



HARVARD JOURNAL OF HISPANIC POLICY

Volume 14 • 2001–2002

Latinos in an Era of Census Projections

Feature Interviews

The Mayor of the “Other New York”
Fernando Ferrer, interviewed by
Karen Hakime Bhatia

Houston Latinos Defy Stereotype
Orlando Sanchez, interviewed by
Wendolynn Montoya

Dark Clouds and Silver Linings
Antonio R. Villaraigosa, interviewed by
Jimmy Gomez

Feature Articles

Latinos in the 21st Century
Suárez-Orozco and Páez

An Analysis of Latino Voter Turnout Patterns
de la Garza, Haynes, and Ryu

High-Stakes Testing and U.S.-Mexican Youth in
Texas
Valenzuela

Book Reviews

Guinier and Torres’s *The Miner’s Canary*

Dominguez and Fernandez de Castro’s *The United
States and Mexico: Between Partnership and Conflict*

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The *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy (HJHP)* is funded entirely through subscriptions and contributions. The John F. Kennedy School of Government provides only in-kind assistance due to an official policy that prohibits funding student-coordinated publications. We would like to thank the following sponsors who have made the publication of our 14th volume possible:

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Contents

Editors Remarks 1

FORUM EVENT

The Changing Dynamics of Black and Latino Politics

Institute of Politics, Harvard University, 2.12.02

Panelists: Matthew Dowd, Donna Brazile, Lionel Sosa, Lani Guinier

Moderator: Xavier De Souza Briggs 5

FEATURE INTERVIEWS

The Mayor of the “Other New York”

Interview with Fernando Ferrer

Former Bronx Borough President (1987-2000) and 2001 New York City
Mayoral Candidate

Karen Hakime Bhatia 17

Houston Latinos Defy Stereotype in Mayoral Election

Interview with Orlando Sanchez

Former Houston City Council Member (1995-2001) and 2001 Mayoral
Candidate

Wendolynn Montoya 29

Dark Clouds and Silver Linings: Race, Politics, and the American Dream

Interview with Antonio R. Villaraigosa

Former Speaker of the California State Assembly (1998-2000) and 2001 Los
Angeles Mayoral Candidate

Jimmy Gomez 41

FEATURE ARTICLES

Latinos in the 21st Century

Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, Ph.D., and Mariela Páez, Ph.D. 49

An Analysis of Latino Voter Turnout Patterns in the 1992-1998 General Elections in Harris County, Texas

Rodolfo O. de la Garza, Ph.D., Charles W. Haynes, Ph.D. and

Jaesung Ryu 77

High-Stakes Testing and U.S.-Mexican Youth in Texas: The Case for Multiple Compensatory Criteria in Assessment
Angela Valenzuela, Ph.D. 97

**The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
2000 Issues Conference Policy Recommendations**
Summit: Census and Civil Rights
Census 2000 and Its Impact on Latino Civil Rights
By Summit Moderator Arturo Vargas. 117

Summit: Business and Economic Development
Revitalizing Our Communities from Within
By Summit Moderator Stephen Denlinger. 122

Summit: Health
Access to Health Care: Where the Sick Get Sicker
By Summit Moderator Dr. Marta Medrano. 129

BOOK REVIEWS

Race and Social Justice Movements
Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres, *The Miner's Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy*
Reviewed by Héctor G. Bladuell 135

The Changing Dynamics of U.S.-Mexico Relations
Jorge Dominguez and Rafael Fernandez de Castro, *The United States and Mexico: Between Partnership and Conflict*
Reviewed by Alexander Harris. 141

Editor's Remarks

Latinos started the millennium by capturing full media attention. Puerto Rican pop singers Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, and Mark Anthony were featured on billboards as the most popular artists in the world. While the influence of Latino culture in music dates back to the rhythms of Celia Cruz, Tito Puente, Ruben Blades, and Gloria Estefan, the new wave of Latino superstars turned the United States and the world's eyes toward us in a way never seen before. We could infer at least two things from the "Latino phenomenon" of the turn of the millennium. The first is that there is wider acceptance of Latino culture in the United States, at least in popular culture. Our rhythms, language, and culture are penetrating and often fusing with that of "mainstream" America. The second (probably a cause of the first contention) is that this country cannot go any longer without acknowledging the importance of Latinos.

The 2000 Census confirmed that Hispanics are the largest minority group in the United States, having displaced African-Americans. Furthermore, Hispanics are the fastest growing group of the population. Out of the expected three hundred million people in the United States in the year 2010, 67 percent will be White non-Hispanic, 12 percent will be Black non-Hispanic, and 14 percent will be Hispanics. In the year 2050, Hispanics will be roughly a quarter of the population; Blacks, roughly thirteen percent; and Whites, slightly more than half. By 2070, Hispanics will be roughly a third of the population, Blacks will remain 13 percent of the population, and Whites will be 46 percent of the population. These projections reveal, above all, the changing face of the United States. Today we can say with complete confidence that we truly live in a multiracial society. Moreover, Hispanics, as the largest and fastest-growing minority group, will occupy an even more influential position in this multiracial society.

Political parties have noticed the important position of Hispanics in the United States. In the 2000 presidential election, both parties were notorious for actively courting the Hispanic vote. More recently, the Republican Party has announced it will introduce a Spanish-language television program called "Abriendo Caminos," Spanish for "opening paths," which will serve to communicate directly with the Hispanic community and advance the Republican agenda.

The changing population dynamics and our popularity among pop music fans and political parties are slowly translating into more political influence. It is just recently that Latinos have recognized their political power and have emerged as top contenders for elective office in major U.S. cities. The mayoral races in New York, Los Angeles, Houston, and Hartford are testimony that Hispanics will emerge as leaders in this century's new multiracial America.

Since 1985, the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* has served as a forum of original research to guide public policies affecting the Latino community in the United States. Furthering the economic, social, and political empowerment of Latinos remains our main objective. To this end, we offer *Volume 14: Latino Policy in an Era of Census Projections*. We hope to inform our community, policymakers, and those who implement policy initiatives about the most pressing issues affecting us in this new era.

Our feature interviews include three Latino mayoral candidates of 2001. Los Angeles' mayoral candidate Antonio Villaraigosa, New York's Fernando Ferrer and Houston's Orlando Sanchez discussed their experiences as political candidates, the future of Latinos in politics, and the relationship between Latinos and the African American community, among other topics, with the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*. Their experiences and leadership provide much insight, and we thank them for their participation and their determination to further the issues of importance to the Latino community.

We also feature a forum event that took place at the Arco Forum of Public Affairs at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government on 12 February 2002. The forum, titled "The Changing Dynamics of Black and Latino Politics in the United States," featured key Democratic and Republican political strategists and law professor Lani Guinier, a national expert on voting rights and multiracial coalitions. Moderating the panel was Xavier de Souza Briggs, associate professor of public policy at the Kennedy School. This forum reveals the significance of Black and Latinos voters for the two political parties. In addition, panelists provide insight into the ways our system of government has failed people of color and provide recommendations to remedy these problems.

The feature articles commence with Marcelo Suarez-Orozco and Mariela Paez's "Latinos in the 21st Century," the introductory chapter from their upcoming anthology, *Latinos Remaking America*. The term Latino encompasses vastly diverse facets ranging from well-known Latino subgroups, such as the Mexican American and Puerto Rican communities, to the "other," less-discussed Latinos, including the growing Brazilian, Colombian, and Salvadorian communities throughout the nation. This work provides an overview of a variety of issues affecting this diverse Latino community, including immigration, education, language, U.S. foreign relations with Latin America, and other dimensions in this era of new census projections. "Latinos: The Research Agenda" broadens the traditional scholarship of Latinos from the individual subgroup to the pan-ethnic level and analyzes

this perspective in terms of political, theoretical, and sociohistorical considerations. Moreover, the authors highlight a new Latino framework while acknowledging the uniqueness of individual subgroups.

Two of the most important issues for Latinos in the 21st century are education and voting patterns. Traditionally, Latinos have seen education as a mechanism to achieve their aspirations. However, many of these aspirations will not be realized if Latinos do not let their presence be felt at the polls. Angela Valenzuela's article explores the currently popular policies of high-stakes testing and grade retention. She analyzes the effects of such policies on Mexican American children in Texas and suggests an alternative method to assess children's educational achievement. With a president who has committed himself to be known as the "education president," and with an education plan with the slogan of "leave no child behind," Valenzuela's research cannot be more timely. Rodolfo de La Garza, Charles Haynes, and Jaesung Ryu's research in Harris County, Tex., offers valuable insight into Latino voter turnout patterns. Informed by their empirical research, the authors suggest strategies for increasing Latino voter turnout. Needless to say, increasing voter turnout is a top priority of the Latino community in the United States. Latinos could be the largest and fastest-growing minority community, but if our right to vote is not exercised, politicians will be less inclined to respond to our community's needs. These two original pieces of research illuminate the dynamics of microcosms of Latino communities in the United States that could well reflect national trends.

Volume 14 also includes three excerpts from the last annual Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Issues Conference which took place on 18-19 September 2000. Leaders of the Latino community, including members of Congress, community activists, policy experts, academic scholars and corporate executives, gathered to discuss issues of importance to Latinos and create a legislative agenda. The Census and civil rights, business and economic development, and health are the three topics we highlight because they stress the importance of our presence in this country, the need to build our own economic institutions, and the imperative of keeping our community healthy. In each excerpt, current conditions, challenges, and recommendations are outlined.

We conclude this volume with two book reviews. Héctor G. Bladuell reviews Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres's *The Miner's Canary*. This book suggests a new methodology for achieving social justice where the formation of multiracial coalitions is central and the value of democratic participation at every level of society is stressed. Bladuell summarizes Guinier and Torres's critique and innovative proposals and discusses the contributions and some of the shortcomings of their project. Alex Harris reviews Jorge Domínguez and Rafael Fernández de Castro's *The United States and Mexico: Between Partnership and Conflict*. The warm friendship between George W. Bush and Vicente Fox has elevated United States-Mexico relations to a new level. Mexico has gotten so much attention that it was the first foreign country that President Bush visited as a head of state. Harris traces the historical accounts

and summarizes the analysis regarding the changing relationship between the two countries that Dominguez and Fernandez de Castro present in their book.

As editors in chief, we extend our gratitude to the many individuals who have helped to make possible this volume. First and foremost, we thank our student staff members for their dedication and hard work. We are especially grateful to Luis Hernandez for his efforts in restructuring the professional editorial board. We are confident that their commitment to the ideals of the *Journal* will produce an equal quality or superior Volume 15 next year. Their leadership and energy will inspire future generations of student staff members. *Abrazos/Abraços!*

We are greatly indebted to our executive advisory board and Chairperson Grace Flores-Hughes for their generous support, guidance, and assistance throughout the years. We are especially grateful to Ingrid Durand and Juan Herrera for their assistance in facilitating our access to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Policy Reports. The *Journal* would not exist without the continued financial support of Dean Joseph McCarthy and the Kennedy School Student Government for their yearly support. We also thank Dean McCarthy for his friendship and commitment to the ideals of the *Journal*.

We give very special thanks to Prof. Richard Parker, Ms. Christine Connare, and Prof. Xavier De Souza Briggs. Profs. Parker and Briggs have provided invaluable guidance and support in making sure that the *Journal* consolidates its space as the only journal of Hispanic policy in the nation. We especially thank them for sharing their wealth of knowledge on the nuances of administering a publication. We especially thank Prof. Parker and Prof. Lani Guinier for their leadership role in helping us get advertisements for the *Journal*. We would like to especially recognize the outstanding work of Christine Connare, who works daily to ensure the success of the *Journal*. We are also appreciative to Abigail Mieko Vargus for her copyediting and to the John F. Kennedy School staff for their logistical coordination.

Finally, we would like to thank the many individuals and institutions that subscribe to the *Journal*. With support from our readers, we are able to create a space for dialogue and promote solutions to the most pressing problems of our community. We hope that our Volume 14 contributes to further the economic, social, and political empowerment of Latinos in the United States.

Karen Hakime Bhatia and Héctor G. Bladuell
Editors in Chief

The Changing Dynamics of Black and Latino Politics

**Forum Event, Institute of Politics, Harvard University
12 February 2002**

*Panelists: Matthew Dowd, Donna Brazile, Lionel Sosa, Lani Guinier.
Moderator: Xavier De Souza Briggs.*

David Pryor

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Kennedy School. My name is David Pryor, and I have the great opportunity of being director of the Institute of Politics. Here at the Institute of Politics, we do not shy away from challenging topics. Race [in] politics has become a national issue, thanks in large part to the changing American electorate. As evidenced by the recent mayoral elections in Los Angeles, New York City, [and] Houston, minority voters are a force—a real force—in local state and national races.

We have the high privilege tonight to host four of this country's foremost experts on politics and race: Matthew Dowd, Donna Brazile, Lionel Sosa, and Professor Lani Guinier.

Professor [Xavier de Souza] Briggs will be our moderator tonight. He is a member of the faculty of the Kennedy School since 1996. He specializes in urban policy and social inequality.

Xavier de Souza Briggs

Thank you, and welcome to you all. The title tonight, "The Changing Dynamics of Black and Latino Politics," strongly implies that there are some important changes happening in America. I think the real opportunity tonight may be in identifying what's changing and what's not, and what about our history we continue to struggle with, and what new opportunities may be on the horizon or even upon us.

Thanks in part to the latest census we know that the “who” of America is changing and changing especially fast in some parts of the country. But it isn’t always so clear what that change means for political voice and political outcomes, our central focus tonight. I’m thinking of things like economic access and cultural presence and more.

Recently, the *Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, and other major media have paid renewed attention to what it means to be a minority in America; [to] whether the term has any reliable meaning, especially in California and other places that are so-called “majority minority.”

There is at least one temptation, however, that we should resist tonight. It’s a tendency we see too often, it seems to me, in the public debate on these issues, and that is the tendency to turn any one of our guests into *the* spokesperson for an entire ethnic group or political party or social perspective. Let’s not do it. In the end, we sacrifice our own learning, and we deny others their due, and we appoint and label in that way.

Before I introduce our first guest, it wouldn’t be the Kennedy School if I failed to do a little justice to the data. The Black and Latino communities are, at this special point in our nation’s history, almost identical, almost equal in size—about 35 million each. But you have to take that raw number and qualify it in a number of ways.

Observation #1: Latinos are the much faster growing group—[a] 13 million increase since 1990 versus 6 million for Black America; a rate of 58 percent versus 21 percent. Immigration, the second great wave in American history, is, as many of you know, driving that big differential.

Observation #2: People numbers don’t always translate into votes or voice or political power. The history of barriers faced by Black Americans is particularly well-known and serious in this regard. Latinos, too, have faced many barriers. Moreover, many are noncitizens and therefore have no vote. Many Blacks and Latinos, beyond that, are too young to vote. For now, these two groups are also neck and neck in terms of voting-age population. If I have the number right, it’s about 23 million for each of these groups.

Observation #3: The national numbers aside, what matters for politics has something to do with where people of color are concentrated, whether they are mobilized in those particular places, [and] how they relate their agendas to one another and to other groups.

So without further ado, I want to introduce Matthew Dowd. Matthew is chief pollster to President George W. Bush. He also serves as a senior political strategist through a public and national committee. During the 2000 election he was director of polling and media planning for the Bush-Cheney 2000 team. He was once a Democratic consultant and staff for the Congressman Lloyd Benson. He’s moved on over to the other side. He is now the GOP’s top pulse-taker of the nation’s views on political issues, particularly the tendencies of minority voters, and he’s just joined us from Austin, Tex.

Matthew Dowd

You saw the results of the 2000 election. The president got 9 percent of the African American vote, 35 percent of the Hispanic vote. The African American vote was about average for what Republican presidential candidates get. The Hispanic vote was way above average. It's the second-highest percentage that a Republican had gotten, second to Reagan's landslide.

But the difference is that the president got a much bigger pie. When Reagan got a higher percentage, only 2 percent of all votes cast were Hispanic. In this election, 7 percent were Hispanic. And a lot of people still say, "Well, that's a number." You have to think that, in 16 years, that's a 350 percent increase of the impact Hispanics have on the vote. It's a tremendous change, and it's a tremendous change in the states—specific states, from Texas to Nevada, Colorado to California. But it's also in states a lot of people don't think of—Nebraska. People don't realize one of every eight children born now in Nebraska [is] Hispanic. One of every nine in North Carolina [is] Hispanic.

So it's a population that is going to dramatically change a lot of states. Florida—a lot of people asked what happened in Florida. Why was Florida the way it was? It's normally a lean Republican state. I'll tell you. What happened in Florida was that two of every three Hispanic votes when the president's father won it, overwhelmingly, in '88—were Cuban American. This time, 12 years later, two of every three Hispanic votes in Florida were non-Cuban votes. And it wasn't because the Cuban population shrank; it's because the non-Cuban population grew tremendously, and not in areas like Miami, but in areas like Orlando and Tampa-St. Pete and the inland areas that a lot of people didn't focus on.

And Florida now is a state that has moved, like some other states, because of the minority growth population. Blacks in some Northeastern states and some Midwestern states, Hispanics in some Southern and Western states, have moved from the Republican column more towards the Democratic column or swing column.

It's the reason why California is now much more of a reliably Democratic state. It's why New York, because of the Black and Hispanic population, is now a Democratic state. It's why New Jersey, which used to be an indicator state, is now a more Democratic state. It's why Delaware, which used to be "as Delaware goes, so goes the nation," is now a Democratic state. It's why Arizona, probably in the next four or six years, will be a swing state. It's why Colorado, which was a Republican state, will now be a swing state. It's why Texas—my guess is, Texas, which has always been, for the last 10 years, a state Democrats had a hard time winning, and every office holder that's now in Texas is a Republican—it's why Texas will probably be, in the next six to eight years, a swing state again. And it's because primarily of the Hispanic population.

Interestingly, as was alluded to, Hispanics have a tendency—because of a lot of reasons—to be underrepresented when compared to what they are in the population. They represent about 11 percent of the population but only

about 7 percent of the vote. That's going to change. It's going to change population-wise, but it's going to change as registration and vote increases.

What does that mean for Republican candidates and what does that mean for a president running for reelection in 2004? It means that if President Bush got the exact same percentages he got last time in 2000—he got the same percentage of the White vote, the same percentage of the Hispanic vote, and the same percentage of the Black vote—if he got those same exact percentages, he'd lose by over 3 million votes.

What do all these things mean? The suburbs, people point out the suburbs—why are they less reliably Republican? What's going on? A lot of people have tried to point to issues. Well, it's because the Republicans don't stand for the right thing on X, Y, and Z. You know what the number one reason why the suburbs are now more swing and less Republican? It's because a movement—like Whites 20 years ago—of minority voters, Hispanics and Blacks that have gained on the economic ladder, have moved from inner cities to suburban counties. What happened 20 years ago or 25 years ago [with] Whites, the same thing is happening among minority voters. They're moving into the suburbs. . . .

So, 3 million votes, what's going to happen? If we were to lose by 3 million, what's there to do? There's a couple of good signs on the wall. The first is, speaking of the president, in his first election for governor, [he] got 9 percent of the Black vote, and he got 24 percent of the Hispanic vote. In '98 when he ran for reelection, four years later, he got 18 percent of the Black vote and 48 percent of the Hispanic vote. And so what that shows is that minority voters have heard and seen. As he's talked to them about issues, he's been able to increase that percentage.

The second thing that people have not focused on is that as Latinos move up the economic ladder, they have the tendency to vote more like Anglo, or White, voters. That's not true of African Americans. Those African Americans at low-income levels, middle-income levels, or upper-income levels roughly stay the same on what their vote is, Democratic versus Republican. There's a slight change, but it's roughly the same. So it wouldn't matter if you earn \$100,000 as an African American voter or \$20,000 as an African American voter, you vote roughly the same.

That is not true of Latinos. And it's very similar to what happened in the early part of the 1900s with European population shifts: As Europeans came here, they voted reliably Democratic. As they moved up the economic ladder, they became more swing. The same thing I think is going to happen among Latinos. I think Latinos are probably the newest key swing group that's probably going to be focused on for the next 10 years.

I think they're like soccer moms of the '90s, and they're like Reagan Democrats of the '80s, and the southern strategy that Nixon talked about in the '60s and '70s of the Southern White vote. I think Latino is going to be the new soccer mom of the 2000 elections—2000 to 2010.

I think that is a very good sign for politics. Why? Because every other swing group that's ever been discussed—focused on by pundits, consultants,

and all that—has been a White group, a heterogeneous White group. And so I think it's good for politics that we now have a group that's going to be focused on by consultants, by media advisors, by all these people, by candidates, in a direct way that's non-White. Which means they will address [Latino] concerns more readily, they're going to devote resources to them [Latinos], they're going to talk about issues related to them [Latinos]. So it's very good news.

The other interesting thing about minority populations is the link that exists between minority populations and unions. People don't realize that as minority populations grow, so does union population, which influences politics. Forty-five percent of Hispanic voters in California belong to a union household. Forty-five percent of Hispanic voters in Nevada belong to a union household. One of every two African Americans in Michigan is in a union household.

And so when people talk about minority politics and try to separate the two, you cannot talk about and deal with minority politics without also talking about and dealing with union issues. The fastest-growing unions in this country are not the old traditional White manufacture unions, they're the new Latino or African American unions that are dominated by service employees or government workers or whatever else. Those are the fastest-growing unions in this country. And it's going to change the nature of Democrats, how Democrats deal with politics. But it's also going to have to change how Republicans deal with union issues because you can't just deal with minorities and not deal with union issues.

Xavier de Souza Briggs

Thank you, Matthew. It's my pleasure to introduce Donna Brazile. Donna is a well-known Democratic field operative and a grassroots organizer. She's a native of Louisiana. She first came to national attention when Coretta Scott King asked her to serve as the national student coordinator for the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday committee and, later, as the national mobilization director for the 20th anniversary of the historic march on Washington in 1963, which gave us the "I Have a Dream" speech.

Donna has worked on several senatorial, congressional, and statewide campaigns throughout her career. She's worked on every Democratic presidential campaign. Most recently, she made it to the top of her business, serving as campaign manager, as you all know, to Al Gore in 2000, where she was credited, among other things, with organizing a tremendous field and political operation, [resulting in] an enormous turn-out of voters of color.

Donna Brazile

Thank you. I have some new ideas, new ideas that will help make sure that Democrats not only retain, quote, control of the Senate, but take back the House in 266 votes.

This topic is very near to my heart because any time you talk about the changing dynamics of Black/Latino politics, it really stirs me up, because

there [are] a lot of changes that need to take place. Since 1776 until the present-day, there [have] been 1,864 Americans who've served in the United States Senate. Guess how many of them have been minorities? Guess. Fifteen. Since 1776 over 2,200 Americans have served as governor. Nine—*nine* have been minorities: four Hispanics, three Asian Americans, one African American, and one native Hawaiian.

Something is wrong with that picture, so it's wonderful that we talk about the growing influence of Hispanics, whether or not they're swing voters, whether or not they're going to make a difference in California and Texas because of their increasing populations. And what about the African Americans, 54 percent of whom reside from Richmond, Va., down to Houston, Tex.? Why haven't we elected more African Americans to the United States Senate and more Hispanics as governors? Why?

Well, that's what I want to talk about. I want to talk about how we can do it, how we can change the dynamics, and not talk about what divides us but what brings us together. The long struggle that African Americans and Hispanics have labored in this country—it's time that we begin to get a big piece of the pie and not just crumbs from the political marketplace. So that's what I want to talk about a little bit tonight.

But what? But it's not the time? It's not the time for Bill Richardson to become governor of New Mexico? It's not the time for Ron Kirk to be the senator from Texas, or Gloria Tristani to be the senator from New Mexico?

No, the time is now, and we can make it happen because African Americans and Latinos have worked together, historically, to elect not only African Americans to positions of power, but also Hispanics.

You know, there wouldn't be a Harold Washington without Blacks and Latinos working together. There wouldn't be a David Dinkins or a Henry Cisneros or a Wellington Webb. And let me just say, in 2001, there wouldn't be a Shirley Franklin in Atlanta or Ed Garza in San Antonio if it wasn't for Black and Hispanic.

