engage in the autonomy-related or culturally expected activity and separately for whether the adolescent decided that the protagonist should or would engage in those different activities. This yielded four sets of analyses. Separate 2 (sex)  $\times$  2 (age)  $\times$  Type of Justification ANOVAs, with type of justification as repeated measures, were conducted. To ensure adequate frequencies for analyses and based on past research (Smetana, Villalobos, Tasopoulos-Chan, Gettman, & CampioneBarr, 2009), only justifications that accounted for more than 5% of responses for each type of response were analyzed. Therefore, the number of justifications examined varied for each analysis. Fairness justifications were excluded from analyses given their infrequent use ( $> 6\%$  across conditions).

#### *Justifications for Choices to Engage in the Cultural Activity*

Adolescents used conventional, punishment avoidance, family system perspective, concern for others, instrumental reciprocity, and pragmatic or alternative inconsequential justifications (see Table 3). Therefore, 2 (sex)  $\times$  2 (age)  $\times$  6 (type of justification) ANOVAs were run on these justifications, separately for prescriptive and expected decisions. Adolescents' use of these justifications differed for their prescriptive,  $F(5, 505) = 13.38, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .12$ , as well as their expected judgments,  $F(5, 395) = 3.16, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .04$ . Post hoc paired sample *t* tests showed that to justify their decisions that adolescents *should* engage in the cultural activity, adolescents used conventional, family system perspective, concern for others, and pragmatic or alternative inconsequential justifications

more than instrumental reciprocity and punishment avoidance justifications. In thinking about whether adolescents *would* engage in the cultural activity, adolescents used conventional and concern for others justifications more than references to instrumental reciprocity. However, the type of justification effect for the expected decisions became marginal after including generational status as a covariate in the ANOVA.

#### *Justifications for Choices Prioritizing Autonomy*

Consistent with hypotheses, adolescents mostly used personal as well as prudential and psychological justifications to support their decisions that the protagonist *should* and *would* engage in the autonomous activity (see Table 3). Separate (sex)  $\times$  2 (age)  $\times$  3 (type of justification) ANOVAs showed that teens' use of these justifications differed significantly both for their prescriptive,  $F(2, 156) = 77.68$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .50$ , and expected judgments,  $F(2, 186) = 163.48$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .64$ . Adolescents more frequently used personal than psychological or prudential justifications to justify why protagonists *should* and *would* engage in the autonomous activity. They also used psychological more than prudential reasons to justify why protagonists *would* (but not *should*) engage in the autonomous activity.

#### *Feelings*

Analyses of feelings were performed with all stories combined because, as for justifications, their different judgments (engage in the autonomy activity for some stories and in the cultural activity in others) for different stories led to an insufficient number of responses in certain cells. Separate 2 (sex)  $\times$  2 (age)  $\times$  4 (feeling type: happiness, guilt, pride, conflicted) mixed method ANOVAs with feeling type as a repeated measure were conducted on adolescents' feelings separately for decisions to engage in cultural and autonomy activities.

#### *Feelings for Choices Prioritizing Culture*

Adolescents' ratings differed by the type of feeling associated with the decision to prioritize culture over autonomy,  $F(3, 237) = 53.32$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .40$ . Post hoc paired sample  $t$  tests revealed that when adolescents expected protagonists to engage in the culturally appropriate behavior, they rated that protagonists would feel more proud ( $M = 5.39$ ) than any of the other feelings. In turn, adolescents believed that protagonists would feel

happier ( $M = 4.48$ ) and more conflicted ( $M = 4.10$ ) than guilty ( $M = 2.63$ ) when choosing culture over autonomy desires.

#### *Feelings for Choices Prioritizing Autonomy*

The analysis of feelings for this choice revealed a significant Sex  $\times$  Feeling Type interaction. Boys endorsed happiness ( $M = 5.30$ ) more than any other feeling ( $M$ s = 4.10, 4.38, and 4.24 for feelings of guilt, pride, and conflict, respectively), whereas girls' ratings of happiness ( $M = 4.98$ ) were stronger than their feelings of pride ( $M = 4.27$ ) when they expected protagonists to endorse the autonomy activity. However, other ratings did not differ from each other.

