

Queens College
Latin American and Latino Studies Program
Presents

Failing to See the Danger:

Conceptions of Pregnancy and Care Practices
among Mexican Immigrant Women in New York
City

Lecture by Alyshia Gálvez , Director of CUNY Mexican Studies Institute

*Abstract from Risk, Reproduction
and Narratives of Experience*

*The reproductive futures of Latina
immigrant mothers have always been
subject to scrutiny and a source of
anxiety for those who see them as
"excessively" fertile or their offspring
as changing the composition of the
nation. This article builds on
ethnographic research among
Mexican immigrant women in the
prenatal clinic of a large public
hospital in New York City. There,
even in a progressive institution in a
city that prides itself on the welcome
it gives to new immigrants,
discourses about the purportedly
excessive childbearing of immigrant*

*women clash with the ideas that
immigrant women and their
families hold about building the
right-sized family and navigating
the treacherous landscape of health
care, citizenship and social rights,
benefits and discourses. While
Mexican immigrant women
achieve remarkably favorable birth
outcomes in spite of facing many
socioeconomic disadvantages, their
efforts are not lauded but couched
within racialized discourses about
immigrant fertility that constrain
the ways they imagine citizenship
for their US-born children.*

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director of the CUNY Institute of Mexican
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anthropologist (PhD, NYU 2004), her
work focuses on the efforts by Mexican
immigrants in New York City to achieve
the rights of citizenship.**



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