So we all know about the problems—we know in Los Angeles there was some tension, some fighting, some bad politicking. So we heard about the problems in New York City with Freddie Ferrer and Mark Green. But let me tell you something, it was African Americans and Latinos who stood together and said, "You know what, if the Democratic party won't help us out then perhaps some of us will stay home." And for the Hispanics, luckily, to Mike Bloomberg's credit—who by the way is a Democrat who turned over because the line was short, again—but it was Hispanics who gave him 25 percent of their vote and African Americans who gave him 18 percent of their vote.

And yes, there were problems in Houston last year when Lee Brown and Orlando Sanchez fought against each other. So yes, we will take three and say, okay, we had problems in three cities last year. But look at the 39 cities that Americans worked together. African Americans in the black-brown coalition came together, and we were able to not only defeat the odds, but put really qualified individuals who are now in the pipeline when they leave city hall to run for statewide office.

We've got to now think about how can we put African Americans and Latinos in state houses. That's where all the decisions are being made. When they cut a billion dollars from the budget, who do you think gets cut first? The people who got to the table last. That's why we should be in the state-houses.

And let me ask you another question. Who better knows how to defend the country and fight against terror than those who have to ride on the highways and get stopped and pulled over by people with guns? Huh? It's Blacks and Latinos. And so we can fight.

And we care about public schools because, after all, we get the schools without the books; we get the schools without the teachers; we get the schools where we don't even have chalk. We know how to defend public schools and make public education the best because it's our kids who go to those schools.

So we can win. But in order for us to win we have to work together. We got to take those numbers—Matt, thank you for telling us—take those numbers and turn them to real power, and get to your place at the table. Unless we level the playing field and make it more accountable, then it will be green—I'm talking about the dollars. That will keep African Americans and Hispanics from reaching their true aspirations. We've fought for this country, we've defended this country, we have shared our blood in disproportionate numbers for this country. And it's now time that we take seats of power in this country, and in proportion to our numbers in the population.

And no more crumbs, my friends. No more scraps.

Xavier de Souza Briggs

Thank you. Our next panelist was the man responsible for crafting President Bush's outreach to the Hispanic community during the 2000 campaign. He's got a successful background in advertising. He used his knowledge and skills for President Bush, as well as five other Republican presidential campaigns since 1980.

Along with his wife, Kathy, Lionel [Sosa] heads Garcia LKS, the largest independent Hispanic advertising agency in the Southwest. He has also founded Sosa, Bromley, Aguilar, Noble and Associates, now Bromley Communications, the largest Hispanic advertising agency in the United States.

He was named one of the 100 most influential Hispanics in the United States by *Hispanic Business Magazine*. He's the author most recently of *The Americano Dream: How Latinos Can Achieve Success in Business and in Life*.

Lionel Sosa

Thank you very much. But what I'd like to go over, in about five minutes, in 30 seconds each, are 10 misperceptions or stereotypes of Hispanics, voting Hispanics in the United States. And I have seen the changes occur. At one time all of these misperceptions were true, but in the last five years a lot of changes have really been taking place.

Number one is that the Hispanic vote is really, really getting big, but it hasn't made a big difference yet. The fact is that George W. Bush got 6,000 more Hispanic votes in Florida than Al Gore did, and if it hadn't been for those 6,000 Hispanic votes, that thing in Florida would have never even happened. Gore would have taken the state, by about 5,550 votes.

Myth number two: Hispanics are Democrats. Well, not anymore. Less than half Hispanics say that they're Democrats. Between 25 and 30 percent, depending on the region, will say they're Republicans. And another 25 to 30 percent will say that they're independent voters.

Myth number three: Hispanics still prefer or see Democrats as their leader. In terms of the approval rating that the president has, it is even higher than mainstream America among the Hispanic. The president enjoys an 84, overall, percentage approval among Hispanics. And one poll even showed an approval rating of 94 percent of Hispanic women approving of the president. Even 70 percent of Hispanics in California approve of the job the president is doing. And 90 percent of Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico approve of the job that the president is doing.

Those are pretty amazing numbers. And the fact that they're bigger than the general population I think is a brand-new revelation.

Myth number four: Hispanics will not support Republicans even if they are also Hispanic. Well, Orlando Sanchez, who ran for mayor of Houston, a Cuban Republican, got 74 percent of the Hispanic vote.

Myth number five: Hispanics will not elect Republican Anglos. You know, the fact is that Bloomberg got 50 percent of the Hispanic vote in New York.

Myth number six: Hispanics favor Spanish over English. Polls all over the place show that Hispanics, 94 percent of Hispanics, believe that English is vital, want to retain Spanish, but believe that English is the language of this country.

Myth number seven: Hispanics don't really acculturate. They kind of see themselves as different and separate. Well, things are changing there, too. In a recent poll, in fact, about 30 days ago, 64 percent of Puerto Ricans on the island favor statehood over independence. Something very interesting happened after September the 11th in Puerto Rico. It was that *Puertoriquenos* began to feel much more American than ever before. And if a referendum were to be held today, statehood would win overwhelmingly.

Another fact: The Bush message appeal, a very conservative message appeal of opportunity, of inclusion, of a better life for the children, of personal responsibility, of the fulfillment of the American dream—a very conservative type of message—really resonates with Latinos. Latinos are really tired of hearing them[selves] being portrayed as victims, as minorities who are victims in need of government aid.

Hispanics are very much like any other immigrant in the United States, here for the fulfillment of the American dream.

Another fact is that Tony Sanchez, who is a Democrat running for governor in Texas, and running one hell of a good campaign, I might add—he's running a very Republican-type of campaign, and he's talking about opportu-

nity and responsibility and the fulfillment of the American dream. It's almost that he has taken George W. Bush's commercial and plugged himself right in there, and I'll tell you what—it's working. Because it is a conservative message that really resonates with Latinos.

Myth number eight: Anglos will not elect Hispanics. Well, that's changing, too. As Hispanics and African Americans are becoming a bigger and more important part of America, Anglos also see a much more together, total population. The mayors of San Antonio and Austin were elected by the support of Latinos, but if it had not been for the Anglo vote as well, they would not have been elected. Congressman Bonilla enjoys the wonderful support of the Anglo community. And Abel Maldonado in California, that is in an area that is 65 percent Anglo and 65 percent Democrat, continues to win by 65 percent of the vote as a Republican.

Myth number nine: Hispanics will not hold major elective offices anytime soon. Well, it's going to happen, and it came mighty close—Villaraigosa almost made it in Los Angeles; Orlando Sanchez almost made it in Houston. Ferrer almost made it in New York. And this is kind of where a preview of the things that will be happening in 2002, in 2004. In just five years, half of a decade from now, we're going to begin to see many more Latinos and African Americans elected to public office by Latinos and African Americans, but by Anglos as well.

Myth number 10, finally: Well, maybe President Bush gets it, but very few other Republicans get it. They're not really understanding the importance of the Hispanic vote. But I can tell you that Riordan, who is running for governor in California, has a very strong Hispanic campaign. Jeb Bush, of course, in Florida. Governor Perry. And running for lieutenant governor of Texas, David Dewhurst. All have strong Hispanic campaigns, as well as the Republican National Committee, the Republican Senatorial Committee, and the Republican Congressional Committee.

I think it's something that everybody is seeing—this is not something that's just numbers out there, it is a reality and a reality needed for survival. And both parties understand that, and they're both reaching out, and I'm so glad of it because it really is good for Latinos and for African Americans. And we will be participating more. There will be more opportunity for our people, and we will be able to participate in the American mainstream as never before.

Xavier de Souza Briggs

Thank you very much. It's my pleasure to introduce my colleague, Professor Lani Guinier. Lani joined the faculty of the Harvard Law School in July 1998. She became the first Black woman ever tenured by the Harvard Law School. Prior to coming to Harvard, Professor Guinier was a law professor at the University of Pennsylvania for 10 years. She has written many articles and op-ed pieces and is the author of four books: *The Tyranny of the Majority*; *Becoming Gentlemen*; *Lift Every Voice*, subtitled *Turning the Civil Rights Setback into a New Vision of Social Justice*; and, most recently, *The Miner's Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power, Transforming Democracy*.

She's become one of the nation's most sought-after speakers on issues of race and gender and political voice. Lani Guinier, welcome.

Lani Guinier

Thank you. I would like to talk about the soft bigotry of low expectations. That is obviously not an original phrase. But I think it applies to the discussion that we have been having thus far about the possibilities of Black-Latino coalitions. And what I mean is that, in many ways, what Donna Brazile started to talk about is something that I would like to continue.

She said we need to think about where we have come since 1776, and I would like to take us back to 1776 and ask why a Democratic system that was put into place by a group of all-male, mainly wealthy, often-aristocratic men who owned slaves should be the definition of the best democracy can offer.

We are operating within a system that is incredibly elitist, from its origin. And part of the problem with the discussion of Black-Latino politics is that many of us, if we work just within the constructs of what that Democratic system is—that these men put in place—we are left with very low expectations of what we can do for all of the people of the United States, not just Blacks, not just Latinos, not just Asian Americans, but working-class Whites and also women. And the reason I say that is because the most we can do is look for a strategy of Black or Latino faces in high places. And that is a strategy, in my opinion, of robust tokenism. Again, not an original phrase.

I agree very much with what Donna has said—that we certainly want to see integrated legislatures, we want to see integrated statehouses, and we would like to see integration at the highest level of the United States, president and vice president. But what I'm more interested in is talking about bringing Black and Latino people together to claim their true power, and their true power is not just in electing other members of their community to go off and become very important people. True power is really about mobilizing people at the grassroots, so that they can have a voice in the decisions that affect all of their lives.

So the claim that I'm trying to make is that we need to study and look closely at the experience of Blacks and Latinos because they can tell us an awful lot about what is wrong—not just with their exclusion, but what is wrong with the entire system of politics in the United States that disenfranchises, on some level, all of us, and I mean all of us.

Now, when I say it disenfranchises us, the United States, on a scale of 200 countries that claim that they are democracies, we are down in the lower quartile in terms of voter participation. We have fewer people voting in this country than most other democracies. That is not an accident. We have fewer people voting in this country because we have a system that was put into place to make sure people don't want to vote. We have a system that was put into place that initially disenfranchised most of the people in the United States. Not just the African slaves, not just women, but most White people were also disenfranchised when this country started.

So we need to think about dreaming. I'm right there with Donna Brazile, wanting to dream, but to dream not just about getting a few more of us to have a piece of a rancid pie. We need to dream about changing what is in the pie, and then having enough so that all of us are not just eating pie or cake. We need to have a decent nutrition that will enable us to survive and thrive.

I just want to end with a comment about *The Miner's Canary* and why I think that metaphor is appropriate for this notion of the soft bigotry of low expectations. And I want to also acknowledge that the miner's canary metaphor did not come from me, it came to me from Gerald Torres, who is also my co-author. And the idea is that those people have been excluded, those people have been underrepresented, those people have been left out—like the canary in the mines. The miners used to take a canary to alert them when the atmosphere in the mines was too toxic for the miners to stay. And the canary's more fragile respiratory system would give way, signaling that there was a problem with the atmosphere in the mine.

And the argument that we make in this book, and the argument that I would like to pursue with you during the questions and answers, is how the experience of Blacks and Latinos are in fact the miner's canary in American politics. How what is happening to Blacks and Latinos—the fact of what Donna said, that, of the 1,867 people who were elected to the United States Senate since 1776, only 15 were African American—that level of exclusion, that is a signal, not just of a problem located in the canary. That is a signal, not just about racism or even sexism. That is a signal that the way in which we have arranged politics in this country means that 24 percent of the people in this country control 60 percent of the seats in the United States Senate.

That is disproportionate power being given to a minority of people. We need to talk about really big dreams, so that we can bring power back to the people and not to incumbent politicians, I don't care what their race or their gender is.

The Mayor of the “Other New York”

**Interview with Fernando Ferrer
President, Drum Major Institute; Former Bronx Borough President
(1987-2000) and 2001 New York City Mayoral Candidate**

Fernando Ferrer was born in the Bronx in 1950 to Puerto Rican parents. He served as Bronx borough president for 14 years and implemented the largest rebuilding effort in the country; in all, more than 30,000 units were completed since Ferrer took office in 1987. These successes earned the Bronx the National Civic League’s All-American City Award in 1997.

Ferrer attended Cardinal Spellman High School and earned his bachelor’s degree from the Bronx campus of New York University in 1972. From 1979 to 1982, he served as director of housing for the Bronx Borough President’s Office and as coordinator of the Bronx Arson Task Force. Before becoming borough president, Ferrer represented the 13th city council district in the west Bronx from 1982 to 1987. As the youngest city council chairman, Ferrer spearheaded the health committee hearings that uncovered faults in the city’s hospitals and medical service, as well as the state’s plan to de-institutionalize mentally ill patients. In addition, he was the prime sponsor of actions to strengthen the Window Guard Law and provide bilingual interpretation in hospital emergency rooms.

Fernando Ferrer, often referred to as Freddy, ran for mayor four years ago but pulled out of the race against mayor Rudolph Giuliani. In the 2001 mayoral race, Ferrer ran on a platform to repeal the death penalty, to strengthen education, to build more affordable housing, to eliminate the fear of racial profiling, and to support pro-choice concerns. He also proclaimed himself to be the candidate of the “Other New York.”

On the 11 October 2001 run-off, after a very tight first primary in which Ferrer had a slight advantage, Green had 52 percent of the Democratic votes and Ferrer claimed 48 percent: Mark Green won the controversial competition for the Democratic ballot. Yet, the 6 November 2001 election resulted in Michael Bloomberg, the Republican candidate, emerging as the new mayor of New York City.

Ferrer has since assumed the position of president of the Drum Major Institute. This is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with a mission to provide a forum to discuss issues of social and economic justice.

Karen Hakime Bhatia of the HJHP interviewed Fernando Ferrer on 15 February 2002.

HJHP

As Bronx borough president, what was your most significant contribution?

Ferrer

Apart from the housing renewal, the job creation, and the infrastructure revival—neighborhoods coming back to life; streets that were once dead showed life—I think the principal one was giving people hope. It was a pretty hopeless place for a long time, beaten down by abandonment, disinvestment, and then the corruption scandal.

And then giving people hope. I think that was probably the least tangible, but it's the one that set the foundation for many other things.

HJHP

And how do you think you went about doing that?

Ferrer

I think by involving people in the formulation of their own destiny—the housing. Then you get them involved in the neighborhood rebuilding. And then when people see you're interested in it, and you're interested in their future, you're interested in their families, people respond to it in a hopeful way.

HJHP

And what are you involved with here at the Drum Major Institute?

Ferrer

This is Drum Major for Justice. This was started as a foundation during the Civil Rights Movement. It became an institute about three or four years ago, and then I was recruited to take it to the next level. It's a continuation, essentially, of the work in the Civil Rights Movement—policies that relate to social and economic justice, issues I'm not unfamiliar with in the course of my own public life. So it was a very comfortable transition for me.

HJHP

Are there any specific issues that you're focusing on right now?

Ferrer

The ones that essentially relate to education, empowering parents, real decision making, and ownership of public education. What are the vehicles for that? What's at stake? Rebuilding for what and for whom after September 11? And many other issues.

HJHP

And how exactly do you go about doing this? Is it primarily lobbying?

Ferrer

No. There are a lot of aspects to us. First and foremost, it's creating a platform of and an arena for the discussion of issues from a perspective of social and economic justice—a progressive perspective having to do with people. And then it's formulating and disseminating those ideas and those recommendations in an activist way.

HJHP

Do you think that all the diverse facets of the Latino community are united?

Ferrer

That's something of a segue from Drum Major. I think it is noteworthy that something that is so rooted in the Civil Rights Movement has asked a Latino to be its leader. Half of this board is in Atlanta. It's headquartered here in New York. And do I think it's united? For the most part, on issues, yes. I think, of course, there are some issues that can have the effect of dividing, and being divisive, but if anything was proven in this past mayoral election, it was Latinos came together.

HJHP

And how do you think that proved itself?

Ferrer

The votes I got. Puerto Ricans are no longer the monolithic part of Latinos in New York City. It's Dominicans, Colombians, Hondurans. Mexicans are emerging now, not only in terms of population, but also voting .

HJHP

Do you think that there is a unified Latino agenda with specific issues?

Ferrer

I don't think one exists per se. Just like there is no unified Black agenda—because there are so many diverse interests. But they come together in a setting such as New York, or any other city. So how does this affect people's lives? How does it affect my life? That's when it comes together. That's the vantage point that I try to provide. And I think that's the way we ought to promote unity. It's how you approach it.

You can pick a lot of different things. You say, "What's going on in Colombia?" But the Mexicans don't care about that. But wait a minute—but everyone really cares about what's going on here. How can my child get a good education or live in decent housing, or how can I have access to a decent job? What are they doing to day laborers? I say, look, if they're going to start beating up on Mexican day laborers, they're going to beat up on Honduran day laborers and everybody else because we all look alike to them. It's a matter of being in the same boat.

HJHP

Why do you think that the Latino vote has not reached the significance or the impact representing the numbers that we have?

Ferrer

In New York City, in the last election it did. We were about 26 or 27 percent of the population in the city. We were about 28 percent of the vote in the primary. It's incredible.

HJHP

Why do you think this isn't reflected in other cities throughout the nation?

Ferrer

Well, it was groundbreaking in New York, but people vote for a reason. They have to be given a reason. And of course there are issues like access—voter access—on the basis of language and the basis of convenience, on the basis of other structural issues that present themselves in voting.

Frankly, I think there would have been more, had there not been such egregious violations of the Voting Rights Act. But, given that, people voted because there was a reason this time. Just like African Americans turn out higher for someone who moves them.

HJHP

With the recent census projection indicating the impact the Latino community can have in electing political officials, what do you think that the different political parties should do to maintain and attract the loyalty of Latinos?

Ferrer

Well, Latinos have been principally affiliated with the Democratic Party although we saw a massive defection in the election from the Democratic Party in New York City. Why did that happen? I think it was because of the nature of the campaign, and Latinos felt hurt by it. And for the first time they displayed their disapproval by rejecting a member of their own party.

That sent seismic shock waves throughout the party. I think the party is still trying to understand what happened. And the reason why it was so unique was because it could have happened this way in Los Angeles.

Antonio Villaraigosa is a very good friend of mine. And I understood what happened there. But they had a nonpartisan election. A guy who ran some terrible ads against him—very terribly unfair ads, too—won. The Democratic Party embraced him because they were all Democrats. But it was a nonpartisan election.

It didn't happen here [in New York City] because there was a partisan election. When people saw what happened, they went to the polls and voted negatively, or stayed home. This is a reliable Democratic vote. But it also happened among African Americans. This is the first time there was a coalition of voters led by a Latino in an urban setting. That has never happened in this way before.

And by the way, 58 percent of Jews and, overall, 63 percent of Whites did not vote Democrat. Who's fault is that?

HJHP

How do you think that coalition of Latinos and African Americans and so on was created? How was that possible?

Ferrer

Over issues. It had nothing to do with anything other than a meeting of the minds on issues. And I think the issues that I was raising in the campaign moved a lot of people.

HJHP

Were there any issues in particular that you would emphasize?

Ferrer

Oh sure. They were broad economic and social justice issues of decent and affordable housing. Also, improvements in education—that it really means something for our kids in the public school system. I didn't talk about vouchers or experiments. I thought of improving public schools and after-school programs that keep kids out of harm's way.

Another issue is health care: the fact that too many people don't have health insurance and don't have access to reliable health care, the economic inequalities of this city. Those are issues that had to be addressed.

HJHP

These issues are often brought up during all the elections. How did you think you framed them differently to attract voters of diverse backgrounds?

Ferrer

I framed them in the only way I could: by letting people know I understood them and I stood for change. And they said, "Well, we're going to have a tough budget." I said, "Yeah. But it's about the choices you make." You cannot penalize the people who can least bear it. You've got to try to bring everybody into the mainstream.

I talked about the “Other New York,” not unlike Kennedy who talked about the “Other America,” or Cuomo did, or Michael Harrington did.

HJHP

And what did you mean by the “Other New York?”

Ferrer

Those who have been left out of the mainstream, economically and socially.

HJHP

Do you think that this term was misinterpreted by people in the media?

Ferrer

No. It was intentionally misinterpreted. First they would say, “Oh, he’s trying to touch off a class war.” And then, of course, somebody would say, “Oh no. There’s going to be a race war.” It’s interesting when people define it in those terms. “Oh, are you saying that only people of color feel the economic brunt of things?” Now why is that?

And it proves my point. In New York, [we experience] such economic and social inequalities in a city such as this, yet it prides itself on Wall Street, and Disneyland on 42nd Street, and everybody doing well. In my view, this is unacceptable.

HJHP

Why do you think that there has been a surge in Latinos running for political office in this day and age?

Ferrer

Because there’s an increased presence in the population and because we’ve been here a while. We are going through the system of living here, of education—I was the first in my family to see the inside of a university. These factors contribute to running for office.

HJHP

What is your perspective on Orlando Sanchez’s race for mayor of Houston?

Ferrer

Well that was a different race; that was a very interesting race. He did not have a natural constituency other than he was a Cuban American running among Mexican Americans. But he had an ideological constituency, Republicans.

HJHP

Do you think that there were any similarities affecting the outcomes of the three mayoral elections [Ferrer in New York City, Antonio Villaraigosa in Los Angeles, and Orlando Sanchez in Houston]?

Ferrer

Only to the extent that when you run out of good reasons, you start raising the fear factor. The first cousins of the race factor are me and you. It bears some watching.

HJHP

What is your vision of the role of Latinos in politics in the next 10 to 50 years?

Ferrer

As our representation in the population increases, then there's an obvious increase in expectations with respect to political achievement. It's the nature of things.

HJHP

Do you think that those expectations will be realized, considering the factors that you mentioned, such as the fear factor?

Ferrer

It's already being realized. I came within a little over 15,000 votes of being the Democratic nominee in the city that would have elected me mayor. The next time out, maybe it's 1,500 votes; maybe it's 15,000 votes the other way. But, the demographics are certainly there. The demographics only tell part of the story. It's how you reach it.

At the end, whoever you are—Black, or Brown, or White, or Yellow—you need a rationale to vote.

HJHP

Do you think that this is lacking in the political system we have right now? Because the voter turnouts, not specifically in reference to this mayoral election, but overall voter turnouts in the United States are particularly low for a democracy.

Ferrer

Yes, it is. Why do we vote on a Tuesday? Why? Why do we still vote on paper in many states? We used to vote over three or four days in this nation, in its infancy.

HJHP

Do you think that race played a role to your day-to-day activities in campaigning for mayor of New York?

Ferrer

I think not a conscious one, certainly, but I would be naive if I didn't acknowledge that I'm not going to play that well in Sheepshead Bay. And that's a fact of life.

HJHP

Do you think that you were viewed predominantly as a Democratic candidate running for mayor, or a Latino candidate?

Ferrer

Well, I think the extent to which you're defined, that's the way you're perceived. I do not speak accented English—at least I don't think so. But certainly, you will be defined in this way.

HJHP

Do you think that this will always play a factor?

Ferrer

Sure, that's who we are as Americans. Of course it does. It played a factor when John F. Kennedy ran for president. He was Irish American. He was Catholic. And before him, Al Smith. It has played a factor since the Civil Rights Movement, when Martin Luther King was first organizing, to me, the revisionist history today. You would think, "Oh, this man was always Gandhi and a saint." No. If you read the newspapers and remember the television and radio accounts of the day, he was described in much the same terms as Al Sharpton is described today. He's a troublemaker. He's a rabble-rouser. He's very controversial.

HJHP

At a recent school discussion regarding Blacks and Latinos in politics, Donna Brazile, who worked on the Gore campaign, said that race and ethnicity should be somewhat downplayed when trying to reach the masses, and, instead, other issues should be accentuated.

Ferrer

I agree with that. And sometimes they're not. Look at Villaraigosa's campaign. They raised the fear factor. They weren't so clumsy as to say, "The guy's a spic." No, no, no. They said, "Can we take a chance on this guy?" Whoa. So race can be a factor.

HJHP

Do you think that there is an inherent problem, though, in trying to downplay your race or ethnicity when you are a Latino politician?