### **Discussion**

Studies show that ethnically diverse adolescents, including Latinos, desire and experience increases in their autonomy over personal, friendship, and dating activities (Darling et al., 2008; Fuligni, 1998). Developmental research also has found that Latino youth highly endorse Latino values, including family obligations and respeto (e.g., Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007). This study made a novel contribution to the field by examining how Puerto Rican adolescents in the United States balance desires for autonomy with adherence to Latino values in daily life situations. Using the framework of social domain theory (Turiel, 2006), we examined Puerto Rican adolescents' reasoning about hypothetical everyday situations in which desires for autonomy (about personal, friendship, or dating activities) and Latino cultural values (family obligations or respeto) conflict. A novel contribution of this study is the comparison of adolescents' prescriptive (*should*) and expected (*would*) judgments about these situations. As discussed in more detail below, adolescents more often thought that adolescents *should* prioritize Latino values but *would* engage in the autonomous activity. In addition, adolescents' decisions and reasoning depended on the type of autonomy and cultural issue included in the story, and in turn these differences sometimes varied by participants' age and sex.

#### *Adolescents' Prescriptive Versus Expected Judgments*

In the present study, Puerto Rican adolescents frequently (76% of the time) judged that hypothetical adolescents *should* prioritize Latino values over

autonomy desires. These prescriptive judgments are consistent with findings from previous research (e.g., Villalobos & Smetana, 2012) and show that Latino (and specifically Puerto Rican) adolescents highly endorse family obligations and respeto. The present study extends past research by revealing that Puerto Rican adolescents believe that Latino cultural values are salient, not only in the abstract but also in contextualized situations where they are pitted against competing autonomy demands. However, adolescents' views about what peers *would* do and their reasoning about the hypothetical stories paint a much more complex picture than previous studies portray.

Analyses showed that adolescents in our study were significantly less likely to say that peers *would* than *should* prioritize the Latino value over the autonomy desire. Therefore, one of the novel findings of the present study is that Puerto Rican adolescents often expected peers to act in a manner that is inconsistent with their prescriptive judgments. This difference between adolescents' prescriptive and expected judgments can be understood as reflecting "flexibilities of mind" (Turiel & Perkins, 2004), which involves individuals' active construction of their values and views of the world. Therefore, individuals sometimes outright reject cultural practices and beliefs, or they act in concordance with cultural values even though they do not endorse them. This study further reveals that at times adolescents endorse these values, but do not believe they will act in accordance with them.

Although adolescents overwhelmingly prioritized Latino values in deciding what they should do, adolescents' ratings of the desirability of the choices showed much more nuanced thinking. Adolescents rated Latino values preferable to engaging in the autonomy activity, which is consistent with adolescents' prescriptive judgments to prioritize Latino values. However, desirability ratings also showed subtlety in their evaluations of their behavioral choices. On average, participants rated choosing the Latino value over the autonomy desire as between "a little" and "somewhat" good, whereas satisfying the autonomy desire over the Latino value was, on average, considered "a little bad." Therefore, family obligations and respeto seem to be viewed as more prescriptive or recommended than satisfying personal desires but not necessarily mandatory given that cultural transgressions are not considered a serious offense. In their decisions about what hypothetical peers *would* actually do, adolescents may take into account these nuanced evaluations and

not just which choice they rated as more desirable. Given that transgressing Latino values is not seen as a serious offense, in real life, Puerto Rican adolescents may tolerate neglecting these values to satisfy their autonomy desires.

From a social domain theory perspective (Turiel, 2006), adolescents' views of Latino values are consistent with social conventions (consensually agreed on, arbitrary norms that serve to facilitate social interactions), given that, like violations of conventions, transgressing Latino values is deemed as wrong but not as serious offenses like moral transgressions (e.g., Nucci, 1981). Additionally, Puerto Rican adolescents in this study reasoned about Latino values mostly as issues of convention or as relating to the importance of the family system, which are consistent with the conventional domain. For example, when asked why she believed the protagonist in the story should respect her parents, a participant stated, "Because they're your parents; you got to respect them. You got to do what they say." Adolescents also justified engaging in the culturally appropriate activity with concern for others, for example, "Because she's helping her family . . . showing how much she cares about her family." Other adolescents focused on the pragmatic benefits of engaging in the cultural activity, "Well a [musical] instrument could come in handy." Therefore, the justifications suggest that Puerto Rican adolescents' reasoning about Latino values was multifaceted; they mostly viewed Latino values as social conventional but also as pragmatic matters or as issues of moral concern for others.