Ferrer

People answer that question all the time and say, "The good news and the bad news for me is my press conferences take twice as long." It's the good news and the bad news. It was interesting to look at the expressions on some of the faces of the White journalists. But they were very impatient when I was speaking in Spanish. And the faces of the Spanish-speaking journalists, who felt empowered that finally a candidate for a major office was conducting this in Spanish.

HJHP

In regards to the situation with Mark Green, did you feel like you had to choose between aligning yourself with the Democratic Party or aligning yourself with your beliefs?

Ferrer

Well, I try to never to put myself in the position where I have to make that choice. I supported the Democratic nominee. I was very unhappy with the nature of the campaign and certainly unhappy with the revelations of the very scurrilous campaign that surfaced in the last five days. [This] is the reason why, [while] I did not withdraw my endorsement, I just withdrew my personal participation in the last five days.

But these things don't happen in a vacuum. People saw this, too. People were very angry about it. They weren't angry about it five days before the campaign when the news stories began to surface. They weren't angry about it when they saw the conduct of the campaign. But they see a commercial like, "Can we afford to take a chance?" Give me a break. They know what that's about. The people don't like it.

HJHP

Was this necessarily race baiting?

Ferrer

Well, when you play the fear card, that's the first cousin of the race card in this context. And it's pretty much acknowledged. And, of course, when you play that card, and then these scurrilous phone calls are mysteriously made, the literature goes up. This doesn't happen by itself. "Oh, you made too much of that." That is, at best, naive; at worst, just an attempt to lie about it.

HJHP

What do you think was the role of the media? How would you characterize that in your campaign?

Ferrer

I think, for the most part, it was fair. Some of it, however, was the propellant for a race-based campaign, but that's about selling newspapers. And how do you do that? You create a controversy where none exists. And then you have to justify it. It's unfortunate how many of them play with this kind of fire.

HJHP

In regards to the mayoral election in Los Angeles, there appears to be growing tensions between the Latino and African American communities. Would you agree with that? And how do you think that should be addressed?

Ferrer

It's very sad, but it is happening. And it's a sense of grievance. It has to be resolved at the people level. It has to be resolved there.

HJHP

How?

Ferrer

I don't know. I think we resolved it here. There was a longstanding sense of grievance in New York, too, and it was resolved when we broke the membrane and finally told people, "Look, this is why I'm running." We broke through the public consciousness of people, so that you can tell them, "Look, there's a reason to come out and vote." I cannot tell you how many African Americans today come to me and say, "You gave me a reason to vote." It's music to my ears. But we should all strive to give people a rationale to vote.

HJHP

How do you think that would play, in part, with the sense that people's power is being diminished? For example, between the African American and Latino communities in South Central, the perception is that power is shifting as more Latinos move into the community. There are worries about representation.

Ferrer

That's going to happen. Something is happening here in New York. The Latino population is becoming less monolithically Puerto Rican. What's going to happen? What's going to happen is what's always happened. Things change. You compete in the marketplaces, ideas, and beliefs; that's the nature of representative democracy.

HJHP

And what do you think of Mayor Bloomberg's performance so far?

Ferrer

It's hard to tell. We've hardly had time to draw conclusions. I just wonder if anyone is looking at all the issues of these proposals in a very, very tough budget. If Mayor Ferrer had proposed it, would I have gotten my head blown off by the editorial boards? That would be an interesting exercise.

HJHP

And do you think that you'll further pursue politics in the future?

Ferrer

I don't know. I might. I'm still a very public person. I'm doing this now, but I haven't lost any of my desire to be active in public matters. I don't know what that will be. If someone were to ask me today, I'd say, "I don't know, ask me in a year, a year and a half."

HJHP

What do you think is the role of organizations like National Council of La Raza [NCLR] and HACU [Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities] and so on?

Ferrer

I used to be a board member of NCLR. They are very focused organizations that relate to important advocacy issues that affect all of us. NCLR began as a principally Mexican American organization. In fact, I was the first Puerto Rican on their board. When I became chairman of the Hispanic Caucus of the Democratic National Committee, [I was the] first Puerto Rican chairman of the caucus dominated by Mexican Americans, and in fact I only became chairman because of the support of Mexican Americans from L.A., from Houston, from Dallas.

So La Raza made a really first attempt to be ecumenical and say, "We've got a huge set of issues here." And I [supported] the first Dominican to be on their board. Those are things we need to do for each other.

HJHP

And do you think it's the role of these organizations, for example, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, to try to locate potential leaders in the Latino community?

Ferrer

That would be ideally wonderful, but I don't think it happens that way. I think it's the responsibility of local leadership to nurture and incubate new generations of leadership.

HJHP

And what do you currently think of leadership in the Latino community?

Ferrer

I can't make a determination about that. I don't know it that well in other places. I know it well enough in New York. I think people are getting involved. There was a time here when we would devour our young. When I was coming up in leadership, these were tough times. The established Latino leadership such as it was, small as it was, was very jealous and constantly guarded.

To some extent, that will continue, but to a great extent, we're incubating new leadership. Herman Badillo was a first in everything—first borough president of the Bronx. When he stopped being borough president of the Bronx, he was not succeeded by a Latino or a Puerto Rican. I was. That's the difference.

HJHP

What do you think is the distinction between the Latino and African American community in regards to national leadership. It appears that the

Latinos don't have national leadership figures the way African Americans appear to have.

Ferrer

Like who, African American?

HJHP

Well, Jesse Jackson is commonly known; Al Sharpton is currently known as well. Do you think that we have that in Latino community?

Ferrer

Henry Cisneros is commonly known. Villaraigosa—pretty good. Ferrer—not bad. My race made coast-to-coast news; there are people who noticed. That will happen. We [Latinos] have had a much briefer journey. And yet we've accomplished an awful lot.

HJHP

Do you have any advice or comments to students who are interested in affecting public policies and issues related to social justice issues but are skeptical about the political process and politics in general?

Ferrer

They go hand in hand. If you believe they do not, it's just simply not true. I'm not in politics right now—maybe forever, I don't know. And yet if you strip down the political office, the elections, I'm still interested today in the same things I was years ago when I set forth on this journey. How does this affect people? I'm interested in that. It's the thing that makes me wake up in the morning and show up here.

HJHP

Thank you.

Houston Latinos Defy Stereotype in Mayoral Election

**Interview with Orlando Sanchez
Former Houston City Council Member (1995-2001)
and 2001 Mayoral Candidate**

On the brink of the decade when Hispanics edged past Anglos to become Houston's largest ethnic group, Orlando Sanchez, a first-generation immigrant whose working-class family fled communist Cuba in 1959, made an attempt to become the city's first Latino mayor.

A Houstonian since 1962, and Houston City Council member (at-large position 3) since 1995, Orlando Sanchez is a product of Houston schools, a cum laude graduate of the University of Houston in political science, and a veteran of the U.S. Air Force and the Texas Air National Guard. The attorney general has twice nominated him to the state's Municipal Advisory Committee. Additionally, Texas senator Phil Gramm enlisted his help as a member of the U.S. Senate Task Force on Hispanic Affairs.

Orlando Sanchez competed for mayor in a city where Hispanics make up about 38 percent of the population yet, to date, constitute only about 8 percent of the electorate. His relatively conservative Republican politics contrast with the traditional Houston Latino leadership of Mexican American Democrats. Sanchez was the first Hispanic candidate for mayor since the changing demographics of Census 2000 became a reality for Houston. Though city elections are nonpartisan, Sanchez almost defeated the Democratic incumbent Lee Brown losing in the run-off by a margin of 1.4 percent.

Wendolynn Montoya of the HJHP interviewed Orlando Sanchez on 11 January 2001.

HJHP

How did your family come to Houston in 1962?

Sanchez

My father was a broadcaster in Cuba, and 1959 there was the revolution. The family left, and we moved to Caracas, Venezuela. In late 1961, early 1962, the owner of the professional baseball team in Houston, Roy Hofeinz, called my father because they needed another sportscaster. My father was recommended, and they recruited him out of Caracas to come to Houston. Therefore, in 1962, my father and a partner became the Spanish voice of the Houston Astros. The rest of the family came to Houston later in May of 1962.

HJHP

You went to the University of Houston, were a political science major, and worked in Houston for many years. At what point did you decide to run for City Council?

Sanchez

My family developed a pretty good relationship with the Hofeinz family. Roy Hofeinz was the former county judge and among his friends was Lyndon Johnson. Then Roy's son, Fred, became the mayor of the city of Houston. I thought this was really fascinating, so I got interested in politics. After college, in 1991, I then decided to run for public office, and I've stayed active in politics ever since.

HJHP

Were you involved in student government at the University of Houston?

Sanchez

No, not per se. I mean, I didn't run for the student body, but my major was political science.

HJHP

When and how did you make your decision to choose your party affiliation?

Sanchez

Interestingly, if I were influenced by my upbringing, I would have been a Democrat because Roy Hofeinz, Lyndon Johnson, and Fred Hofeinz, who became mayor, were all Democrats. I grew up around Democrats. My mother's favorite president was John F. Kennedy.

It wasn't until about 11th grade that I started to "snap" as a student, and I started to develop a real interest in politics. It was then that I started to see the differences between the philosophy and the platform of the Democratic party and that of the Republican party. I don't agree with everything in the Republican party, but, overall, it's the one that's more closely aligned with what I believe. I believe in the spirit of the individual, not the government. I guess it was my own end analysis that developed my interest in the Republican party.

HJHP

Who represents the Latino community, here in Houston and nationwide—Democrats or Republicans? Or do you feel there is no clear-cut line?

Sanchez

I don't see any clear-cut decision. Houston is the fourth-largest city in the nation and there is no leader of Houston from the Hispanic community, from one party or another. The Hispanic community all over the country, and particularly the Southwest, has matured, such that there is no longer a Cesar Chavez leading the labor movement; there's not a Henry Cisneros who's the only Hispanic mayor of a major metropolitan area. While we may not have mayors of major cities, we all witnessed Hispanic candidates for mayor this year in Houston, New York, Miami, El Paso, San Antonio, and Los Angeles. Therefore, I think in Houston, and in all these cities, there are a lot of bright young Hispanics coming up in the political arena from both political parties.

HJHP

During the campaign, a significant number of Latino voters declared they were voting for you simply because your last name was Sanchez. Do you agree with this sentiment, and do you feel that the Latino community should always support a Latino candidate, regardless of party affiliation?

Sanchez

No, I disagree. I think that every voter should make an informed and intelligent decision based on the issues the candidate discusses. To say, "I'm voting for that candidate regardless of party," is an uninformed opinion, therefore, I disagree with that policy. I think people ought to vote for candidates based upon the issues they articulate, the benefits the candidate can bring to the community, and based upon [the candidate's] experience.

HJHP

How do you feel that your Cuban background played out during the campaign in a city that's largely Mexican American and one in which the Latino elected officials are predominately Mexican American Democrats?

Sanchez

This issue had some impact in that my opponent wanted to use it against me. Lee Brown did not understand the Hispanic culture. In other words, he believed there existed a natural animosity between Cubans and Mexicans, Cubans and Venezuelans, Nicaraguans and Salvadorians. What I have always tried to do is simply talk about the Hispanic community, recognizing that the Mexican community and the Mexican American community are the largest block of voters, followed by the Salvadorian community.

I always sought to talk about issues that were common to us—a common religion, a common set of values and language. Though we have different ethnicities and have different styles of eating—some of us like black beans,

others like frijoles a la charra—I sought to discuss global issues, education, etc. My goal was to get Hispanic turnout up, and by doing this, we empowered the Hispanic community.

HJHP

In speaking with Latinos as you campaigned, what were the complaints most expressed?

Sanchez

Lack of services from the city. Drive down any street on the East End or the Northside—the Latino parts of town—and look at the streets: open ditches, no sidewalks, no streetlights, no services whatsoever. We're almost 40 percent of the population of the city of Houston, meaning we're paying a lot of taxes and we're not getting any services. When they want to shut down a fire station, they go shut one in the Latino area of town.

Secondly, many were very sensitive about the police treatment of the Latino community. Even small things like response time by the police to Latino crimes tended to be slower. Many basically felt they were treated as second-class citizens.

I'll tell you this because this really irks me. In pay grades 12 and above, which is the supervisory level in the city of Houston, Latinos only make up 7 percent under this mayor, Lee Brown. We actually lost supervisors under Mayor Brown. The city of Houston has 13 departments, and we have one Latino that was appointed to head that department. And Democrat Lee Brown declares himself the mayor for all of Houston.

HJHP

Hispanics make up approximately 38 percent of Houston's population, and estimates indicate that Hispanics usually represent 8 percent of the electorate. However, in this election, Hispanic voter turnout measured between 14 and 19 percent of the electorate. Why do you feel the Latino vote does not usually reach a level of significance, and why did the numbers go up in this election?

Sanchez

I can tell you that here in Houston, we set a record level of voting this year. I think we doubled the vote because we had a Latino out there that inspired people to vote. However, these numbers are still low. As you know, the Latino community is the youngest ethnic group in the United States, and this is also true in Houston, according to the census data. So, half of our population is under 18, and it can't vote. Of the 800,000 total Latinos, about 400,000 are below 18, so you have a pool of 400,000. Of that 400,000, a lot of those are here undocumented. And I don't know what that number is, but I would estimate to, say, between 150,000 and 200,000. Let's just assume it's the higher number of 200,000. That leaves you a pool of 200,000. Of that group, not many are registered to vote because historically they haven't voted; they're not citizens yet, or they don't want to vote. That leaves you

a very small pool. We have a lot of work to do in terms of getting people educated.

HJHP

What do you feel is the best means by which to organize more Latinos to vote? What are the top two or three suggestions you recommend?

Sanchez

I think it's an education process. The Latino community needs to know that they must have a seat at the table; that to enjoy full participation in the American dream, you must cover all bases—socioeconomic, educational, political, all aspects. You have to have representation in all those areas.

We've done a tremendous job, as a community, from the economic perspective. It's amazing, here in Houston, for example, how many people started, 10 to 15 years ago with a small *taqueria* in one little location. I can tell you specifically *Taqueria Aranda*, that started many years ago. Now, they're on the verge of franchising because they persevered and worked hard.

So the Hispanic community, whether the Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Cuban community, is hardworking and entrepreneurial. If given the opportunity, we'll flourish. So, economically I think we're doing very well, especially in Houston.

On the political and educational levels, we need to have voter participation. We need to stress to Latinos why it's important to vote. This is a primary issue. In every survey, and regardless of the ethnicity of the Hispanic, education is the number one issue. Educating our youth is something we're lagging in. Latinos have the highest drop-out rate among kids in our school district—in the Houston Independent School District. It's frightening, and this is the workforce of tomorrow.

Not only is it frightening for the Latino community, it's frightening for a city like Houston, [which] has to compete economically with other major metropolitan areas. If we cannot graduate enough students to participate in a global economy, the city's going to suffer.

Along these education lines are not only education for the Latino community, but political education for the Anglo community as well. Many don't understand the Hispanic community. First of all, they don't know what the word Hispanic means. Secondly, [when] they think Hispanics, they think of brown-skinned individuals, [yet] Hispanics are as white and blond and blue-eyed as a Swedish person, and as dark and black as a Nigerian.

So, you have Africans that are Hispanic, you have Anglos, Caucasians that are Hispanic, you have *mestizos*, you have all kinds of people that are Hispanic. That's the Hispanic culture; it includes all ethnicities.

HJHP

In addition to education what do you feel are the most pertinent policy issues affecting the Latino community in Houston, and nationwide?

Sanchez

The most pertinent issues, I think, are education [and] access to services, whether it be health care, education, whatever benefits are available to people—benefits from the Small Business Administration, how to fund a loan for small businesses, whatnot. Third of all, I don't want to say discrimination, because it's getting a lot better, but I guess I would have to. I would say those are probably the top three: education, access to services, and then, of course, discrimination.

HJHP

Would you say that those three issues would be a national Latino agenda that many of us could rally behind and unite for?

Sanchez

I think so. I can't imagine any Latino that doesn't want better education for their children. That is a universal virtue among Latinos, we want better for our kids than what we had. I'm fortunate in that I had a better education, I have more material things, I live in a better country; my parents provided that for me. My daughter, I hope, will be better than I will. I know that's probably how your family raised you.

I think we all want better access to services. We want to know how we can become citizens quicker; we want to know about our social security; we want to know about our workman's compensation rights. If we don't speak English, we don't understand the system in each and every state. Often, we don't know that there are legal services available to us if we're indigent. We want to know about healthcare. It's tragic that the childhood immunization rate in Houston, Tex., is lowest among Latinos. Those are issues that we all need to rally around, and I think we can, regardless of party and regardless of nationality.

HJHP

Nationwide, what can either party—Democrat or Republican—do to attract the Latino vote? What do you think we need to appeal to?

Sanchez

Two things. I think that both parties need to do a better job of GOTV—getting out the vote—among the Latino community. This can be done through an education process, either directly or indirectly, through nonprofit organizations such as NALEO (National Association of Latino Elected Officials), such as South West Voter Registration. [Such groups] are all over the country, whatever you want to call them.

For the Democrats, what I think they need to quit taking Latinos for granted. They talk a good game, but their appointments of Latinos are very thin on the record. They need to stop just talking about helping Latinos and do something. I think the Clinton administration was criticized for being weak on the Latino side—in naming them to key positions.

On the Republican side, I think they need to quit being scared of the Latino community and go into the community. I mean, you don't see too many Republicans campaigning there, and it's mostly because they don't really understand the community. The only way to understand Latinos is to get into the community and find out what the problems are, and you're seeing more and more of that. The president, when he was our governor, did an excellent job of promoting Latinos to positions of power and leadership—Al Gonzalez and Tony Garza, David Medina to the courts here. The list is long of people that the governor appointed. Now, the White House counsel is somebody that's Latino who is from Houston—Al Gonzales. And rumors are that he will be the first Hispanic member of the Supreme Court.

I think from the very top, if the leadership is committed to helping the Latino community, then they will put Latinos into positions or appoint them to positions of power and leadership—like Governor Bush did.

HJHP

What is it that you feel is attracting Latinos to the Republican party and away from the Democratic party? Or what is it that is attracting Latinos away from the Republican party and to the Democratic party?

Sanchez

I think the shift is to the Republican party and not the Democratic party. For years the Democrats had the support of the Latinos, and for years Latinos weren't getting anywhere. It was like, "Yeah, come vote for us," and you looked around and there were no Latino Supreme Court justices, there were no Latino secretaries of state, there were no Latino railroad commissioners. As the Latino community began to become educated and generate wealth, they realized they were being taxed ridiculous amounts.

So when we become part of the economic mainstream, we start to realize we don't want to pay all these taxes for all these social services, which we never get, and we become smarter. We start to love the country, and we understand it's important to have a strong national defense. You may disagree with the social issues of the Republican party, but at the end of the day, we all love our country, and we understand that America has to be the big 800-pound gorilla. And you can't be an 800-pound gorilla without a strong national defense. That is a core belief of the Republican party. Not the Democrats. They'll do just what it takes. So that's a fundamental difference.

Republicans believe in less regulation. Any businessman will tell you, "Get the government off my back." You know, it even hurts the little guy more because the guy that wants to open up the *taqueria* has to fill out tons of paperwork, get several permits, and Republicans hate that. Democrats live on it because it creates more government jobs.

Republicans believe in accountability and education. We don't want to just pass you socially: "You spent a year in first grade? Good, you move to second grade." Republicans ask, "What did you learn in first grade?" We're going to

test you to make sure you learned all that so we can move you into the second grade, so you become a good citizen.

Democrats really aren't interested. They're more interested, in my opinion, in making sure we have bigger teacher unions, this, that, and the other. Particularly young people now that are third generation are learning more about the two parties fully. I can't tell you how many young people would come to me and say, "I like what you say and I've read the Republican platform." That's good. You know why it's good? Because you should never have us, as a Latino community, with our feet planted just in one side of the aisle. We should have our feet on both sides of the aisle, so when you have a Republican Congress, we have influence there; when you have a Democratic Congress, we have influence there. I think it's great we're in both parties.

HJHP

In Houston and, more so, in many other major cities, there seem to be growing rifts between the Latino community and the African American community. In Houston, this issue played a major role in the mayoral race. What are your thoughts about this problem, and what do you suggest to ease these tensions?

Sanchez

Any time a particular entity feels threatened by another entity or group, there's going to be some conflict. Obviously the conflict is about who's going to divide up the pie or who's going to be in charge of the pie, so it's natural for there to be some conflict among groups—it's just a natural tendency.

I think for us as leaders, our job is to diminish that tension and talk about the common issues that affect us: common roads that are in disrepair that we have to drive on, or a fire department that's not in good shape and that has to respond to everybody, or whether sanitation workers are working adequately. We need to discuss global issues that affect us all and not divide our communities.

In my campaign, I had many Hispanics—males and females—involved. I had many African Americans and Asians [also involved].

HJHP

Do you think that other communities in Houston, Texas, and nationwide will ever be able to fully support Latino politicians?

Sanchez

I hope so. If you look at the data, it doesn't look good. Whether it's Los Angeles or whether it's Houston, there's just not a long history of African Americans supporting Latinos. It's the other way around—Latinos have helped and supported the African American community for a long time. I hope that someday the African American community will be able to look beyond ethnicity and race and judge candidates based on what they bring to the table.

HJHP

You spoke about the leadership of Henry Cisneros earlier. How do you feel

that his scandal affected Latino politicians in the state and in general how they were viewed?

Sanchez

It hurts. It hurts because Latinos are under a microscope anyway. We had a rising star in the Latino community, whether it be Henry Cisneros, or Houstonian Ben Reyes, and then Betty Maldonado. They were all young, rising stars. Then we start getting busted, so to speak. Ben Reyes is in a federal penitentiary, and Betty Maldonado is in a federal penitentiary, and Henry Cisneros plea-bargains out in a federal court. That sends the message that we're all crooks and that hurts.

I tell my colleagues and particularly young people that what we need to do as Latino leaders is to hold ourselves up in a manner that makes our community proud. If you want to be a crook and make money, there's not a lot of money in politics—go somewhere else. If you're going to represent people, do it in a fashion that brings respect and honor to your community. That's what they were doing; they were representing us before trouble hit. Henry Cisneros spoke for us. What happened is disappointing for all of us.

HJHP

What do you feel are the hindrances to Latina/os participating in politics in Houston and in general?

Sanchez

I think the hindrance in general is that it's tough. It's tough to be a Latino, an immigrant, and go out to the public and say, "Elect me [to] city councilman." Especially in the South, where we have a lot of racial discrimination based upon stereotypes. Who wants to put themselves up to that kind of scrutiny? I was concerned about that when I ran, but you have to overcome it.

And Latinas, I think they're doing a good job. We have great Latina organizations here in Houston. The first elected official in the city of Houston was Gracie Saenz, and I'm proud of her and her leadership. Now we have many women involved. I think the Hispanic community though, is probably more private sector oriented than government oriented. Maybe because in our respective countries elected officials are not seen as virtuous, and that gives the industry a bad name. Even though they like to ridicule politicians, there still is a sense that public service is good. It's like the military: it's honor, it's our country.

HJHP

What do you think a run-off with a Latino and an African American says about Houston?

Sanchez

Great city. It's a great city.

HJHP

What do you feel it says about Texas when we have two Latino Democrats, Dan Morales and Tony Sanchez, battling it out to be the Democratic candidate for governor, and we have a Latino running for senate?

Sanchez

I think it's great. I just wish it were two Latinos battling it out on the Republican side. Governor! I mean, think about that. That's great! I take my hat off to them. Sanchez has money, he's got wealth, and he's risking it and putting it out there to be a leader for all of Texas, and, more importantly, he's a Latino. I think it's great.

HJHP

Jessie Jackson is viewed as leader and a voice for the African American community. Do you feel we have anyone that leads the Latino community now?

Sanchez

No, but that's why our community is different. I think our community is assimilating more quickly, in my opinion, into the American dream or the American way in that we don't have just one leader. Our community is so diverse, and we don't look to just one person. We know better than that, though I'm not trying to insult Jessie Jackson. I think African Americans have a completely different situation than the Latino community. Our problems are historically different.

HJHP

Upon reflection after the election, what would you have done differently, if anything?

Sanchez

Nothing. We actually had a plan. We looked at the history of run-offs in Houston and we realized, in a run-off election, you need about 141,000-145,000 votes to win a run-off. We got 161,000 votes—almost 20,000 more votes than our total. Unfortunately, my opponent got 8,000 or 9,000 more votes than I did.

Yet, what we did help establish is historic voter participation in this city. We had more voters vote in the run-off between a Latino and an African American than the first go-round, and then, in any race in the history of Houston. So I fell a little short. Would I have liked to have won? Absolutely. But I had a business plan. If I raised a million dollars, here's what my plan's going to look like. If I raise \$2 million, here's what my plan's going to look like. If I raise \$3 million, there's this plan, and so forth. I followed my plan, and I got all the votes I wanted, and more. In fact, I raised more money than I thought I would.

This Latino immigrant raised more money than the incumbent. It was a fascinating race, in that people first thought, "He's not going to go any-

where.” However, Lee Brown had to call in all these people from Washington to win this election for an incumbent. I was pretty proud of that. It would have been nice to be the first Latino elected in a major metropolitan area in the United States, but someone will do it, some Latino will, but we need much more voter outreach targeting Latinos.

HJHP

Do you feel you still hold a responsibility to the Latino community, if they were to come to you and ask, “Would you run again?”

Sanchez

No, it’s not that simple. I will tell you some interesting things happened in this race. I’ll tell you why I ran. I was having lunch one day, with a Mexican entrepreneur who owns about 10 automobile dealerships here, and about 20 of them in Mexico. He’s a U.S. citizen, but he is from Mexico. He says, in his Mexican Spanish Orlando, “*Tienes que lanzarte para alcalde*” [“You have to run for mayor”], and I said, “You’ve got to be kidding.” He told me he was serious and that he would help me raise money.

Then I visited with a couple of other Mexican businessmen, and they all agreed. We had this core group of Mexican businessmen who committed to raise a quarter million dollars immediately. And I’ll be darned if they didn’t deliver. My biggest contributors were Mexicans. And that was pretty exciting. Do I have a responsibility now to the Hispanic community? Yes. I have that sense, that feeling, that now if there’s a grave injustice, that people are going to look to me and say, “Well, what do you think?” And I’ve already started to live up to my commitments to address these injustices.

I went to “Politically Incorrect,” and they asked me what issues I wanted to talk about. I said, “Well, while I’m here in California, how about the way Hispanics are depicted?” Pick any show on television, and tell me when you see a Hispanic judge or Hispanic E.R. attending physician. You see Asians, you see African Americans, and Anglos. But the Latinos are still the maids at the hotels, and they’re sweeping and mopping the emergency room of all the blood. But you never see them in positions of leadership. Ever.

I have a little Latina girl whom I’m trying to teach how to speak Spanish because I want her to be bilingual. My daughter can’t watch a Hispanic woman in a position of leadership in a television show because it isn’t there. I think that’s a huge injustice. Jessie Jackson, much credit to him, would call those people down on the carpet. How come there isn’t a movement to say to Hollywood, “Forty percent of the U.S. population is going to tune you off, and now go tell your advertisers that.” Where’s our Hispanic leadership? That’s why I would run again.

HJHP

You’ve been asked to run for Congress by many in the Republican party. Would you run for a Congressional seat?

Sanchez

I could. I've always wanted to write a book called *From Cuba to Congress*. I'm kidding. But the Republicans have been very supportive. Republicans are tripping over themselves trying to figure out how to make inroads into the Hispanic community. They just don't know; they're just new at this.

I think Governor Bush set the trend, and now they're all calling me, "What can we do?" "How can we reach out to a Latino community?" I say, you shut down your office over here on the affluent West side, and you go and open up an office in the Mexican community, and then you'll make inroads into the Hispanic community. You'll develop a lot of friends, and you'll develop the infrastructure.

HJHP

What do you predict for yourself in the future?

Sanchez

I have a 9-year-old daughter I have to raise, so I'm staying here in Houston for the immediate future. I am passionate about politics, and I love this city. Therefore, I think the Latino community deserves a leader that can understand it, that's bilingual, and that understands the culture. People say, "You're Cuban," and they think I don't understand the Mexican community. They forget I came here when I was 3, I grew up here, so my favorite dishes are from Mexican restaurants. I would love to run for office again, but it could be that there's a better-qualified, more passionate, better-funded Latino candidate next time, in which case I wouldn't run; I'd probably help them.

HJHP

What is your vision for the role of Latinos in the American political establishment in the next 50 years, and what do you feel about the future of Texas? Do you think we'll be able to get a Latino governor, maybe a Latino president?

Sanchez

I think that it is possible. I think we'll see a governor that's Latino in Texas, first. There is a possibility for a Latino president; though at that point, it will be an American with a Hispanic surname. But it's going to take a lot more voters. We have the numbers to elect anyone now, but we need to work on getting out the vote.

If most of the people that were eligible to vote registered to vote, I'd be mayor today; it's just that they didn't. If everybody [Latino] that's eligible across the country to register actually does vote, [Latino candidates] can [win]. If you look at the key electoral states, Latinos could have California, Texas, New York, and Florida. The states with the highest electoral concentration are the states that are most heavily populated by Latinos. So is it possible? Yes, it's possible.

Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

**Race, Politics, and the American Dream
Interview with Antonio R. Villaraigosa
Former Speaker of the California State Assembly (1998-2000)
and 2001 Los Angeles Mayoral Candidate**

It is often said, "What happens in Los Angeles eventually happens in the rest of California; what happens in California eventually happens in the rest of the country." Antonio Villaraigosa's race for the mayor of Los Angeles signaled the growing political clout of Latinos in California and across the country. During 2001, at least two more Latino candidates would run for mayor—in the cities of New York and Houston.

Villaraigosa began his career in public service 25 years earlier, when he led student protests at his high school. He graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Villaraigosa spent most of his years after UCLA as an organizer and eventually became the president of the local American Federation of Government Employees, and president of the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California.

In 1994, while a member of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority, Villaraigosa was elected to the California State Assembly, representing the 45th district in Los Angeles. Villaraigosa's career in the assembly is marked by his meteoric rise to the speakership. First, as a freshman legislator, Villaraigosa was tapped to be a Democratic whip and served on the appropriations and budget committees. In 1997, he was chosen as assembly majority leader. A year later, Villaraigosa became the 63rd speaker of the assembly.

Antonio Villaraigosa shocked political insiders and Los Angeles by winning the April 2001 primary election. Although he lost the general election, his defeat was considered a dark cloud with a silver lining; many believe that his candidacy opened a door for Latinos in Los Angeles and across the country.

Jimmy Gomez of the HJHP interviewed Antonio Villaraigosa on 26 December 2001.

HJHP

Mr. Villagraigosa, you have been a community activist your entire life—can you tell us a little about that?

Villaraigosa

Well, I had been involved as a community activist since I was 15 years old. I got involved in a number of things, such as the farm workers boycott, student-led protests and walk-outs at Cathedral high school, and a Mexican American student group. During that same year, 1968, I helped found a chapter of the Black student union.

So, I've been involved my whole life and I continued to be involved during my years [as a student] at UCLA. I was the chairman of MEChA [*El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán*], and I was involved with the Third World Coalition. I was involved with many of the fights around access to the university. At that time, there already were attempts to retrench on affirmative action. Ethnic studies were under assault. So I was involved in all of those fights back then.

I left UCLA with a few weeks to graduate to start a newspaper and got involved with other people who were organizing and defending immigrants. After that, I was involved with the labor movement, eventually becoming the president of the American Federation of Government Employees. I also worked with organizing with SEIU—Service Employees International Union, and worked with the teachers union before I was elected [to the State Assembly].

HJHP

What factors and issues motivated you to run for a state assembly seat in 1994?

Villaraigosa

The same issues that motivated me to run for office are basically the same issues that motivated me to get involved since I was 15 years old. Prior to 1994, many community leaders in the mid-1980s asked me to run for school board and for other offices. However, at that time I had decided against it. Then in 1993, I was a member of the MTA board, Metropolitan Transit Authority, and I had done a number of things to focus attention on urban bus riders. For example, I had put together a 50-cent fare plan for bus riders, expanded the bus system, and put together the most successful anti-graffiti program in the country. Working with many elected officials that were on the board at that time, I realized that it made sense for me to run for office. It was a next step in a 25-year career in public and community service, so in 1994 I decided to run.

HJHP

In more ways than your election, 1994 was an interesting year for Californians.

Villaraigosa

Yes, it was an interesting year. It was the year that Proposition 187 [anti-immigration proposition] passed, and also the year that the “Three Strikes” initiative was on the ballot. So, throughout my campaign I spoke in opposition to Proposition 187. I questioned and opposed the “Three Strikes You’re Out” initiative. So you’re against the death penalty, which over 70 percent of Californians support. You’re opposed to [Proposition] 187, while so many people support it. You think that the “Three Strikes, You’re Out” initiative is nonsensical and isn’t a good public policy. How do you expect to get elected?

I was a candidate from an area that was very progressive, and I think people were looking for a leader that was willing to take on those issues.

HJHP

A lot of academics and news media say that 1994 was the year that the Latino community finally woke up. Do you believe that to be the case? And if so, how do you think it will change the political landscape of Los Angeles, the rest of California, and the country as a whole?

Villaraigosa

Certainly 1994 was a seminal, watershed year. When I was elected, the day after the election we had a press conference denouncing Proposition 187, and I said that day, interestingly enough, that 187 was a dark cloud, but that there was a silver lining, and the silver lining would be increased consciousness and organizing among Latinos; and it proved to be true.

In fact, since 1994 you’ve seen an energized Latino voting base, not just in California, but all across the country—but certainly California has led the nation. Before 1994, there were four or five members in the [California] state assembly. Today there are some 20-plus [Latino] members of the state assembly. Back then one or two [Latino] state senators, and there are now 10 [Latino] state senators. In many elections throughout the state, Latinos are voting in higher numbers than in any demographic group, especially new Americans, the immigrants who are voting for the first time.

HJHP

Why did Proposition 187 have such impact in motivating Latinos?

Villaraigosa

Let me tell you why I think Proposition 187 was so important. One of the things I said was that [Proposition] 187 was the breaking of the social compact in America. In the 20th century and before that, immigrants have always had the toughest job. That wasn’t more true for Latinos and Asians than it was for the Russian Jews that got here, the Italians, the Poles, or the Germans, or whoever it was that came to this country. Immigrants have always had the toughest, dirtiest jobs.

But the social compact with immigrants has always been, “You come here, you’re going to work hard, and you’ll have an opportunity for a better life.”

But that opportunity will be even more enhanced with your children's generation. You'll have a tough life, but your kids will have the promised-land . . . if you will. Your kids will have the opportunity to go to the best schools, have health care, and have all of the quality of life issues that make the United States a country like no other.

I think it was a breaking of the social compact because now we're saying you [new immigrants] won't be treated like other Americans. You'll be second-class citizens. Your children won't get a public school education—radical concepts, when you think of it. Now, the other side will say, well, that's not true. That it [the American Dream] was only for legal immigrants, not the illegal immigrants. But the truth is [that] the history of this country has been that many, many of the immigrants that have come to this country have come here illegally.

And, while this country has a right to have immigration laws—which I support, they should be implemented fairly and equitably. However, when they're implemented in a discriminatory way, in the way that [Proposition] 187 was, I think they're wrong and should be opposed. And I think that the groundswell of opposition to [Proposition] 187 was visceral because it was like we're not welcome here. We're vulnerable because we're not citizens and we're not voting, so we can't allow ourselves to be vulnerable. We must become politically engaged.

HJHP

Traditionally, Democrats represent Latinos, but this appears to be changing. For example, in Houston, with the support of the Latino community, the Republican Orlando Sanchez was almost elected mayor. Some Latinos basically said that they were voting for Orlando Sanchez just because he's Latino. Who do you think represents Latinos, and should Latinos vote for a Latino no matter what party they belong to?

Villaraigosa

Well, I'm a Democrat, and a progressive Democrat at that. I'm not a Republican. I've always believed that Latinos have historically and will continue to affiliate with both parties. I think over the last seven years or so there's been a higher propensity for Latinos to affiliate with Democrats, but that could change over time. I think both parties are going to have to work hard to represent Latinos. And if one doesn't, the other will fill the void. It's as simple as that. I don't think that the Republican Party reflects the needs and aspirations of Latinos currently. That could change, but I don't see a [Republican] party that's fighting for health care, that's fighting for economic opportunity, that's trying to level the playing field in education.

So I don't think that Republicans reflect on issue after issue, whether it's been voting rights, health care, education, whatever . . . , representing the aspirations and needs of the Latino community. Having said that, I think you'll see Latinos right now in this period, be very focused on wanting to see Latino leaders. We [Latinos] will sometimes cross the party divide to support

Latinos. We saw that in my race for mayor—Latino Republicans voted for me in higher numbers than other Republicans. I don't think they're great numbers, though. Ultimately, I lost the Republican vote, 79-21. I would dare say that the 21 [percent] was probably a higher propensity of Latinos. [However] I don't think electing a Latino per se, if that Latino isn't willing to be a change agent, is necessarily a positive step forward.

HJHP

What should the Democratic Party do to cultivate the loyalty and support of the Latino community in California and nationwide?

Villaraigosa

I think they have to be perceived by Latinos as a party that is going to be the standard bearer of the American dream; the party that's going to open up the country economically, socially, and politically. A party that is going to break the glass ceiling for Latinos. The party that is going to focus on urban America. The party that is going to invest in health care and education because those are the basic needs. The party that is going to embrace immigration and say that immigration has been good for the country, not particularly Latinos but other immigrants [too]. But we're speaking in the context of Latinos—that they contribute greatly to this country.

I think the party has to more aggressively promote Latino candidacies across the country. There's a lot of criticism of the [Democratic] party with respect to some of the [political] races, but you should know that in my race that's not true. The party endorsed me; the Democratic leadership in Los Angeles supported my candidacy. I won the [majority of] Democrats in my race. If this had been a Democratic primary, it would have been a landslide. Unfortunately, the Republicans were in the race.

HJHP

Three major mayoral races, L.A., New York, Houston, the Latinos lost by slight margins. Why do you think Latinos lost in these races?

Villaraigosa

First of all, different than New York, Whites crossed over in much greater numbers in my race. I won a lot of Whites, especially White Democrats. I didn't win overall, but I did win Democrats. The conservatives—I lost pretty heavily.

I can't tell you exactly why I lost—there are a number of reasons. One reason, I was running against someone whose name had been on the ballot for some fifty years in L.A., Jimmy [Hahn], his father, his uncle—very formidable name recognition. When we started, Jimmy Hahn's name recognition was in the seventies [percentage points], and I was less than three [percentage points]. To be able to catch up in the way that I did was phenomenal.

Maybe another reason was that, in L.A., anyway, Latinos are only 22 percent of the voting population [that voted in the 2001 run-off election]. I mean,

truth is, Latinos voted in greater numbers than they ever did. [In the 1993 mayor's race, Latinos made up 10 percent of the voter turnout.] However, that's only about 40 percent of the city's registered Latino voters. That means about 60 percent sat out. I won 82 percent of those that voted, but it would have been nice to [have] won 95 percent. What I won was phenomenal.

And you should know, for the record, I do not believe that I lost because I'm Latino. I just don't buy that. There are a lot of people that voted—like there were Latinos that voted for me because I was Latino, and there were people who voted for me who were not Latino—Whites who did. There were even a lot more people that voted for me because I was in their eyes the best candidate, and that ultimately, I think, is what wins elections—not where you come from.

HJHP

So, you do not believe that the Carlos Vignali television ad had a negative impact on the campaign?¹

Villaraigosa

I'm not saying that race and ethnicity weren't issues. Clearly, I think anyone who saw this ad knows that they were trying to create a climate of fear. It may have been tangentially related to race and ethnicity, but I'm not suggesting that it wasn't either.

But once the public started questioning, "Can we trust [Antonio Villaraigosa]?" it began to have an impact. Those kinds of messages are much more effective when they haven't really known you for a long time.

There were a lot of reasons why I lost. There's no question that there was an attempt to create a climate of fear around my candidacy through television advertisements and mail, but I don't think that was the only thing. However, I thought for the most part we ran about as good a campaign as anyone.

HJHP

Your opponent won 80 percent of the African American vote. Why did you lose the African American vote by such a large margin? Was it due to increasing political tensions between the Latino and African American communities?

Villaraigosa

There's without question some fear in the African American community due to the struggle over finite resources, changing demographics—things like that. But I don't think the message of my campaign, despite the vote I received from the African American community, is that Latinos and blacks are two communities at loggerheads. And the truth was, I was running against a man whose father [Kenneth Hahn] was a great man and who had done great things in the African American community. Kenneth Hahn was the first White to really fight for and represent the African American community in Los Angeles. He was loved. He had been on the ballot for 50 years. African Americans have run against him and lost.

And there's no question that [the Hahn family name] was a big part of what happened [in my race for mayor]. But what was interesting was that I won 40 percent of African Americans under [the age of] 40, which was phenomenal. I think young African Americans were more ready for my candidacy. Furthermore, I had more African American elected officials and ministers [support me] than my opponent. I had a lot of support among the Black leadership who get that the city's [demographics are] changing and embraced my candidacy—in part because I am a Latino, but more importantly because I am a progressive and I wanted to change L.A., to make it better for all people.

So I would say that, while there is some tension, we've had good things within that—a silver lining. I can't tell you how many young African Americans walk up to me and say, "Run again. You're a good guy; you ran a good campaign." However, at the end of the day, this is hard to overcome, a familiarity and a comfort with candidates' families who have been long and great supporters of [Blacks]. And, no question, there was some fear.

HJHP

Although there was some tension around your candidacy, people were energized about you running for mayor. Can you tell us why this was the case?

Villaraigosa

What I tried to convey, was that this [being Latino] is not enough. That the mayor has to be a uniter. That the leader has to be someone who wants to create a political and social paradigm where more people are included.

On election night there were 6,700 people [at campaign headquarters]. You've been involved with politics. I know you've never been anywhere where 6,700 people elected a person. I'm not saying that presidents haven't gotten that, but nobody running for mayor has had that kind of support—Black, White, or brown, or yellow. I had an energy around my candidacy that was incredible, and it was not because I was a Latino. It was because I had a vision for a more inclusive L.A.. I didn't necessarily win the Asian vote, but I can tell you I had a lot of Asians involved in my race. I had a lot of young Blacks; a lot of young people, period. In my race, one of the dominant characteristics was that it was democratic, was that it was young.

A lot of these people that took off a month were not people 65 years old—there were some, but they were young people too. They were people like you; they were people that came from all over the country, and they just said, "Hey, I'm camping out. I want to work for you." And it wasn't that they wanted to work for me; they wanted to work for the ideals that I was propagating. I think that's what excited this city. It wasn't that I was a Latino.

I think a lot of what happened in my race was not just about being a Latino although that excited some people, no question, but I think people were proud that someone was running for office who wanted a more inclusive Los Angeles, a Los Angeles where everybody's welcome, a Los Angeles where we can live together in harmony around principles, such as everyone deserves good housing and safe neighborhoods and good schools—not just some.

HJHP

If you were elected the first Latino mayor of a major U.S. city in the 21st century, how would have you governed?

Villaraigosa

I think at the end of the day, you run like you would govern. I ran a progressive, visionary campaign for the new future for Los Angeles, for the new future for America. I lost, but I'm proud of the effort, and, without question, I opened up a door. No matter who gets elected eight years from now, this city will have a Latino mayor.

Endnotes

¹ The Hahn campaign launched the Vignali television advertisement during the final weeks of the campaign to remind voters of the letter Villaraigosa wrote on behalf of Vignali's father to President Clinton asking for a pardon for Carlos Vignali, a convicted drug-dealer. The advertisement overlaid images of a ready-to-light crack pipe on images of an ominous-looking man. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Villaraigosa was ahead in the polls by a slight margin before the Vignali television advertisement aired.

Latinos in the 21st Century

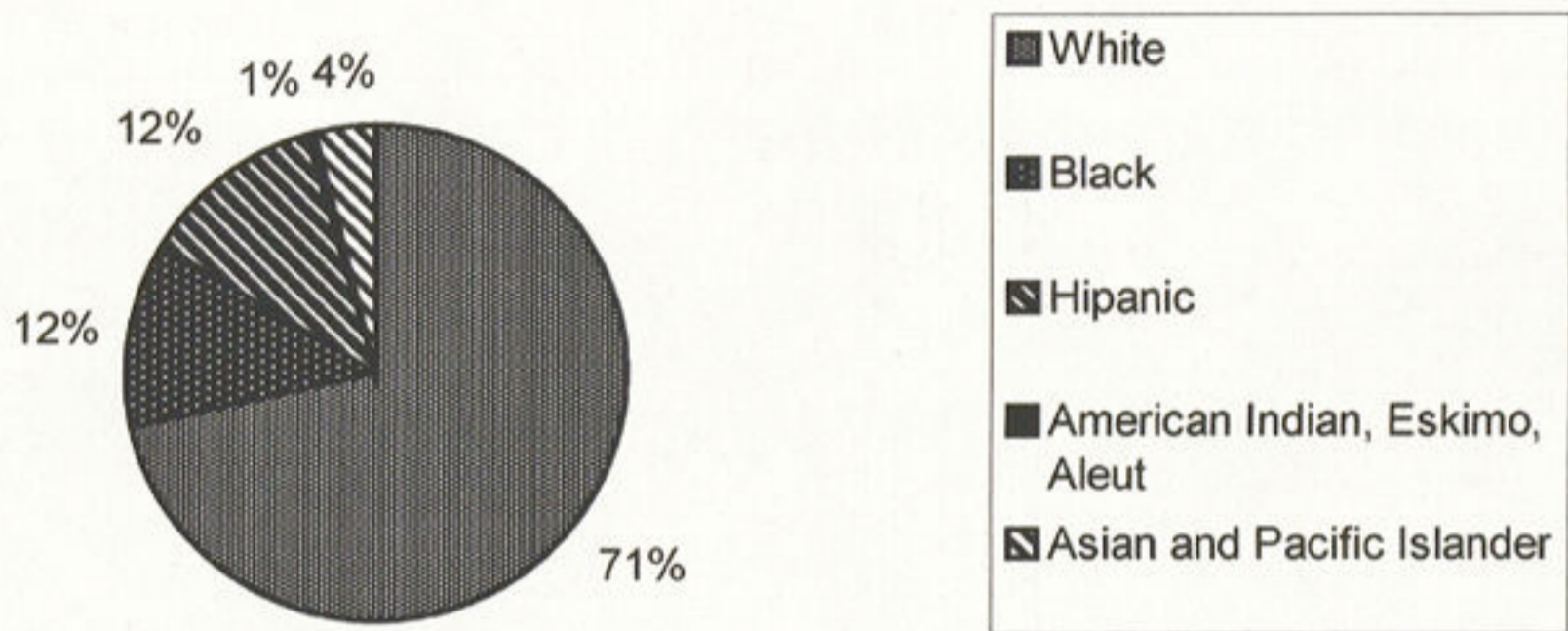
Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco and Mariela Páez

*Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, the Victor S. Thomas professor of education at Harvard University, is co-director of the Harvard Immigration Projects. Mariela Páez received her doctorate in education from Harvard in 2001. She is currently working as a researcher at Harvard University. The following article is adapted from the introduction of the volume, *Latinos Remaking America* (co-edited by Mariela Páez and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard and the University of California Press, 2002).*

During the closing decades of the 20th century, a process of gradual demographic transformation that began on the eve of World War II gained extraordinary momentum. At the end of the war, the population of the United States was largely of White, European origin. By the year 2000, more than a quarter of the U.S. population was composed of members of ethnically marked minorities, including African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. And the future augurs even more startling changes. In a widely cited report, scientists at the U.S. Bureau of the Census concluded that by the year 2050, 50 percent of the U.S. population would be members of ethnic minorities—making the term “minority” somewhat anachronistic (see Figure 1). This and other census projections are somewhat uncertain—after all, the terms Latino or Asian American did not even exist 50 years ago; who is to say the terms now used will have currency 50 years from now? These data nevertheless suggest an unequivocal social fact: the United States is now in the midst of a process of unprecedented change.¹ Indeed, the future of the United States will be in no small measure linked to the fortunes of a heterogeneous blend of relatively recent arrivals from Asia, the Caribbean, and, above all, Latin America.