Concerns with conventions and the welfare of others were less prominent in adolescents' thinking about what they *would* actually do, which were dominated by concerns with personal choice. The present study suggests the importance of individuals' priorities, desires, and enjoyment in Puerto Rican adolescents' decisions of what they *would* actually do. As one adolescent stated, "Cause sometimes what you *have* to do is not what you *want* to do. Most people just do what they want to do . . . . Because what they want to do is funner [sic]. It's for them." Thus, although adolescents believed that they should prioritize issues of conventions and concerns for others, concerns with the self often seemed to take greater importance in their decisions of how peers would actually behave.

Another novel feature of the present study is that we assessed how happy, guilty, proud, and conflicted adolescents believed the protagonist would feel after choosing between the cultural activity and the autonomy desire. These emotions may explain

the discrepancy between adolescents' beliefs and expected behaviors. Puerto Rican adolescents in this study believed protagonists would experience strong feelings of happiness when they engaged in the autonomy activity instead of the cultural activity. On the other hand, adolescents believed protagonists would feel more proud than happy (or conflicted or guilty) when they prioritized the cultural over the autonomy activity in their choices. Consistent with research showing that adolescents are highly inclined to seek rewards while their self-control capacities are still maturing (Steinberg, 2010), the present study suggests that the happiness expected for engaging in the autonomy activity may be salient enough to sway adolescents from their prescribed actions. This finding appears inconsistent with previous fMRI research by Telzer et al. (2010), where Latino adolescents' reward system was more active when they chose to earn money for their family (with a cost to their own endowment) than when they decided to earn money for themselves. It may be that Telzer et al.'s (2010) fMRI assessments measured adolescents' pride and satisfaction instead of their happiness. Our research raises interesting questions about associations between feelings and adolescents' behaviors that should be examined in future research. For decades, research on ethnic identity has pointed to the importance of taking into account the affective dimension of ethnicity. Studies show that positive ethnic affect (feeling good, happy, and proud about your ethnicity) is associated with healthier youth adjustment (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014). The present study further demonstrates the importance of distinguishing between the types of positive affect (i.e., happiness vs. pride) regarding one's ethnicity and their associations with youth behaviors.

#### *Differences by Type of Latino Value and Autonomy Desire*

Adolescents view personal issues as more acceptable than engaging in friendship and dating activities (e.g., Fuligni, 1998). Consistent with previous studies and hypotheses, adolescents said that for the most part, protagonists should and would prioritize personal issues more than friendship and dating activities. Moreover, adolescents prioritized personal desires more when they were pitted against respeto rather than family obligation. This is consistent with previous studies showing that Puerto Rican adolescents believe that family obligations are more important than respeto (García Coll & Magnuson, 1999; Vázquez García et al., 2000).

This may be because youth may perceive respeto as an unfair authoritarian regulation of their personal domain, whereas family obligations may be considered more of a choice and less of a restriction of their area of personal jurisdiction. In fact, supporting theory and research (Nucci, 2001), Puerto Rican adolescents in our study considered personal activities as individual prerogatives and regulation of the personal domain by parents as wrong and unfair. For example, several adolescents expressed that it would be wrong for parents to prevent teens from satisfying their desires: "I feel like parents shouldn't stop her from something she would like."

On average, participants rated that making a decision about the hypothetical stories was moderately difficult, showing that the dilemmas entailed true conflicts for participants. Furthermore, Puerto Rican adolescents in our study believed it was more difficult to make a decision in the respeto than in the family obligations stories (although no such difference was found in the dating stories). Taken together, the findings revealed that adolescents had more difficulty making a decision in situations involving respeto, which they prioritize less and consider less important, than in situations involving family obligations, which they endorse more highly. Even though adolescents do not endorse respeto as highly as family obligations, youth may have reported decisions involving respeto as more difficult because they take into account parents' endorsement of respeto, which adolescents believe is higher than their own (Villalobos & Smetana, 2012). Furthermore, adolescents may view restrictions to their autonomy in the respeto stories as more challenging because, even though adolescents may want to engage in the autonomy activity and believe that respeto involves an unfair regulation of their personal domain, transgressing respeto and disobeying parents may have more negative consequences (e.g., punishment) than not engaging in family obligations.