At the dawn of the new century the 35 million-plus Latinos in the United States make up roughly 12.5 percent of the total population. It is estimated

Figure 1. Resident Population Estimates of the US by Race, and Hispanic Origin: US Census Bureau, October 2000



that in just two generations the United States will have the second-largest number of Latinos in the world—after Mexico. From 1990 to 2000 the Latino population grew by 58 percent. The Bureau of the Census claims that by the year 2050, a full quarter of the U.S. population will be of Latino origin—that is, nearly 100 million people tracing their ancestry to the Spanish-speaking, Latin American, and Caribbean worlds.

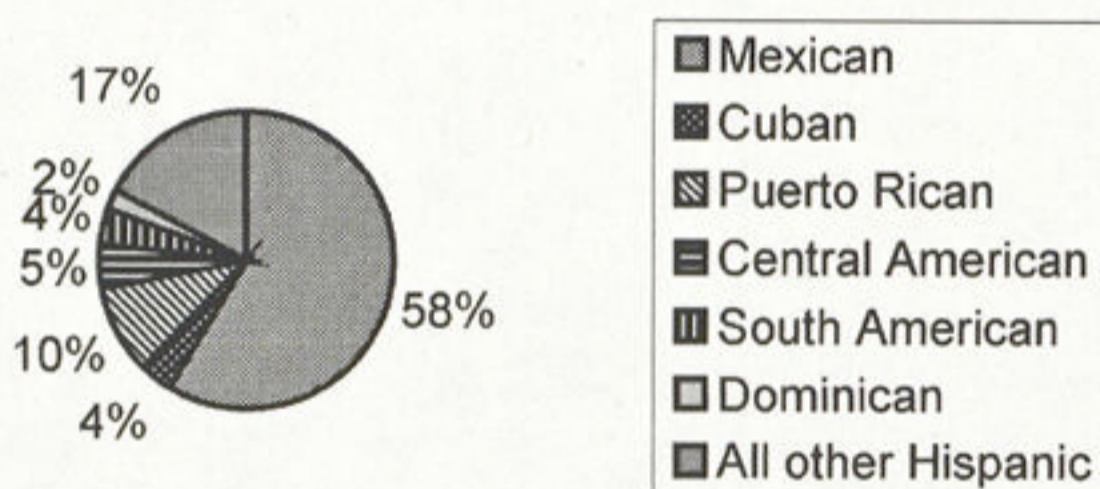
The Latino population of the United States is a highly heterogeneous population defying easy generalizations. As various authors (Stepick and Stepick 2002; Torres-Saillant 2002) suggest, the tired “Latinos-are-a-big-family” metaphor is not only facile but tends to gloss over the contradictions, tensions, and fissures around class, race, and color that often separate them. Bluntly, what does an English-speaking, third-generation, upper-status, White Cuban American in Florida share in common with a Maya-speaking recent immigrant from Guatemala? What precisely warrants collapsing their distinct histories, current sociocultural predicaments, and likely destinies under the same rubric? To complicate matters further, as Jorge Dominguez suggests, in some important respects Latinos are not particularly distinguishable from other Americans. So how are we to proceed? Cautiously.

Therefore, in this overview we have opted for the broadest, most inclusive and generous definition of Latinos: that segment of the U.S. population that traces its descent to the Spanish-speaking, Caribbean, and Latin American worlds. The term Latino is a new and ambiguous invention. It is a cultural category that has no precise racial signification. Indeed, Latinos are White, Black, indigenous and every possible combination thereof. Yet, as a number of authors discuss, upon entering the United States, Latinos undergo a rapid regime of racialization.

The term Latino also lacks the national origins specificity found in terms such as Irish American or Italian American. Latinos originate in more than a dozen countries as varied from each other as Mexico, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic (see Figure 2), and include Puerto Ricans, who are able

to move freely between the island and the mainland as U.S. citizens. Nor does the term Latino capture the sensibilities rooted in history and generation in the United States. Latinos are among the “oldest” Americans—the ancestors of some settled in the Southwest and spoke Spanish, making it their home well before there was a United States. They did not come to the United States; the United States came to them. They are also among the “newest” Americans. Indeed, two-thirds of all Latinos in the United States are either immigrants or the children of immigrants. And because the vast majority of Latinos in the United States originate in Latin America—the number of Latinos from Central and South America grew by more than 100 percent between 1990 and 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2001b), we choose the term Latino over Hispanic—a term that foregrounds the population’s link with *Hispania/Spain*.

Figure 2. Latinos, by Type of Origin: Current Population Survey, 2000



Latinos have varied histories, cultural sensibilities, and current social predicaments. The vectors of race and color, gender, socioeconomic status, language, immigrant status, and mode of incorporation into the United States shape their experiences. Latinos are a work in progress; they are a people in process of becoming as they settle in unprecedented numbers in the United States. The very term Latino has meaning only in reference to the U.S. experience. Outside the United States, we don’t talk of Latinos; we talk of Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and so forth. Latinos are made in the USA.

Given the heterogeneity, ambiguity, and internal fissures, what are the arguments for privileging a Latino panethnic construct? Is it that Latinos in the United States are poised to achieve the Bolivarian dream of unity that for centuries escaped their brothers and sisters in Latin America? Or will each Latino subgroup follow its own path—Cubans in one direction, Mexicans in another,

and Dominicans in yet another? Is it not wiser, empirically sounder, and more promising to keep our gaze on individual groups such as Cuban Americans, Mexican Americans, Dominican Americans, and so forth? Yes and no.

Systematic scholarly work at the subgroup level has generated important empirical data and theoretical insight. The work by sociologist Alejandro Portes and anthropologist Alex Stepick is a case in point (Portes and Stepick 1993). By focusing on the somewhat unique features of the Cuban ethnic enclave in Florida, they have considerably broadened our theoretical understanding of the dynamics of immigrant insertion into the U.S. economy and society (Stepick and Stepick 2002). Indeed, to date, the vast majority of the scholarship on Latinos has tended to focus on individual subgroups.² It is now time to broaden the conversation.

The case for broader scholarly analysis at the panethnic level can be made along at least three broad principles—one based on politics, one based on theoretical considerations, and one based on sociohistorical themes. At the political level, the panethnic construct has emerged as significant. Latinos are entering the United States in large numbers at a time when the nation's ethos is dominated by a "culture of multiculturalism" (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001; Glazer 1997). The social practices and cultural models that we have come to call multiculturalism shape the experiences, perceptions, and behavioral repertoires of immigrant and native-born Latinos in ways not seen in previous eras of large-scale immigration. A hundred years ago there certainly was no culture of multiculturalism celebrating—however superficially and ambivalently—ethnicity and communities of origin.³ "Passing" was then the name of the game. In the words of Berkeley cultural psychologist George De Vos we have now all noticed the "passing of passing" (De Vos 1992).

In the current ethos, racial and ethnic categories are relevant because of high stakes political and economic implications. Nation-states use these categories for various purposes such as for census enumeration and taxation, as well as apportionment for political representation. Racial and ethnic categories as generated by state policy are relevant to a variety of civic and political matters, including civil rights, affirmative action, and equal opportunity; furthermore, they are appropriated and used by various groups for their own emotional and strategic needs.⁴ Because all major federal agencies have chosen to privilege the broader panethnic term ("Hispanic" is the term now used by the Bureau of the Census) and because of a powerful bureaucratic and, indeed, market-driven impulse to standardize and homogenize (Torres-Saillant 2002), it is abundantly clear that the subgroup labels are generally quite secondary to the panethnic construct *qua* the workings of the state apparatus.⁵

Another argument for scholarly reflection at the panethnic level uses theoretical considerations and not politics as the relevant analytic axis. Work at the broader panethnic level can generate more robust conceptual understandings than work at the subgroup level. Our understanding of transnationalism might be a case in hand.

Caribbean Latinos, especially mainland Puerto Ricans and immigrant Dominicans, have been depicted as paradigmatic examples of groups

engaged in deep transnationalism—an analytic concept that is often used to refer to economic, political, and cultural strategies articulated by diasporic peoples across national spaces (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc 1995; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). Significant numbers of Puerto Ricans and Dominicans are said to lead dual lives, engaging in double consciousness, cultivating dual loyalties, living serially between their islands and the mainland. Recent studies, for example, suggest that Dominican immigrants have developed political, economic, and cultural adaptations that involve high levels of transnationalism. They remit large sums of money to their homeland; they remain substantially engaged in political processes there and return periodically with their children to nourish social and cultural ties in their island home (Levitt 1997; Guarnizo 1994; Pessar 1995). Research on mainland Puerto Ricans suggests a slightly different version of this general transnational dynamic. While they are less likely than Dominicans to remit dollars to the island,⁶ mainland Puerto Ricans remain socially, culturally, and at times politically involved in island affairs (Torre, Vecchini, and Burgos 1994).

Yet our theoretical understandings of transnationalism might benefit by placing what the Caribbean pattern suggests in the context of a larger Latino framework. By examining the Caribbean experience in the context of, for example, the Mexican experience, a more subtle understanding of transnationalism is likely to emerge.

Over the last two decades Mexican immigration to the United States has undergone a profound transformation. Historically, U.S. immigration policies, market forces, and the social practices of Mexican immigrants did not encourage their long-term integration into American society (Suárez-Orozco 1998). A sojourner pattern of (largely) male-initiated, circular migration, seeking to earn dollars during a specific season, dominated the Mexican experience for decades into the 1980s (Durand 1998). After concluding their seasonal work, large numbers of Mexicans typically headed south of the border—and eventually started the cycle again the following year. In that context, Mexican immigrants engaged in dual lives, displaying the kinds of proto-transnational behaviors now more fully developed among Caribbean Latinos. Like Puerto Rican and Dominicans today, the Mexican immigrants of yesterday lived “here” and “there.”

Yet over the last two decades, data on various aspects of Mexican immigration suggest the intensification of a momentum to permanently settle on the U.S. side of the line. Wayne Cornelius has argued that Mexican immigrants are rapidly moving *away* from articulating transnational strategies. For example, over time and across generations, Mexicans tend to remit less money, become less involved in politics there, and visit less often (Cornelius 1998). Will Dominicans, over time and across generations, follow the Mexican pattern? Or will they follow the Puerto Rican version of transnationalism that by some indicators has intensified rather than decreased over time (Bonilla 1989)? While the verdict is still out, its implications for our theoretical understandings are significant.

In the context of the broader Latino framework, transnationalism turns out to be a more complex set of social adaptations that seem to take different forms and to serve different purposes. Furthermore, it becomes increasingly obvious that transnational adaptations need to be systematically examined over time and across generations. This implies a research agenda that would examine the varieties of transnationalism across sites, social groups, and generations to track longitudinal as well as transgenerational continuities and discontinuities in behaviors and adaptations.

There are other arguments for privileging a panethnic level of analysis. In striking contrast to the other major new immigrant group, Asians, most Latinos share a common language, Spanish.⁷ While not all Latinos are Spanish-speakers, the Spanish language has become ubiquitous. On Wednesday, 13 September 2000, CBS made television history when it aired to a national audience of more than 7.4 million viewers several Spanish language commercials—with English subtitles—during a primetime show, the Latin Grammy Awards. In May 2001, President George W. Bush also made history when he delivered his weekly radio address to the nation in Spanish—a move that was applauded by some as a shrewd strategy to court Latino support and condemned by others as encouraging linguistic and ethnic divisions. The president was surely aware that Spanish is now the nation's second language—spoken by nearly 20 million people. More important, it is itself a world language shared by more than 265 million people. While Latinos, like other groups, are divided by factors such as race and color, class, and national origin, a common language—Spanish—generates a powerful gravitational field bringing them together.

Studies of language maintenance and shift suggest that Latinos, more than any other ethnic group, tend to remain loyal to their native language, with Mexicans being the most resilient Spanish speakers (Portes and Rumbaut 1990). Even across generations, third-generation bilingualism is relatively higher among Latinos than among other ethnic groups (Portes and Rumbaut 1990). These patterns suggest that Latino families are more likely to retain their native language than other groups such as Asians (Kao 1999).

Language is intrinsically involved in processes of education, including literacy development, and identity formation (Darder, Torres, and Gutierrez 1997). Within the last two decades, issues of language in education have taken on heated importance among government officials, policy makers, educators, parents, and concerned citizens. Most recently, bilingual education has been under a microscope as new initiatives for English-only instruction are proposed throughout the nation (Gándara 2002; Moll and Ruiz 2002). Indeed, language is at the core of the Latino educational experience in this country. But as many point out, educating Latino youth should not be reduced to issues of language alone. It requires a full understanding of the context in which language is embedded—the larger social, political, cultural, and racial fields (Zentella 2002; Moll and Ruiz 2002).

Language is also implicated in the social construction and conditions that shape class, racial, gender, and sexual identities. Thus, the Spanish language

in all its varieties plays a central role in the construction and transformation of the Latino community in the United States. Will Spanish follow the path of previous immigrant languages such as German, Italian, and Japanese and come to be buried in U.S. territory? (Lieberson, Dalto, and Johnston 1975). Or, conversely, will it prove to be the exception to the rule as Latino demographics support a highly elaborate social infrastructure to support the Spanish language, new information technologies, and the continuing flows of Latin American immigration that allow Spanish to flourish in the United States? If Spanish indeed endures in U.S. soil, will it be an asset or a hindrance for Latinos? Will globalization give an edge to Latino bilinguals? These broad questions set the stage for numerous theoretical and empirical works (Pearson 2002; Zentella 2002; Gándara 2002; Carlo and Snow 2002).

Language is only one of the cultural constituent units, or buildings blocks, critical to any understanding of Latino identities. Latinos also tend to share cultural models, social practices, and religious sensibilities that organize and give meaning to their lives. Peggy Levitt (2002) examines how Latino immigrants are transforming the nature of organized religion in the United States. They are now the largest ethnic group in the Catholic Church, making up more than two-thirds of all Catholics in Florida, Texas, and New Mexico. Their involvement in religion in turn shapes their social and political incorporation into the United States.

Sociohistorical Themes

The most robust case for the analytic use of the panethnic Latino construct emerges from various shared sociohistorical processes that are at the heart of the Latino experience in the United States. We identify three such themes: a) the experience of immigration; b) the changing nature of U.S. relations with Latin America, and c) the processes of racialization as Latinos enter—and complicate—the powerful “Black-White” binary logic that has driven U.S. racial relations. In the words of Silvio Torres-Saillant (2002), “We share the experience of being uprooted by large socioeconomic forces from our original homelands. We come from societies with a history of unequal association with the United States, a country that has influenced and sometimes even dictated political behavior in Latin America.”

A) Immigration

The Latino experience in the United States has been profoundly shaped by immigration (Cornelius 2002; Hondagnou-Sotelo 2002; Falicov 2002). The vast majority of Latinos are either immigrants or the children of immigrants. In 1980, there were roughly 14 million Latinos in the United States (Delgado and Stefancic 1998, xvii). Twenty years later, there were more than 35 million, most of them new immigrants. Large-scale immigration from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean defines the central tendencies of what U.S. scholars of immigration now call “the new immigration” (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001; Edmonston and Passel 1994; Hing 1993).

According to Suárez-Orozco (1999), three distinct social formations constitute the central tendencies of an emerging Inter-American Immigration System (IIS):

1. A more or less uninterrupted flow of large-scale legal (as well as undocumented) immigration from Mexico, rapidly intensifying after 1980, structured by powerful economic forces and sociocultural practices, which seem unaffected by unilateral policy initiatives
2. More time-limited “waves” (as opposed to uninterrupted “flows”) of large-scale immigration from Central and South America—by the early 1980s, El Salvador and Guatemala replaced Cuba as the largest source of asylum seekers from the Spanish-speaking world
3. A Caribbean pattern of intense circular migration typified by the Puerto Rican and Dominican experiences in New York—where Dominicans are now the largest immigrant group.

By the 1990s, there were more legal immigrants from Mexico *alone* than from all of Europe combined. By the end of the 20th century, well over seven million Mexican immigrants resided in the United States (Gonzalez Baker et al. 1998). More than one-quarter of all Mexican immigrants to the United States arrived in the first half of the 1990s (Binational Study on Migration 1997, ii). Mexican immigrants constitute nearly half of the total Mexican-origin population of the United States.

By the early 1980s, the intensification of Cold War tensions in Central America and increased direct U.S. involvement in the conflict generated unprecedented population displacements and new migratory flows. While during the 1960s and again briefly in 1980,⁸ Cubans had dominated the Latin America refugee experience in the United States, the 1980s were characterized by large-scale emigration from war-torn areas in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. By the year 2000, 1.7 million Central Americans made the United States their home (U.S. Census Bureau 2001b, 3). By one account “one in every six Salvadorians now lives in the United States” (Mahler 1995, 37). By the year 2000, the escalation of the war in Colombia and the sharp intensification of U.S. involvement in the conflict revealed the beginnings of a large-scale migratory wave as growing numbers of Colombians began leaving their war-torn country, and many of them headed north to the United States (Krauss 2000, 1). Indeed, Colombians are the largest of the “new, new Latinos” originating in South America—approximately half a million Colombians now live in the United States.

The Dominican-Caribbean experience is paradigmatic of what sociologist and anthropologists of immigration have called transnational migratory circuits (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2002; Basch et al. 1995). This pattern of immigration is typified by intensive back-and-forth movement—not only of people but also of goods and information—principally between the islands of Hispaniola and Manhattan.

Another relevant feature of the new transnational framework is that even as Latinos enmesh themselves in the social, economic, and political life in their new lands (Cornelius 1998; Durand 1998), they remain powerful protagonists

in the economic, political, and cultural spheres in the countries they left behind. Latinos are emerging as “hemispheric citizens.” Latino remittances and investments have become vital to the economies of varied countries of emigration such as Dominican Republic, Mexico, and El Salvador. In the latter country, remittances in the 1990s became the largest source of foreign exchange, averaging more than one billion dollars yearly. Likewise, the Binational Study on Immigration (1997, vii) estimates that remittances to Mexico were the “equivalent to 57 percent of the foreign exchange available through direct investment in 1995, and 5 percent of the total income supplied by exports.”⁹

Politically, Latinos are also becoming increasingly relevant actors with influence in political processes both “here” and “there.” Some observers have noted that the outcomes of Dominican elections are routinely determined in New York City, where Dominicans are the largest group of new immigrants (Pessar 1995). Likewise, Mexican politicians have recently “discovered” the political value of the more than seven million Mexican immigrants living in the United States. The new Mexican dual-nationality initiative—whereby Mexican immigrants who become nationalized U.S. citizens would retain a host of political and other rights in Mexico—is also the product of this emerging transnational framework.

Culturally Latinos are not only significantly reshaping the ethos of their new communities, but they are also responsible for significant social transformations in their countries of origin. Peggy Levitt (1997) has argued that Dominican and Brazilian “social remittances” affect the values, cultural models, and social practices of those left behind. Immigrant Latinos today are more likely to be at once “here” and “there”—bridging increasingly unbounded national spaces (Basch et al. 1995) and in the process transforming both home and host countries.

Several features characterize the new Latin American immigration to the United States. First, a growing body of research suggests that economic restructuring and the sociocultural changes taking place in the Americas virtually ensure that Latin American immigration to the United States will be a long-term phenomenon. Globalization and economic restructuring have intensified inequality in Latin America, generating unemployment, underemployment, and new migratory waves (Dussel 2000). Beyond Mexico and Central America, the contours of a large-scale South American exodus became increasingly clear by the end of the year 2000 when large numbers of Ecuadorians, Peruvians, Venezuelans, and Argentines headed north (“South America’s Exodus” 2000, 1) (see Table 1).

Second, new data suggest that the immigration momentum we are currently witnessing cannot be easily contained by unilateral policy initiatives, such as the various border control efforts and theatrics that have intensified over the last decade (Chavez 2001; Andreas 2000). Transnational labor recruiting networks, family reunification, and wage differentials continue to act as powerful contexts for Latin American immigration to the United States.

Third, new data suggest that Latin American immigrants are in the United States to stay. Latin American immigrants today, especially Mexicans and

Central Americans, are more likely to permanently settle in the United States than in previous eras of immigration (Cornelius 1998). Latinos, therefore, are an enduring, rather than transient, feature of the American social landscape.

B) Dangerous Liaisons: U.S. Relations with Latin America

The eclipse of European ascendancy and dominance in the Americas as the 19th century came to a close and the parallel rise of the United States as the hemisphere's unrivaled hegemonic nation factor significantly in the making of the Latino experience in the United States. The story of the Latino population of the United States can only be fully articulated within the context of the historic, political, and economic relationships between the United States and Latin America. The United States and Latin America have never been equal partners. U.S. relations with Latin America can be characterized as an asymmetrical liaison between a dominant power and a weaker, often reluctant partner. There exist a few themes in U.S. relations with Latin America that are most relevant to an understanding of the Latino experience.

The first theme relates to U.S. territorial expansionist impulses, a phase in U.S. relations with Latin America that historian Peter Smith (1996) has argued is characterized as "imperial" in nature. It is at the heart of the nation-building process by which the United States emerged from the original 13 colonies to become the continent's unrivaled transoceanic power. It was driven by an ideological apparatus with equal parts of pseudoscientific racism and cultural arrogance, along with a voracious appetite for Latin American land and other resources. It was achieved via direct military confrontation and a series of territorial annexations, appropriations, and purchases (including the 1803 Louisiana purchase for 15 million dollars and the Florida purchase from Spain in 1819). But the choice prize of this imperial campaign surely was the territory that is now the U.S. Southwest. The aftermath of the 1846-48 Mexican War resulted in the annexation of roughly half of Mexico's territory.

The transfer of lands stretching west of Texas all the way to the Pacific Ocean—formally decreed in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—is the most obvious example of how this expansionist phase was implicated in the making of the U.S. Latino population (Chavez 1984; McWilliams 1968; Acuña 1981; Anaya 1976; Montejano 1999; Weber 1973). Mexicans residing north of the Rio Grande—without taking a step—found themselves living in a different country. Likewise, the seeds for the mainland Puerto Rican community were planted in 1898 when the island of Puerto Rico became a U.S. possession in the aftermath of the Spanish American War (Silén 1989).

By the beginning of the 20th century, relations with Latin America would no longer be dominated by U.S. territorial expansionist impulses. It gave way to a new set of dynamics and policy objectives. The well-known history of U.S. economic and cultural hegemony in the region—including countless direct and indirect military interventions in Latin American affairs—is at the heart of the agenda during this era. This has been extensively treated in the scholarly literature within the frameworks of Marxist theory, dependency theory, and world systems theory (LaFeber 1984; Cardoso and Faletto 1979; Wallerstein 2000).

Various U.S. military interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean during the 20th century have substantially contributed to the making of the Latino population of the United States. Likewise, U.S. economic and cultural hegemony have instigated developments that can be related to patterns of Latino uprooting from the Caribbean and Latin American contexts and resettlement in the United States.

In the aftermath of World War II, the Cold War came to drive U.S. intervention in Latin America. While the earlier era of hemispheric relations was dominated by an ideology of racism and cultural superiority, by mid-20th century we witnessed the emergence of a relentless form of anti-Communism dominating U.S. policy toward Latin America. Harvard political scientist Jorge Domínguez (1999, 33) has argued that the Cold War emerged “as significantly distinctive in U.S. relations with Latin America because ideological considerations acquired a primacy over U.S. policy in the region that they had lacked at earlier moments. From the late 1940s until about 1960, ideology was just one of the important factors in the design of U.S. policy towards Latin America. The victory and consolidation of the Cuban revolutionary government changed that. In its subsequent conduct of the key aspects of its policy towards Latin America, the U.S. government often behaved as if it were under the spell of ideological demons.”

Chasing its demons led the United States to intensify overt and covert military interventions in the Caribbean, Central, and South America from the 1950s until the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The crescendo of Cold War tensions in the Latin America context took the form of various insurgency and counterinsurgency campaigns stretching south of the U.S. border all the way to Patagonia. It left sequelae of death, displacements, and devastation. In Central America alone there were some 100,000 politically motivated killings in Guatemala and 75,000 in El Salvador, with much of the killing taking place in the 1980s.

These conflicts intensified with U.S. involvement, fueling new refugee and migratory waves. A rough formula might be applied: a decade after U.S. intervention, a million asylum seekers, refugees, and immigrants from that area of the world inevitably permanently settle in the United States. Indeed, just as it was the case in the earlier U.S. involvement in Vietnam,¹⁰ more than a million new asylum seekers and migrants fled Central America during the 1980s and now make the United States their home (Suárez-Orozco 1989). The intensification of the Soviet-American conflict during the Cold War contributed to the development of a robust Cuban diaspora in the United States, now numbering more than a million people. Likewise, earlier interventions in the Dominican Republic (in the 1960s) and elsewhere also fed migration to the United States. That is why many Latinos (of Guatemalan, Salvadorian, Nicaraguan, etc., origin) can tell their American friends, “We are here because you were there.”¹¹

The end of the Soviet Union—and with it, the Cold War—ushered in a new set of priorities in U.S. relations with Latin America—with Cuba as an exception. U.S. military interventions would no longer be driven by fear of

communism and competition with the Soviet Union. New security concerns came to the top of the agenda: drugs, undocumented immigration, and economic restructuring (Bulmer-Thomas and Dunkerley 1999). The 1990s saw a remilitarization of U.S. policy in Latin America (Domínguez 1999). The new focus was drugs—with extraordinary increases in U.S. military involvement in Colombia by the year 2000. The militarized antinarcotic effort is likely to deepen the upheaval in Colombia where more than two million citizens have been displaced from their homes—more than during the war in Kosovo (Krauss 2000). It is safe to predict that the size of the Colombian diaspora in the United States will grow exponentially as U.S. policy intensifies the conflict in their native land.

In Latin America, globalization, economic liberalization, and restructuring have directly contributed to deepening inequality and the intensification of migratory flows. New regional trade agreements have also contributed to this process. The recent Mexican experience with the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is a case in point. The theory behind NAFTA was that the liberalization and restructuring of the Mexican economy along with massive foreign investments—taking advantage of raw materials and cheap labor—would generate economic growth, creating new jobs in export manufacturing, and increasing wages. The growth generated by the economic restructuring and liberalization strategies would, *inter alia*, reduce the pressures for Mexicans to migrate to the United States in search of better jobs at better wages. In practice, the liberalization of the Mexican economy has so far produced mixed results. While there has been some growth, it has been uneven, with some regions of Mexico and some sectors of the economy benefiting much more than others. There has also been a rapid growth in inequality (Dussel 2000).

The recent Mexican experience also suggests that an increase in wages may paradoxically increase rather than decrease migratory pressures. John Coatsworth (1998, 76) has noted, “Over the course of the 20th century, the proportion of the Mexican population earning enough to cover [migratory] expenses has increased substantially. Should Mexican wages begin to rise again in the coming years, rates of undocumented migration to the United States will probably increase, *ceteris paribus*, as more people manage to save what they need to immigrate.” This is in part because an increase in wages “stimulates consumerism and consumption and raises expectations regarding the standard of living . . . [which,] combined with easy access to information and migration networks, in turn create[s] tremendous pressure for emigration” (Zhou and Gatewood 2000, 10). In summary, there is reason to suspect that globalization will continue to be closely associated with large-scale immigration flows.¹²

C) Racialization

Much of the scholarly work on minorities in the United States has centered either on the concept of *ethnicity* or conversely on the concept of *race*. The theoretical work on ethnicity has largely focused on the study of White

European immigrants and the transgenerational process of change as their children became “White ethnic” Americans (Doucette-Gates, Brooks-Gunn, and Chase-Lansdale 1998). A parallel current of theoretical work has examined the experiences of African Americans in the United States within the paradigm of race—their unique experiences a product of the legacy of slavery, segregation, and “the one drop rule.”¹³ These two independent scholarly projects proceeded along parallel lines without much systematic and meaningful cross-fertilization. As Nathan Glazer (1993) astutely observed, the vast majority of scholarly work on immigration and the making of White ethnics failed to consider the pre-existing racial polarization so central to any understanding of American social structure. The new immigration, a human wave dominated by Latinos and other immigrants of color, is finally bringing the two conceptual paths together (Waters 1999). Will the experiences of Latinos best be captured by the paradigm of ethnicity *or*, conversely, by the paradigm of race? Will they follow the pattern of yesterday’s White European ethnics or will the process of racialization lead to a remaking of the color line? The verdict is still out.

We can envision several different possible long-term scenarios for Latinos. One scenario is that Latinos simply replicate the European immigrant experience and over the course of a few generations become, en masse, a version of yesterday’s “White ethnics.” Another scenario would have the racially heterogeneous Latinos follow different paths as a function of skin color and human and social capital. In this scenario, lighter-skinned Latinos who are able to settle in integrated neighborhoods maximize opportunities for status mobility and over the course of two or three generations “disappear,” becoming *de facto*, if not *de coeur*, sociologically “White” (i.e., like Whites in terms of major demographic and social indicators). In the Census 2000, roughly half of all Latinos self-identified as “White” (U.S. Census Bureau 2001a, 10). Conversely, poorer and darker-skinned Latinos, settling in highly segregated neighborhoods culturally dominated by African Americans, over the generations disappear in the other direction, joining the Black side of the U.S. “color line.”

In yet a third scenario, Latinos by the sheer force of their numbers finally break the Black-White binary mold. Unlike previous waves of (European) immigrants, Latinos prove in the long term able to maintain certain vital cultural sensibilities and social practices—via the replenishment generated by ongoing immigration, proximity to Latin America, and new communication and information technologies. Under this scenario, Latinos manage to create a third space—between Black and White. New Latino immigrants may be able en masse to articulate new strategies of adaptation beyond the tired old model of straight-line or unilineal assimilation driven by the “either/or” logic of acculturation (M. Suárez-Orozco 2000). As Falicov (2002) perceptively argues, Latinos are pursuing and performing “both/and” identity styles and cultural adaptations. In the process they are redefining double consciousness by shuttling back and forth—linguistically, socially, and culturally—between the institutions of the mainstream culture, their co-ethnic cultures in the

United States, and transnationally by keeping links (economic, politic, and cultural) with their relatives and other compatriots in Latin America and the Caribbean.

While no one can say which of these tentative scenarios will prove most accurate in the long term, three themes in the racialization process now facing Latinos will likely shape their future. They are 1) long-held stereotypes that mainstream Americans hold of Latin Americans—a form of symbolic violence that has been updated and now Latinos must face up close; 2) their low levels of education and skill as they join a thoroughly globalized U.S. economy, and 3) the intense forms of segregation—in schools, in neighborhoods, and in the workplace—that Latinos are experiencing. What are the dominant contours of these concurrent processes?

1—Symbolic Violence

In his exquisite history of U.S. policy towards Latin America, Lars Schoultz (1998, 5) has argued that U.S. political elites have long held the “pervasive belief that Latin Americans are an inferior branch of the human species” and, furthermore, that the “belief in Latin American inferiority is the essential core of United States policy towards Latin America.” His book recounts in horrid detail the constituent units of the ideological apparatus with which the United States related to Latin America for more than two centuries.

Here is a sampling taken from the various headings of Schoultz’s chapters: from John Quincy Adams, “The people of South America are the most ignorant, the most bigoted, the most superstitious of all Roman Catholics” (quoted on p. 5); from Senator John Clarke, “To incorporate such a disjointed and degraded mass into even limited participation with our social and political rights would be fatally destructive to the institutions of our country. There is a moral pestilence attached to such a people which is contagious—a leprosy that will destroy” (quoted on p. 14); from Joel Poinsett, the first U.S. consul to Latin America and the man who brought the poinsettia to the United States from Latin America, “[Mexicans are] an ignorant and immoral race . . . [in] constant intercourse with aborigines, who were and still are degraded to the very lowest class of human beings” (quoted on p. 19); from President Teddy Roosevelt, “[Colombians are] contemptible little creatures . . . jackrabbits . . . foolish and homicidal corruptionists . . . to the worst characteristics of 17th Century Spain, and of Spain at its worst under Phillip II, Colombia has added a squalid savagery of its own, and it has combined with exquisite nicety the worst forms of despotism and anarchy, of violence, and of fatuous weakness, of dismal ignorance, cruelty, treachery, greed, and utter vanity” (quoted on p. 164); from Assistant Secretary of State Huntington Wilson, “Nature, in its rough method of uplift, gives sick nations strong neighbors” (quoted on p. 205); from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, “You have to pat them a little bit and make them think you are fond of them” (quoted on p. 332).

Schoultz’s data suggest that U.S. opinion makers and leaders have been remarkably consistent in their views on Latin Americans from colonial times

up to the present. In this ideological structure, Latin Americans are depicted as racially and culturally inferior, ignorant, degraded, filthy, childlike, and essentially unable to govern themselves. It is not surprising then that in U.S. public opinion polls Latinos rank among the least favored of all new Americans (Cornelius 2002). Wayne Cornelius (2002) advances an “ethno-cultural” hypothesis to account for the specifically anti-Latino sentiment found in public opinion surveys and other data. According to Cornelius, the anti-Latino sentiment cannot be explained by the usual economic factors. Theorists of the anti-immigrant sentiment have argued that the best predictor of its intensity is the state of the macroeconomy—most specifically the unemployment rate (Espenshade and Belanger 1998, 367). When the economy is weak and unemployment is high, public opinion generally turns against immigration.

The pervasive view, found among policy leaders as well as the general public, that Latin Americans in general are inferior and that Latinos are specifically more likely to “commit crimes and take advantage of welfare, and less likely to work hard, do well in school, and have strong family values” (Jones-Correa 1998, 407) powerfully shapes the Latino experience in ways that we are only recently beginning to understand (C. Suárez-Orozco 2000, 194-226). Most at risk are Latino youth who struggle to develop a healthy identity and sense of self in the context of such toxic attitudes and beliefs—further complicating the already arduous task of adapting to the institutions of American society.

2—*Poverty*

Over the past century, Latinos have been leaving a continent rich in culture, natural resources, and beauty, but poor in terms of economic and social development (see Table 3). It is also a continent of startling inequalities. A few social and economic indicators reveal the breadth of the “distribution of sadness” south of the Rio Grande (Vélez-Ibáñez 1996). For example, in 1995 the GNP per capita was \$2,521 for Mexico, \$1,671 for El Salvador, \$1,438 for the Dominican Republic, and \$379 for Nicaragua—compared to \$27,550 for the United States (see Table 1; Wilkie, Alemán, and Ortega 2000). It has been estimated that the “average U.S. cat eats more beef than the average person in Central America” (Barry and Preusch 1986, 142). In 1995 life expectancy was 67.8 years for males and 73.9 years for females in Mexico, 50.7 years for males and 63.9 years females in El Salvador, and 67.6 years for males and 71.7 years for females in the Dominican Republic—compared to 72.2 years for males and 78.8 years for females in the United States. More than 60 percent of the Guatemalan population, more than half of the Nicaraguan population, 40 percent of the Dominican population, and more than 20 percent of the Mexican population have had no schooling—compared to 0.6 percent of the U.S. population (Wilkie, Alemán, and Ortega 2000). Increasing inequalities coupled with the extraordinary burden of meeting foreign debt payments has made it so that “most of Latin America was still staggering” in the beginning of the new century (Skidmore and Smith 1989).

As a consequence, Latino new arrivals tend to be poorly educated and skilled (see Table 2). A comparison of the average years of schooling for the top three immigrant groups reveals significant differences. In 1990, the average Mexican immigrant to the United States had 7.6 years of schooling, the average Filipino had 12.3 years of schooling, and the average Chinese had 12.8 years of schooling (INS 1997, 27-28). By the year 2000, inequalities had intensified: only 11.2 percent of the Latin American-origin population had a bachelors degree or higher, compared to 44.9 of the Asian-origin population. Because all U.S. workers other than those with college degrees have been losing ground in terms of real wages, Latinos today earn substantially lower salaries than other Americans.

Latino males on average earn \$18,430 vs. \$31,486 for non-Hispanic Whites. More worrisome is the prevalence of poverty in the Latino population—despite high rates of labor force participation, 22.7 percent of Latino families live below the poverty line. For non-Hispanic Whites the corresponding number is 6.1 percent. In addition, some 34.4 percent of all Latino children now live below the poverty level—compared to 10.6 percent of non-Hispanic Whites. Deep and concentrated poverty is powerfully implicated in a variety of long-term educational, social, and health outcomes (Massey and Denton 1993)

Over the last 20 years, Latino immigrants have been entering a country that is economically unlike the country which absorbed—however ambivalently—previous waves of European immigration. Economically, the previous large wave of immigrants arrived on the eve of the great Fordist industrial expansion in which immigrant workers and consumers played a significant role (Higham 1975). European immigrants got into an elevator that was going up fast: a U.S. economy that was in the process of raising the standard of living for all workers. Immigrants now are actors in a thoroughly globalized and rapidly changing economy that is increasingly taking an “hourglass” shape. The elevator now has two destinations: one up to the top of the hourglass and one down to its bottom. Well-educated, high-skilled immigrants are moving into well-remunerated knowledge-intensive industries at a heretofore-unprecedented rate (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996). Nearly 40 percent of all new businesses in California’s famed Silicon Valley are immigrant-owned. On the other hand, low-skilled immigrants, many of them Latinos, are finding themselves in the down elevator to occupy the low-wage sector. Some scholars have argued that, unlike the low-skilled industry jobs of yesterday, the kinds of jobs typically available to large numbers of low-skilled Latino immigrants do not offer prospects of upward mobility (Portes 1996).

3—*Segregation*

Another important feature of the Latino experience is the increasingly segregated concentration of large numbers of Latinos in a handful of states in large urban areas polarized by racial tensions. By the year 2000, half of all Latinos lived in two states, California (11 million) and Texas (6.6 million) (see Table 2). A number of distinguished sociologists have argued that as a result of an

Table 1. Selected Demographic Characteristics for Latin American Countries,* 1995

	Population (Millions)	GNP per Capita	Life Expectancy Male/Female	Highest Level Attained: Post-Secondary (% of Total Population)	No Schooling ⁺ (% of Total Population)	Illiteracy (% of Total Population)
Mexico	83.226	2,521	67.8 / 73.9	6.5	21.4	10.4
Dominican Republic	7.110	1,438	67.6 / 71.7	1.9	40.1	17.9
Cuba	10.628	2,068	72.9 / 76.8	5.9	3.7	4.3
El Salvador	5.110	1,671	50.7 / 63.9	5.3	38.5	28.5
Colombia	34.970	2,107	66.4 / 72.3	10.3	11.8	8.7
Peru	21.569	2,363	62.7 / 66.6	18.2	23.4	11.3
Guatemala	8.749	1,337	55.1 / 59.4	1.2	61.6	44.4
Ecuador	10.264	1,476	67.3 / 72.5	11.1	1.8	9.9
Nicaragua	3.827	379	64.8 / 67.7	—	53.9	34.3
Honduras	4.879	672	65.4 / 70.1	3.3	33.5	27.3
United States	249.907	27,550	72.2 / 78.8	44.6	0.6	—

*The selected countries correspond to the top 10 sending countries as a function of the number of immigrants coming to the United States from Latin America. The countries are listed in descending order— i.e., the highest number of Latin American immigrants who entered the United States in 1999 were from Mexico.

+ Data for No Schooling correspond to different years—Mexico: 1990, Dominican Republic: 1970, Cuba: 1981, El Salvador: 1992, Colombia: 1993, Peru: 1993, Guatemala: 1981, Ecuador: 1990, Nicaragua: 1971, Honduras: 1983.

Table 2. Selected Characteristics of Hispanics and Non-Hispanic Population

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Non-Hispanic Whites
Total Population (in millions)	31.7	240.1	193.1
Median Age (yrs)	26.1	36.1	37.5
Educational Attainment			
Less than High School	43.9%	13.8%	12.3%
High School or More	56.1%	86.2%	87.7%
Bachelors or More	10.9%	26.7%	27.7%
%age in Labor Force			
Male	78.4%	73.3%	74.3%
Female	55.8%	60.7%	60.3%
Household Income: 1998 (median income in US\$)	\$18,430	\$30,468	\$31,486
Type of Family			
Married couple	68.0%	77.5%	82.2%
Female-headed	23.7%	17.2%	13.0%
Male-headed	8.2%	5.3%	4.8%
Families below the Poverty Level: 1998	22.7%	8.6%	6.1%
Children below the Poverty Level: 1998	34.4%	32.4%	10.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1999.

increasing segmentation of the economy and society, many low-skilled Latino immigrants “have become more, not less, likely to live and work in environments that have grown increasingly segregated from Whites” (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996, 20). Quite alarming are the recent findings of the Harvard Civil Rights Project establishing that Latino children are now facing the most intense segregation (by race and poverty) of any ethnic and racial group in the United States:

American schools continue the pattern of increasing racial segregation for black and Latino students Latino segregation by both measures has grown steadily throughout the past 28 years, surpassing the black level in predominantly non-white schools by 1980 and slightly exceeding the proportion in intensely segregated schools (90-100% minority) in the 1990s [S]chool segregation statistics show that the next generation of Latinos are experiencing significant less contact with non-Latino whites; 45% of Latinos were in majority-white schools in 1968 but only 25% in 1996 (Orfield and Yun 1999, 14).

Indeed, by 1999, more than 35 percent of all Latino students were enrolled in schools where 90 to 100 percent of their peers were other minority students.

Table 3. Selected Characteristics of Hispanics by Type of Origin

	Hispanic	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	South/Central American	Other Hispanic
Total Population (millions)	31.7	20.7	3.0	1.4	4.5	2.1
Median Age (years)	26.1	24.2	27.5	41.3	29.9	28.3
Educational Attainment						
Less than High School	43.9%	50.3%	36.1%	29.7%	36.0%	28.9%
High school or More	56.1%	49.7%	63.9%	70.3%	64.0%	71.1%
Bachelor's or More	10.9%	7.1%	11.1% 24.8%	18.0%	15.0%	
Percentage in Labor Force						
Male	78.4%	80.4%	66.3%	73.4%	80.8%	72.3%
Female	55.8%	55.2%	52.6%	49.2%	61.8%	57.1%
Percentage of Unemployed	6.7%	7.0%	7.3%	4.9%	5.9%	6.4%
Median Earnings: 1998						
Male	\$18,430	\$17,395	\$22,711	\$22,864	\$18,961	\$21,146
Female	\$12,910	\$11,995	\$16,444	\$20,673	\$13,309	\$14,832
Household Income: 1998 (Median Income in US\$)	\$28,330	\$27,361	\$26,365	\$32,375	\$31,636	\$30,463
Type of Family						
Married Couple	68.0%	69.9%	56.7%	79.2%	66.6%	61.7%
Female-headed	23.7%	21.3%	37.2%	17.0%	23.7%	30.6%
Male-headed	8.2%	8.7%	6.1%	3.7%	9.7%	7.8%
Families below Poverty Level: 1998	22.7%	24.4%	26.7%	11.0%	18.5%	7.8%
Children below Poverty Level: 1998	34.4%	35.4%	43.5%	16.4%	26.6%	31.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1999.

School segregation is strongly linked to inequalities in schooling opportunities, processes, and outcomes. Forced to attend inferior schools, in deep poverty and deep segregation neighborhoods, many Latino children struggle educationally against the odds (Moll and Ruiz 2002). Most worrisome is the unacceptable rate of school dropout among Latino youth. In 1998, 29.9 percent of Latino youth dropped out of high school compared to 7.7 percent of White non-Latinos and 13.8 percent of African American youth (U.S. Department of Education 2000). The future harbors even more troubling developments as schools throughout the country are instituting high-stakes tests as a prerequisite for graduation. Recent data suggest that large numbers of Latino youngsters are failing these high-stakes graduation exams. For example, in 1999 more than a third of all Latino students failed the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). Latino youngsters who are leaving schools without the skills demanded by an increasingly unforgiving global economy face dim prospects in the opportunity structure.

Latinos, we claim, are the offspring of these three broad sociohistorical processes: large-scale immigration, U.S.-Latin American relations, and racialization. These momentous social and historical vectors have shaped the experiences of Latinos in the United States. While each Latino sub-group, indeed each Latino individual, is unique, the lives, struggles, dreams, and deeds of Latinos in the United States can only be fully understood in reference to these formations and their enduring legacies.

Endnotes

1 Nor, *voilà*, do these projections take into account the increasingly fertile field of transethnicity: Latinos, very much like other immigrants before them, are marrying out of their various national origins groups in large numbers. According to some estimates, nearly 30 percent of all married Mexican-origin people were married non-Mexicans (Jiménez. 2000. "Immigration, Assimilation and the Mexican Origin Population." Filed Statement. Department of Sociology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.).

2 See, for example, Alvarez 1987; Ambert and Alvarez 1992; Camarillo 1979; Chavez 1991; Cruz 1998; Flores 1993, 2000; Gomez-Quiñones 1990; Grasmuck and Pessar 1991; Guarnizo 1994; Gutierrez 1995; Levitt 1997; Mahler 1995a, 1995b; Massey and Liang 1989; Nieto 1995, 2000; Pachon and DeSipio 1994; Perez y Gonzalez 2000; Pessar 1995; Portes and Bach 1985; Portes and Stepick 1993; Rodriguez 1995; Rodriguez and Sanchez Korrol 1996; Romo 1983; Sanchez 1993; San Miguel 1987; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 1995; Suárez-Orozco 1998; Suárez-Orozco 1989; Torres-Saillant and Hernandez 1998; Velez-Ibañez 1996.

3 Indeed, the defining ritual at Ellis Island was the mythical renaming ceremony when immigration officers—sometimes carelessly and sometimes purposefully—renamed new arrivals with more Anglicized names, a cultural baptism of sorts. Others chose to change their names because of racism, anti-Semitism, or simply to blend in. Hence, Israel Ehrenberg was reborn as Ashley Montague, Meyer Schkolnick was reborn as Robert Merton, and Issur Danielovitch Demsky was reborn

as Kurt Douglas Friedman, 1999.

4 An outcome of our culture of multiculturalism is that new immigrants must be socialized into preexisting racial and ethnic categories—into becoming “Latino” or becoming “Asian.” Over the course of basic research among immigrant Latino youth, we have witnessed the disorientation they feel when they discover that their regional, or indeed, national identities have little relevance in the U.S. context (see Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001). A boy from El Salvador will, depending on where he settles down, soon discover that what matters now is that he is a Latino and not a Central American or Salvadorian because the category Salvadorian will be irrelevant to most of his teachers, peers, and neighbors.

These categories, while quite powerful, seem to have little resonance with new immigrants as they enter the country. Over time, however, they become increasingly relevant, particularly for children as they begin to struggle developmentally with the vicissitudes of identity formation, especially during the period of adolescence.

5 Peggy Levitt, in *Latinos: Remaking America*, likewise explores how in recent years the Catholic Church has strategically used a non-nation specific approach, instead privileging a panethnic “Latino” construct, to attract new immigrants from the Dominican Republic and elsewhere into the fold.

6 After all, Puerto Rico is a dollar economy.

7 Recent Latino immigrants are of course more likely to be Spanish-speakers than more established Latinos. Over time and across generations Latinos tend to become English dominant. Furthermore, those who trace their origins several generations in the United States may have little or no knowledge of the Spanish language.

8 In 1980, more than 129,000 Cuban *Marielitos* arrived in Florida over the course of a few weeks.

9 Cornelius (1998), however, argues that over time Mexican immigrants in the United States are less likely to invest in capital improvements in their sending communities. In fact, he argues that a new feature of the Mexican experience in the United States is that as Mexican immigrants become increasingly rooted in the U.S. side of “the line,” they mainly go back to their sending communities for rest and relaxation.

10 The fact that there are more than a million Southeast Asians in the United States today can be directly traced to U.S. intervention in this region.

11 North African youth in France and elsewhere in Europe often respond to xenophobic assaults and identity threats with the saying “We are here because you were there.”