#### *Age and Sex Differences*

Findings revealed several important differences between younger and older adolescents. First, older but not younger adolescents demonstrated their preferences for family obligations over respeto in their judgments of what protagonists *would* do as well as in their beliefs about the desirability of prioritizing cultural values over personal desire. Mirroring these results, older (but not younger) adolescents also believed it was more desirable to disrespect parents than avoid family obligations to



engage in the personal activity. Younger adolescents may not distinguish respeto and family obligations in their judgments and desirability ratings because they may not be allowed or feel justified to disrespect and disobey parents, whereas older adolescents may believe it is permissible to do so given their increased autonomy (Fuligni, 1998). Favoring the personal issue over friendship and dating activities was also reflected in older but not younger adolescents' ratings of desirability. Older adolescents rated prioritizing the Latino value as less desirable when it was pitted against a personal than a dating or friendship activity (although older boys did not distinguish between personal and dating activities). Also, because of increases in autonomy during adolescence, older (but not younger) adolescents' desirability ratings thus may reflect their view that adolescents have more of a right to engage in personal activities.

Findings also suggest that dating is a particularly salient issue for older Puerto Rican adolescents. They were more likely to judge that protagonists *should* prioritize dating than friendship when these issues were pitted against family obligations. Late adolescents spend more time with their boyfriends or girlfriends than with friends (Laursen & Williams, 1997). Therefore, dating may be seen as more salient than going out with friends. In addition, older boys (but not girls) also reflected this preference for dating over friendships in their desirability ratings and rated engaging in culturally sanctioned activity as less desirable than satisfying autonomy desires when the latter involved dating rather than friendship activities. Because Latina adolescents' dating activities are greatly restricted (Villarruel, 1998), they may not have sufficient dating experience to distinguish it from their activities with friends. In contrast, Latino boys have significantly more autonomy over dating than do girls (Raffaelli, 2005). Based on their experiences and as reflected in their desirability ratings, boys may view dating as more salient than going out with friends.

Older adolescents rated decisions (either to prioritize dating or the Latino value) as less desirable when dating was pitted against family obligations than when it was pitted against respeto. Older adolescents may believe it is less acceptable to neglect their romantic relationships to nurture their relationships with the family. Adolescents may find it more desirable to downplay their romantic relationships because of an external influence (e.g., being forced to do so by parents) than to willingly prioritize family over their boyfriend or girlfriend. Further research on the meaning of dating for Puerto

Rican youth during middle versus late adolescence is needed to better understand these findings.

The hypothesis that older adolescents would use more personal justifications than their younger counterparts was not confirmed. Surprisingly, the only age difference we found in justifications for autonomy was that younger adolescents were more likely than older adolescents to reason about the protagonists' well-being (i.e., the prudential aspects of the issues). These findings do not necessarily show that adolescents' interest in autonomy declines with age; it may reflect a developmental increase in the internalization of Latino values (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). Also unexpected was the finding that older adolescents referenced punishment avoidance more to justify prescriptive judgments to engage in the cultural activity than did younger teens. This may be a result of older adolescents' greater experience with the negative consequences of violating Latino values. More research is needed to understand these age differences.

Women are considered the carriers of culture and are expected to pass on cultural traditions to future generations (Phinney, 1990). Consistent with this notion, older Puerto Rican girls in the present study used fewer self-interested (instrumental reciprocity) reasons than did boys to justify why actors should engage in the culturally appropriate activity. In addition, other research has shown that Latino parents are more likely to forbid girls than boys to engage in romantic relationships and from spending time outside the home (Raffaelli, 2005). This may explain why we found that girls had a harder time making decisions in these stories and reported more guilt and conflicting feelings than did boys.

#### *Limitations and Future Directions*

Although this study made several novel contributions to the literature, it also had some limitations. First, we had more difficulty recruiting younger than older adolescents, resulting in an imbalance in the sample size of the two groups. It may have been easier for older than younger adolescents to schedule an interview, given that they have fewer parental restrictions on their time and activities. Future research should continue to study the development of adolescents' thinking about culture and autonomy conflicts across adolescence, preferably using age as a continuous measure rather than comparing age groups, as was done in the present study. Longitudinal studies following adolescents' reasoning over time also would be important in understanding age differences.

Some research suggests that generational status should be considered when examining effects of cultural values, given that acculturation increases and endorsements of Latino cultural values weaken as generational status increases (Vázquez García et al., 2000). Although additional analyses showed few significant effects of generational status in our study, our ability to fully test for these effects was limited by our sample size and our focus on within-person effects. Therefore, future research should examine the effects of generational status on adolescents' reasoning about conflicts between culture and autonomy desires, and variables that can explain this relationship, like endorsement of cultural values. Other contextual variables that may be associated with cultural attitudes like family structure and socioeconomic status (Fuligni et al., 1999) should also be examined in future research.