12 Zhou and Gatewood (2000, 10) write, “Globalization perpetuates emigration from developing countries in two significant ways. First, direct U.S. capital investments into developing countries transform the economic and occupational structures in these countries by disproportionately targeting production for export and taking advantage of raw material and cheap labor. Such twisted development, characterized by the robust growth of low-skilled jobs in export manufacturing, draws a large number of rural, and particularly female workers, into the urban labor markets. Increased rural-urban migration, in turn, causes underemployment and displacement of the urban workforce, creating an enormous pool of potential emigrants (Sassen 1989).

Second, economic development following the American model in many developing countries stimulates consumerism and consumption and raises expectations regarding the standard of living. The widening gap between consumption expectations and the available standards of living within the structural constraints of the developing countries, combined with easy access to information and migration networks, in turn create tremendous pressure for emigration (Portes and Rumbaut 1996). Consequently, U.S. foreign capital investments in developing countries have resulted in the paradox of rapid economic growth and high emigration from these countries to the United States.”

13 Here we must point to a disciplinary bifurcation in the use of the term race. Sociologists and psychologists have continued to use the term while anthropologists are more skeptical and view race as a folk construct that, while powerful in its social and cultural implications, is devoid of any scientific (biological or cultural) foundation.

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*An Analysis of Latino Voter Turnout Patterns in
the 1992-1998 General Elections in Harris County,
Texas*

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Introduction

The purpose of this research is to compare voter registration and turnout patterns of Hispanic¹ voters in Harris County, Tex., over the course of four general elections: the presidential elections of 1992 and 1996, and the off-year elections of 1994 and 1998. Harris County is the most populous county in Texas, containing much of the city of Houston. Although not predominantly Hispanic, the county is home to a large number of Hispanic persons. Consequently, the county offers an opportunity to examine voter turnout rates among Latinos. We should note that because of the focus on one city, we cannot use our findings to generalize to Latinos across the nation. Our results, however, may suggest insights that other studies may wish to pursue.

We seek to address three questions. First, how many Latinos vote consistently in all the elections for which they are registered? Second, are there differences in the voter turnout rates among Latinos across precincts of varying density?² Third, do the voting patterns of Latinos vary from the patterns of non-Latinos? Because of the limited variables included in official records that are the source of the data analyzed here, this paper cannot contribute to the theoretical debate regarding voter mobilization. Instead, it consists of an extensive test of the relationship between voter registration and turnout, the results of which will serve future research.

To answer the first question, we determined the number of Latinos³ registered to vote in Harris County from 1992 to 1998 and ascertained how many of them voted in the four election cycles (1992, 1994, 1996, and 1998) in which they were registered.⁴ As described in Appendix A, we obtained voter registration and voting history files on all registered Latinos in Harris County during these years. We examined the records to establish the voting eligibility for each person (i.e., for how many election cycles an individual was properly registered to vote). We then matched that eligibility against the person's voting record to determine how many persons voted consistently, how many voted intermittently, and how many never voted.⁵

The second question examines voter turnout according to the ethnic concentration of precincts. The question asks whether Latinos living in highly concentrated Latino precincts are more likely to vote on a regular basis than those living in less highly concentrated precincts. The results of this analysis will suggest where to target voter mobilization projects. To examine the effect of

ethnic density on voter turnout, we divided Harris County precincts into three categories according to the proportion of registered voters who are Latinos.

The third question compares Latino voter turnout to turnout by non-Latinos. To explore potential differences, we obtained voter registration records for all persons in five selected precincts in Harris County. These precincts were selected because they are highly populated and predominantly non-Latino (i.e., less than 5% of the registered voters had Hispanic surnames, as determined by the Texas secretary of state's Spanish surname list). Our process for analyzing these data was the same as for analyzing the Latino data (as described in Appendix A), except that we deleted all persons with Hispanic surnames, rather than deleting all non-Hispanic-surnamed persons.

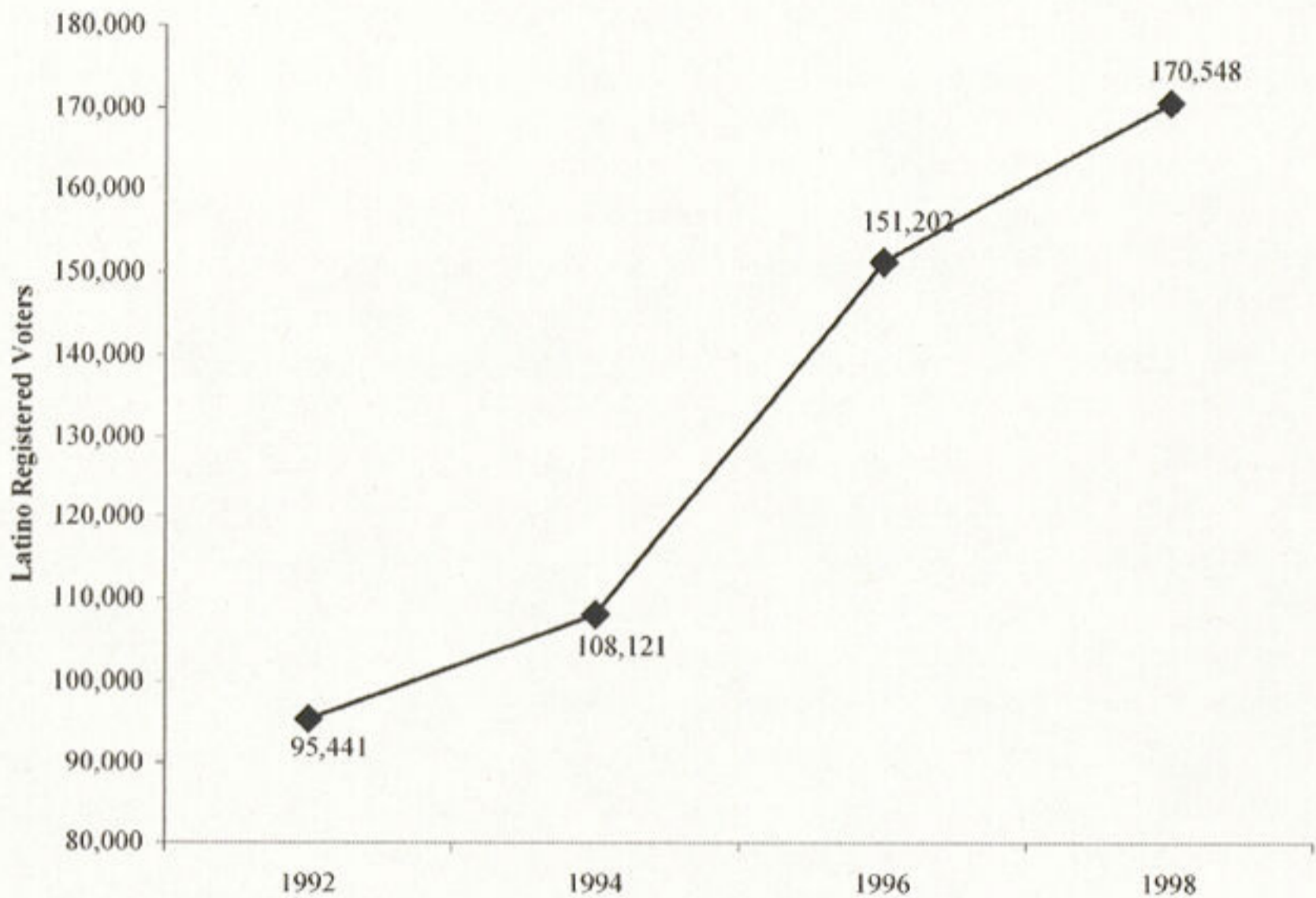
There are two caveats that must be noted relative to this research. First, there is no race or ethnicity variable in the data sets we used. Therefore, the term "non-Latinos" should not be interpreted to mean "Anglos." The term "non-Latino" simply means those persons without Hispanic surnames. Second, our primary interest in this research was in the voting patterns of the Latino population. Therefore, we purchased data on the entire Hispanic population of Harris County. Financial constraints restricted our ability to purchase data on the county's entire non-Latino population. Instead, we selected five numerically large non-Latino precincts. They do not constitute a representative sample of non-Latino districts. We include them because comparing them to Latino precincts may generate comparative insights into Latino turnout.

Analysis

Registered Voters

Figure 1 shows the growth in the number of Latino registered voters in Harris County between the general elections of 1992 and 1998. There were 75,107 more registered Latino voters in 1998 than in 1992, increasing the number of registrants from 95,441 to 170,548. That represents an increase of 78.7% over the time frame. Note that the bulk of that increase (nearly 60%) occurred between the 1994 and 1996 elections. There are a number of possible explanations for this registration spike. First, the 1996 election was a presidential election, and more people tend to vote in those elections, so it is not unreasonable to believe that much of the reason for the increase was due to a greater desire to become registered in time for the presidential election. Second, there was a concerted effort on the part of the Clinton administration to clear a backlog of citizenship applications during 1996.

Figure 1A shows the growth of the non-Latino registered voter population in the five selected precincts over the time frame of the four general elections. The total number of non-Latino registrants in the five precincts increased by 12,937, from 14,816 in 1992 to 27,753 in 1998, an increase of 87.3%. That increase was 8.6 percentage points larger than the increase in Latino registrants county-wide. The pattern of increase shown in Figure 1A is similar to the pattern shown in Figure 1 in that the highest two-year growth rate

Figure 1**Latinos Registered to Vote in Harris County, Texas (1992 - 1998)**

occurred between the 1994 and 1996 general elections. However, there is a substantial difference in the patterns as well.

Figure 1B shows the percentage changes between each election for Latinos and non-Latinos. The percentage change line for non-Latinos indicates a more stable growth pattern than for Latinos. This pattern suggests some support for the argument that the effort to clear the backlog of citizenship applications during 1996 may have had a distinct impact on increased Latino registration patterns because the Latino population in Texas would have been more influenced by that effort than the non-Latino population.

Figure 2 expands on Figure 1 by showing the changes in the composition of the registration rolls between each election. For each election, the "base" comprises the holdover registrants from the previous election,⁶ while the "new" category represents persons who registered during the intervening years. As an example, of the 108,121 persons registered for the 1994 election, 17,236 were newly registered persons, and 90,885 were previously registered persons. The newly registered persons fall into one of four categories: those who reached their 18th birthday between the 1992 and 1994 elections; those who had been previously eligible to register but did not; U.S. citizens ages 18 and older who moved into the county between the 1992 and 1994 elections; and persons who became U.S. citizens after the 1992 election but before the 1994 election.

Harris County also lost voters between 1992 and 1994. Of the 95,441 Latinos who were registered in 1992, 4,556 were no longer in the county. They either moved or died. Thus, in 1994, Latino voters consisted of 15.9%

Figure 1A
Non-Latinos Registered to Vote in the Five Selected Precincts
in Harris County, Texas (1992 - 1998)

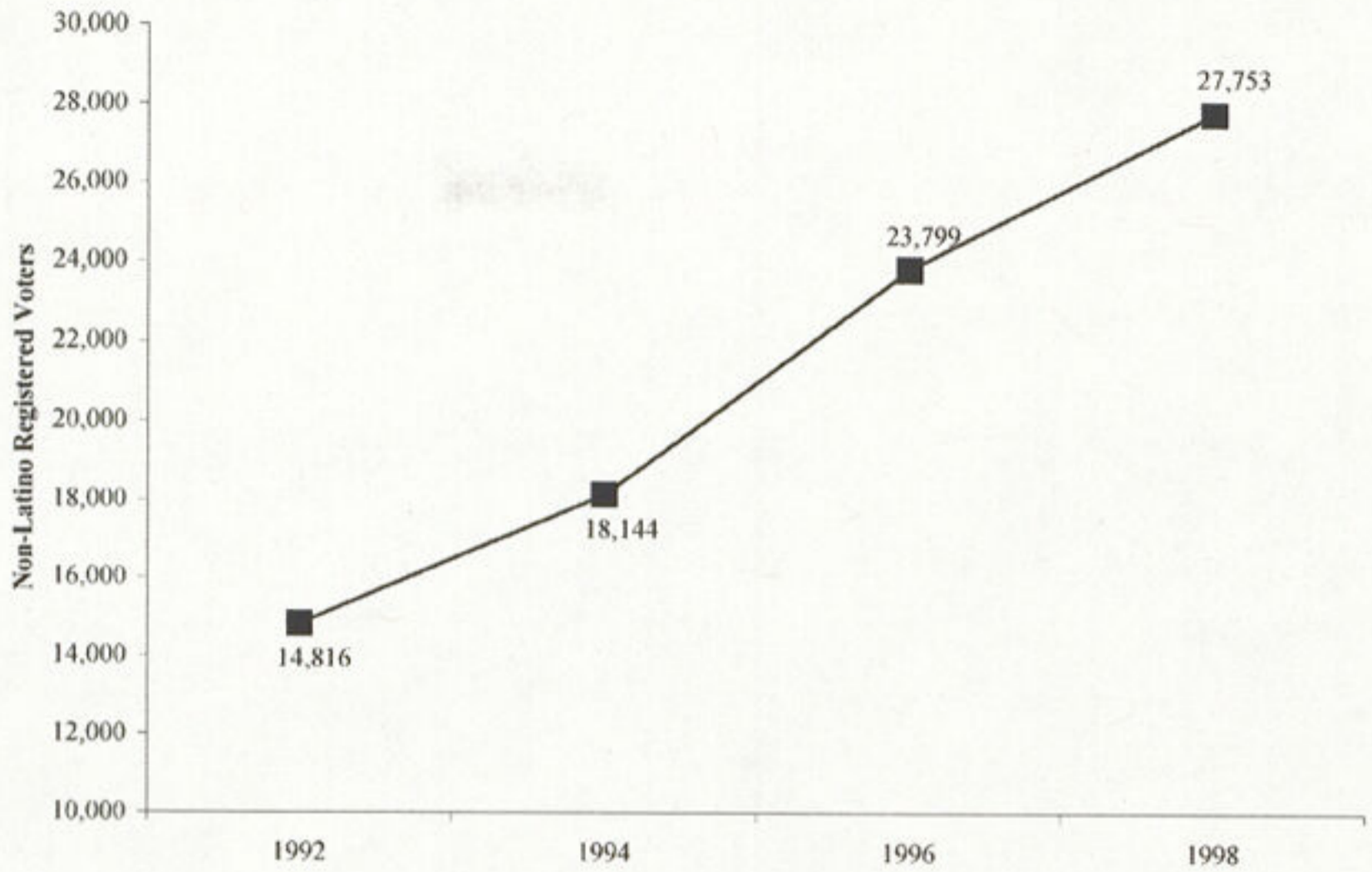


Figure 1B
Percentage Changes in Voter Registration in Harris County, Texas

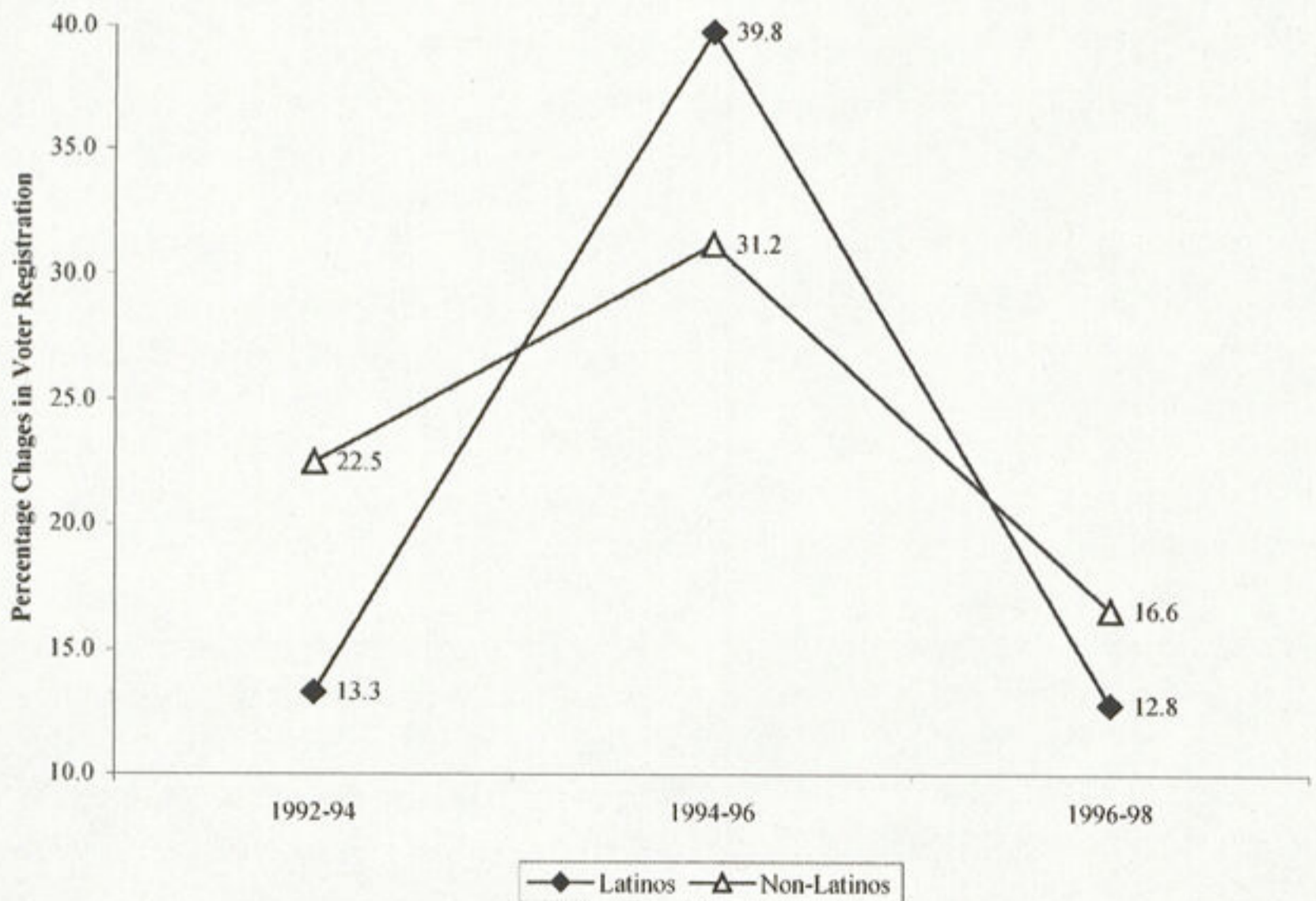
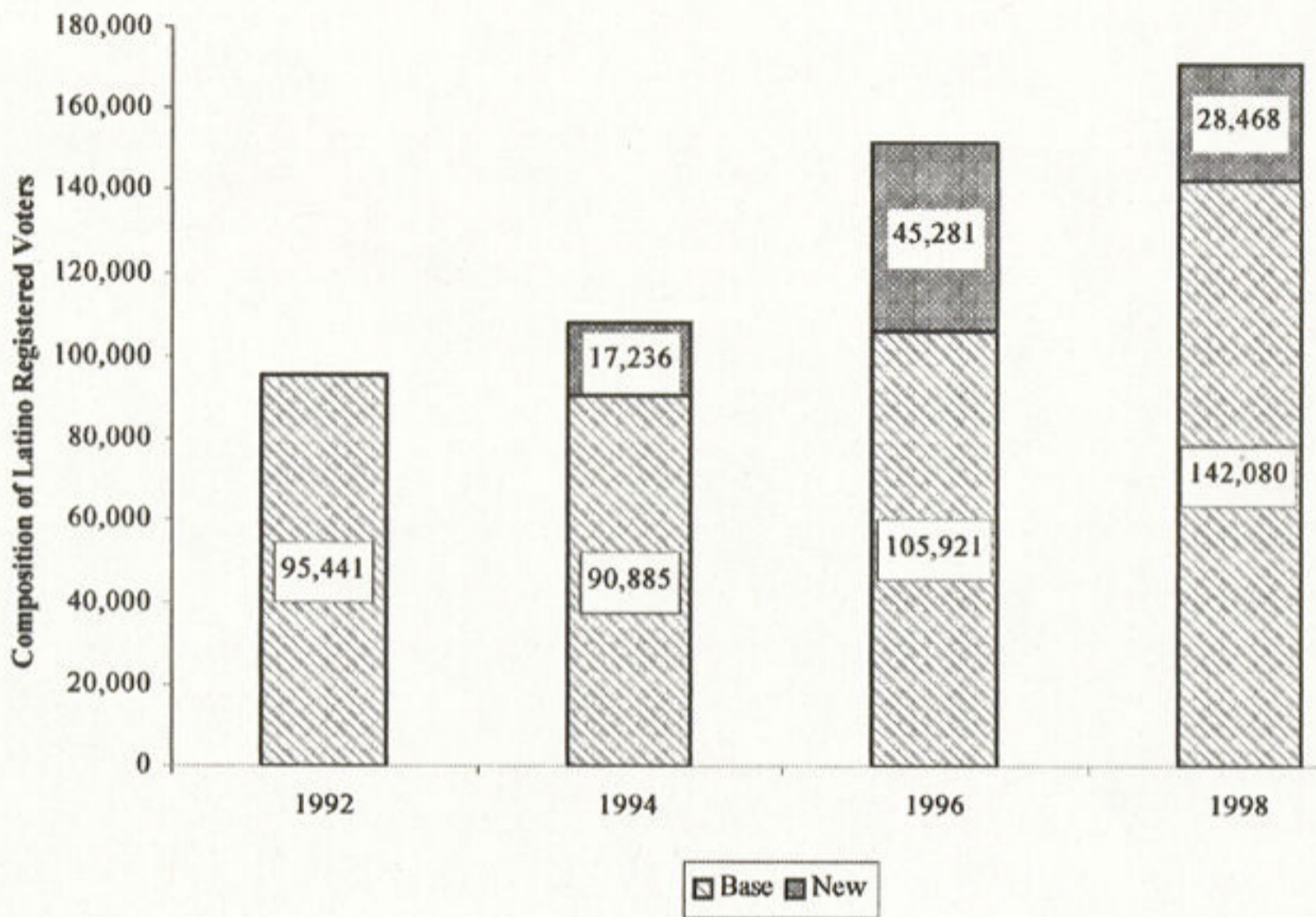


Figure 2
Composition of Latino Registered Voters in Harris County, Texas (1992 - 1998)



new registrants (i.e., individuals who had not been registered in 1992) and 84.1% prior registrants.