One of the advantages of the use of hypothetical stories was that it allowed for systematic examination of adolescents' judgments according to the type of Latino value and autonomy desire included in the stories. However, adolescents' decisions in real-life situations may differ from those assessed in hypothetical stories. For example, participants in this study were required to choose between engaging in the autonomy *or* the cultural activity, given that one of the main goals of the present study was to understand how adolescents prioritize these issues. However, in real-life, adolescents may often engage in compromise and not see these two sets of concerns as conflicting, or they may use other strategies like nondisclosure and lying to engage in activities they desire but that parents disapprove (Smetana, Villalobos, et al., 2009). Therefore, studies assessing adolescents' actual experiences with conflicts between their culture and autonomy desires are needed. Finally, conflicts between Latino cultural values and autonomy desires are also relevant to adolescents from recent Mexican migrant populations living in rural areas, although they have a very different cultural background than the Puerto Rican adolescents studied here. More generally, adolescents from other ethnic backgrounds also may experience conflicts between family obligations and autonomy (e.g., Phinney, Ong, & Madden, 2000). However, teens from other ethnic backgrounds were not examined, given that the measures used in the present study were Latino specific. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to examine whether Puerto Rican youths' reasoning about culturally appropriate issues differs from other adolescents.

Despite these limitations, the present study showed that adolescents' reasoning regarding

culture and autonomy desires not only varies according to contextual factors (the type of autonomy desire and cultural value considered) but also depends on the type of judgment made (whether adolescents were considering *should vs. would* judgments). Findings also showed that adolescents reasoned differently about Latino values and autonomy desires. Future research should further examine the processes involved in adolescents' decision making about cultural and autonomy issues and why adolescents expected peers to act inconsistently with their prescriptive judgments.

Finally, previous research has shown that intergenerational conflicts between Latino adolescents' desires for autonomy and parents' cultural values negatively influence youths' psychosocial adjustment and highlight the importance of positive parent-adolescent relationships for healthy Latino youth development (e.g., Crockett, Brown, Russell, & Shen, 2007; Updegraff et al., 2006). The present study contributes to the existing literature by demonstrating the importance of considering Latino youths' internal conflicts and balancing of their own cultural values and desires for autonomy. Future studies need to examine whether the ways in which adolescents balance these conflicting interests and how Latino adolescents reason and feel about these conflicts are associated with their psychosocial adjustment. A better understanding of these issues could have important implications for clinical practice and for interventions to promote optimal Latino youth psychosocial development.

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## Appendix

### *Personal Versus Family Obligations*

All week José (Jessica) has been wanting to relax in his (her) room. Today, José has a few hours of free time after finishing his homework. He could use his free time to stay in his room relaxing and listening to music. However, José thinks people have a duty to help their family. He could use his free time to help his family by cleaning up the dirty living room.

### *Personal Versus Respeto*

Carlos (Carla) found out today that there is going to be a music class right after school. Carlos loves music and wants to go to the after-school music class. However, this morning Carlos's parents told him to join a sports team after school. Carlos doesn't think he has to try out for the sports team, but he thinks it is important for children to show respect for their parents by obeying them.

### *Friends Versus Family Obligations*

All week Pedro (Paula) has wanted to hang out at a music store with his friend Victor (Victoria). However, he thinks people have a duty to help their family. As usual, his sister is at home doing homework, and he could stay home and help her with it.

### *Friends Versus Respeto*

Mario's (Ana's) friends are going bowling at the recreation center after school today and he has wanted to go for a longtime. However, earlier today Mario's parents told him to stay home and practice his musical instrument. Mario doesn't think he needs to practice his musical instrument, but he thinks it is important for children to show respect for their parents by obeying them.



*Dating Versus Family Obligations*

Isaac (Sylvia) has been very busy lately and he hasn't had much time to spend with his girlfriend. Isaac has been wanting to hang out at the mall with his girlfriend today after school. However, Isaac thinks people have a duty to help their family. He could help his family by picking up a couple of things that his mom is using to cook.

*Dating Versus Respeto*

This afternoon Luis (Lilliana) wants to go out to the movies with a girl he likes. However, Luis's parents told him to clean his bedroom today. Luis doesn't think he has to clean his bedroom today, but he thinks it is important for children to show respect for their parents by obeying them.