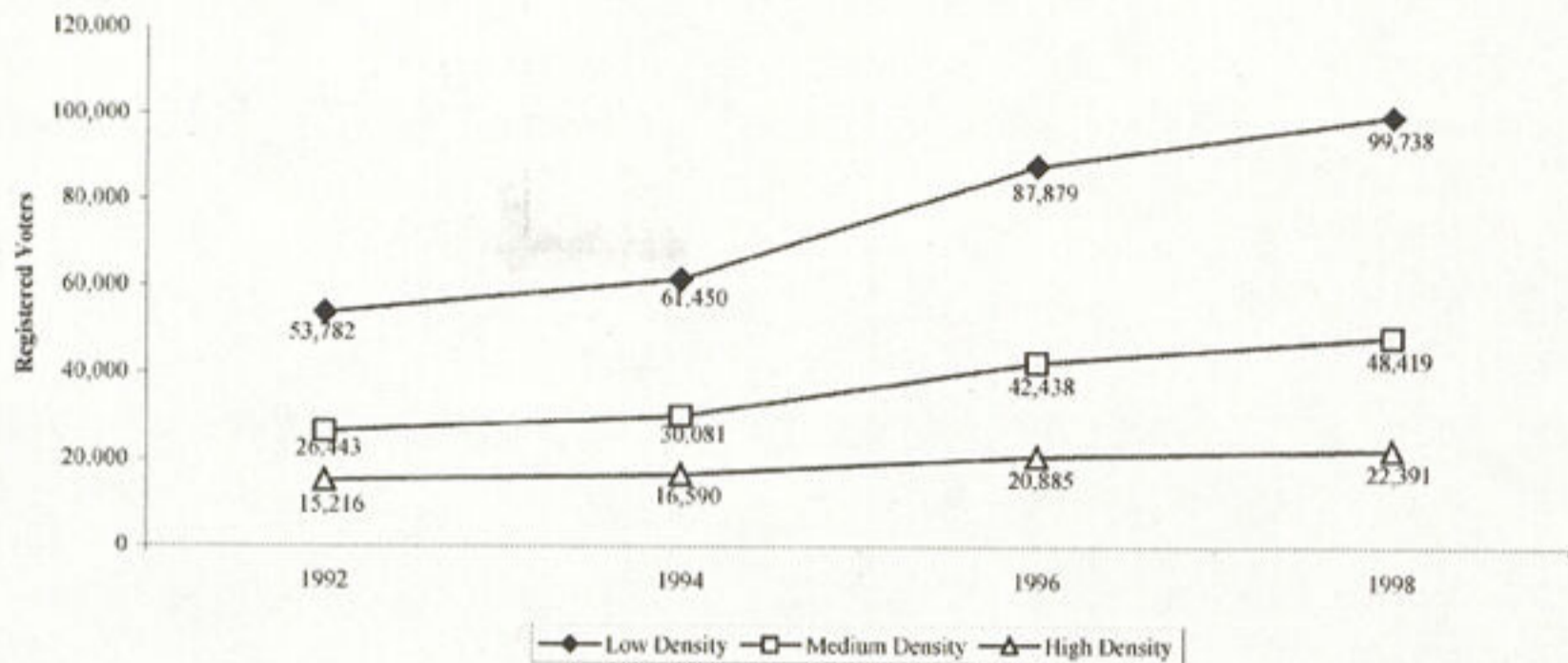
In 1996, 29.9% of Latino voters were new registrants, and 70.1% were prior registrants. In 1998, 16.7% of Latino registered voters were new registrants, and 83.3% were prior registrants. The large difference between 1994-1996 and 1996-1998 may be due to the fact that 1996 was a presidential election year. The substantial increase in 1996, however, may be also due in part to a one-time surge in registrations by newly naturalized citizens as a result of the previously mentioned effort to clear the citizenship application backlog.

The trend toward increasing numbers of registered Latino voters is more conspicuous in the low-density precincts than in the high- and medium-density precincts, as shown in Figure 3. As a result, the proportion of registered Latino voters in low-density precincts increased between 1992 and 1998 from 56.4% to 58.5%, while the proportion of registered Latino voters in high-density precincts decreased from 15.9% to 13.1%. The proportion of registered Latino voters in medium-density precincts increased from 27.7% to 28.4%.

Figure 3 raises the question as to whether Latinos are moving into the low- and medium-density precincts in greater numbers and registering at their new addresses or whether those living in low-density precincts are simply registering at a higher rate than those in medium- and high-density precincts. We cannot determine why the increase has been greater in the lower density precincts

Figure 3

Latinos Registered to Vote in Harris County, Texas,
by Precinct Density (1992 - 1998)



using the data available.⁷ If they are registering at a higher rate, what is the cause? Unfortunately, we cannot explain this using the data available.

Turnout Rates

Table 1 shows the voter turnout rates for each of the four elections. The second column shows the voter turnout rates for non-Latinos in the five selected precincts of Harris County, while the third column shows the voter turnout rates for Latinos in Harris County. The three columns to the right show the voter turnout rates for Latinos according to precinct density.

It should come as no surprise that turnout rates for the mid-term elections

**Table 1. Harris County Voter Turnout Rates
(Latino versus Non-Latino)**

Election	Non-Latinos	Latinos	High	Medium	Low
1992	54.5	58.1	59.1	52.0	47.0
1994	33.9	34.7	35.8	27.9	30.1
1996	47.0	47.3	47.1	39.4	40.4
1998	29.9	24.1	25.3	21.1	25.2

were lower than for the presidential elections. However, as shown in Table 1, the turnout rate for the 1996 presidential election dropped substantially from the 1992 presidential election. Similarly, the 1998 mid-term election also showed a significant decrease in turnout rate from the 1994 mid-term election. The decreasing trend in turnout rate is noteworthy because it occurred concurrently with large increases in the number of registered voters for the 1996 and 1998 elections. Clearly, the substantial increase in registrants was not matched by a comparable increase in voters.

What does come as a surprise is the difference in the turnout rates among

Latinos and non-Latinos. Numerous studies have found that Latino voter turnout rates have historically been lower than for non-Latinos (Leighley 2001). Our data do not support these historical findings. Only in the 1998 election was the non-Latino turnout rate higher than the Latino rate. In the 1992 election, Latino turnout exceeded that of non-Latinos by 3.6 percentage points, while the turnout rates for Latinos versus non-Latinos in the 1994 and 1996 elections were very close.

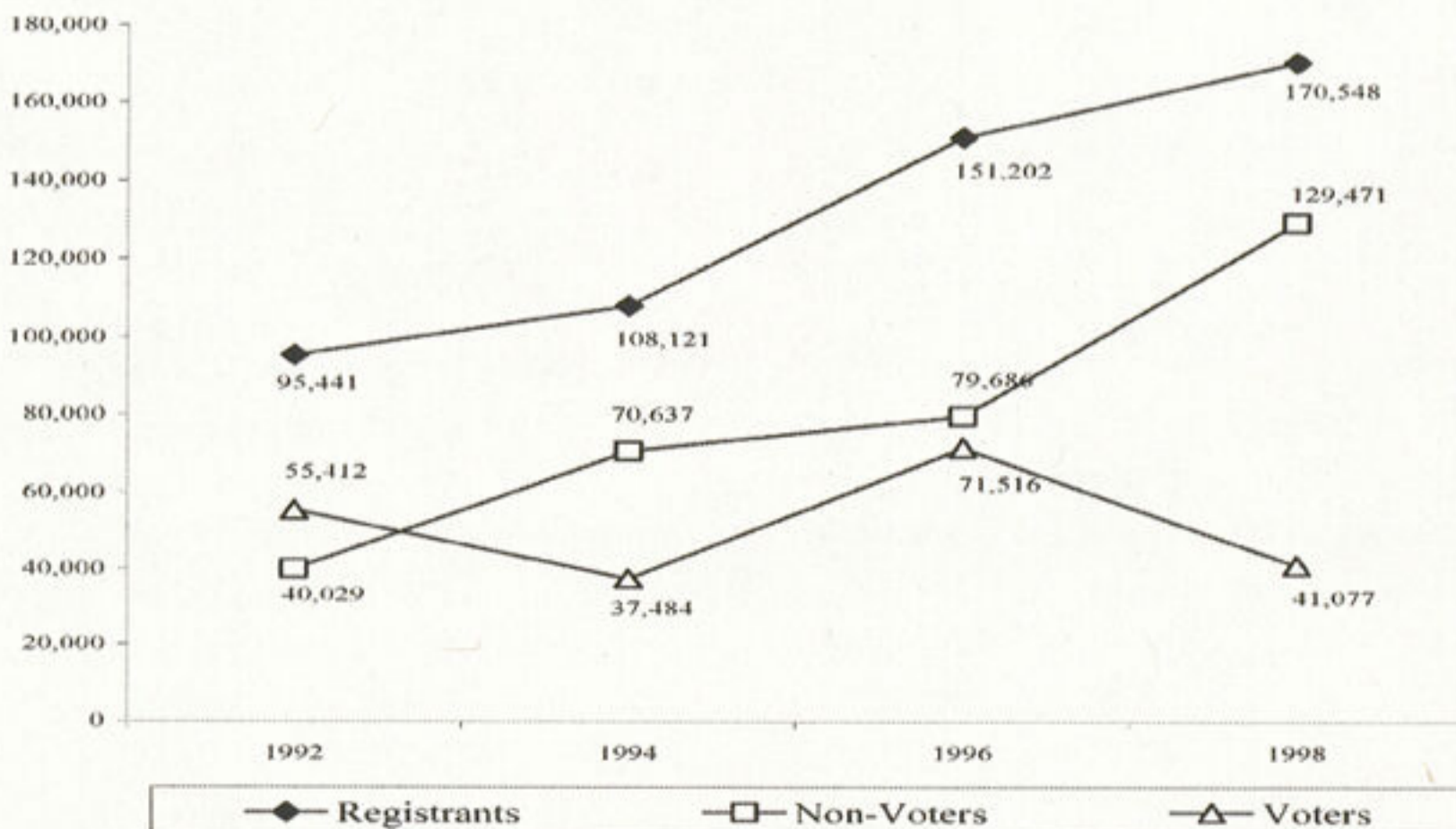
As Table 1 also shows, turnout rates in the low-density precincts in each election we analyzed were higher than those of either the high- or medium-density precincts. Nearly 60% of the Latino registered voters living in the low-density precincts went to the polls in the 1992 election, while only about half of the registered voters in high- and medium-density precincts did. However, the turnout rate in high-density precincts surpassed the medium-density rate after the 1992 election and was virtually equal to the low-density rate in 1998.

Similar to the overall Latino and non-Latino turnout rates shown in columns 2 and 3, the decreasing patterns in turnout rates are comparable regardless of precinct density. Voters were less likely to turn out for the presidential election in 1996 than in 1992, and were even less likely to turn out for either mid-term election. The turnout rate was worse in 1998 than in any of the other three elections.

Figure 4 compares actual Latino voter turnout to the total number of registrants and non-voters during the four elections in question. Note that for the 1992 election, more than half of the registrants went to the polls. However, while the numbers of registrants increased each year, the number of voters did not increase correspondingly. In fact, the increase in the number of non-voters was more dramatic. One possible explanation for this is that many per-

Figure 4

Actual Latino Voter Turnout in Harris County, Texas (1992 - 1998)



sons registered under revised procedures facilitated by the Motor Vehicle Registration Act. The act made voter registration substantially simpler in that one is required merely to enter some basic personal information onto a pre-paid postcard. This action can be accomplished while registering for or renewing one's driver's license. It is a simple act requiring only a few minutes and no expense. Registering in this way does not explicitly connect individuals to the political process, however. Furthermore, it suggests nothing about the voting-associated commitment to obtain at least a modicum of information about the candidates or issues in an election.

There was a substantial increase in registrants (nearly 80%) between 1992 and 1998, while the number of actual voters declined by more than 25%. However, since 1998 was a non-presidential year, it is more appropriate to compare 1992 to 1996. There were 58.4% more registrants in 1996 than in 1992 but only 29.1% more voters. Similarly, while there were 57.7% more registrants in 1994 than in 1998, there were only 9.6% more voters. Thus, Figure 4 appears to suggest that while efforts to convince people to register have been reasonably successful, inducing registrants to go to the polls and vote has been considerably less effective. One might argue that the time and money expended to increase the numbers of registrants would perhaps be more efficiently and effectively spent educating current registrants and motivating them to actually turn out and vote.

Figure 4A shows the actual non-Latino voter turnout over the four general elections. The patterns are remarkably similar to those shown in Figure 4. The number of registrants increased from one election to the next; the number of non-voters increased faster than the number of voters (i.e., non-voters constituted an increasingly larger proportion of the registrants); more people voted in presidential elections than in off years. However, the percent variation from year to year was substantially lower among non-Latinos than among Latinos. This is particularly noticeable in the numbers of voters. Note that the number of non-Latinos who actually voted in 1998 was greater than the number in 1992. This was not true for Latinos. Roughly 25% fewer non-Latinos voted in each of the mid-term elections than in the presidential elections. By contrast, 32.4% fewer Latinos voted in 1994 than in 1992, and 42.6% fewer Latinos voted in 1998 than in 1996. This suggests that, as we would expect, Latinos, like voters in general, are more interested in the presidential elections than in non-presidential elections.

Figure 5 shows the differences in turnout rates between groups of newly registered and previously registered (base) voters. The data show that newly registered voters tend to be less likely to go to the polls than previously registered voters. An even more interesting finding is that for the presidential election year of 1996, there was a very small gap—only 2 percentage points—between the groups of newly registered and previously registered voters, while in the mid-term election years, there were much larger gaps—7.8% and 8.0%, respectively. It will be interesting to see if this trend continues, as we gather data for the 2000 and future general elections.

Figure 4A

**Actual Non-Latino Voter Turnout in the Five Selected Precincts
in Harris County, Texas (1992 - 1998)**

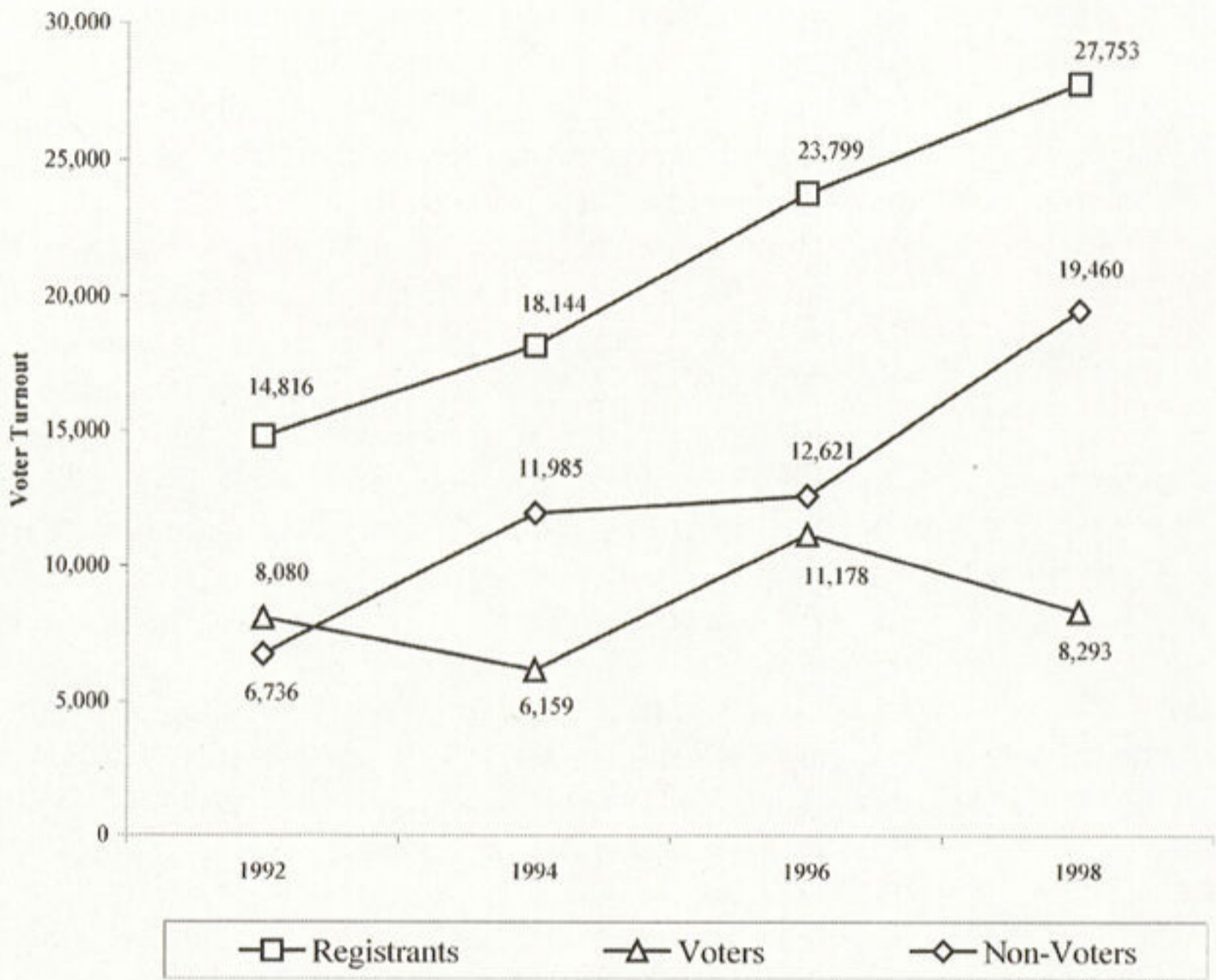


Figure 5

**Latino Voter Turnout Rate in Harris County, Texas,
by New and Previously Registered (Base) Voters
(1992 - 1998)**

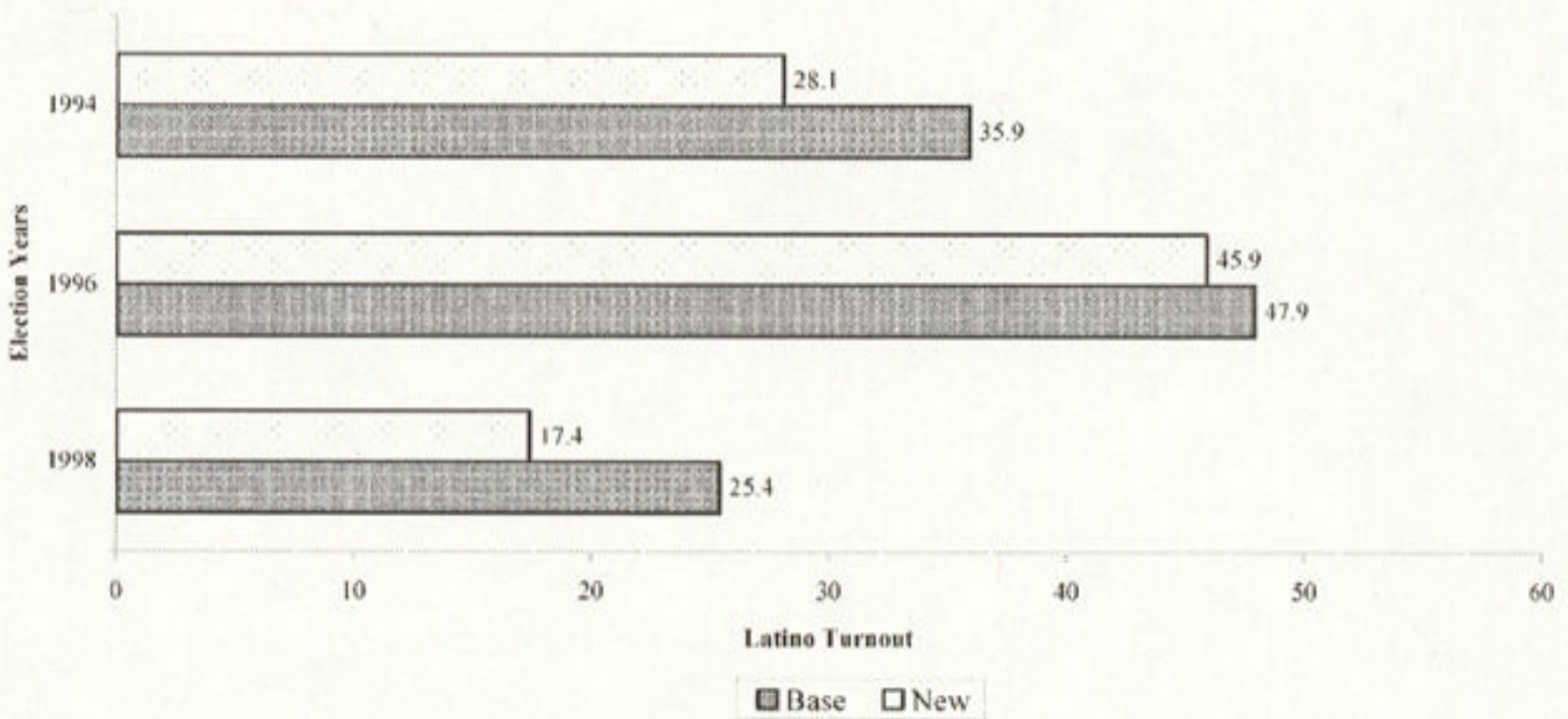
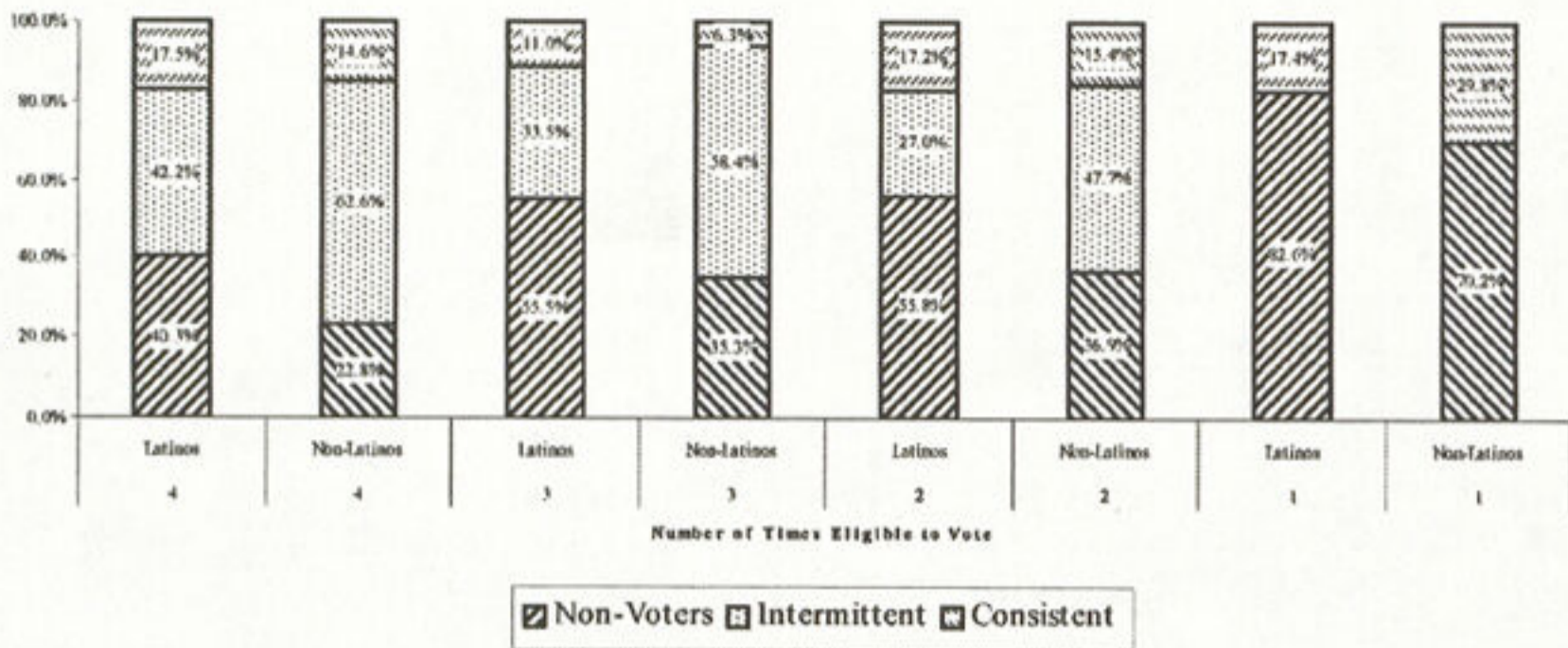


Figure 6

Distribution of Regularity of Voting among Latino and Non-Latino Voters in Harris County, Texas (1992 - 1998)



Regularity of Voting

Figure 6 indicates the population distribution of both the Latino and non-Latino citizenry in terms of voting frequency according to the number of times individuals were eligible to vote. We have labeled these people as “consistent” voters, “intermittent” voters, and “non-voters.” Those labeled as “consistent” voted in each election for which they were registered. Those designated “intermittent” are those who voted in at least one of the elections for which they were registered but did not vote in every election for which they were registered. For example, among the Latinos who were registered to vote for each of the four elections, 17.5% voted in each of the four elections, 42.2% voted in at least one election but not all four, while 40.3% were registered but never went to the polls. Among those registered to vote only once (because they were newly registered), there is, of course, no intermittent category.

Note that in three of the four elections Latinos were more likely to be non-voters than intermittent voters. Also, non-Latino and Latino non-voters greatly outnumbered consistent voters. Among those who were eligible to vote in more than one election, the percentage of Latinos who were consistent voters exceeds that of non-Latinos. The only exception to this finding was among one-time eligibles. One might argue that Figure 6 demonstrates that while, in general, Latinos are less likely than non-Latinos to become voters, those who become voters are more likely than non-Latinos to be consistent voters. Once again, this suggests that the primary emphasis needs to be placed on encouraging Latinos to vote, rather than on voter registration.

Regularity of Voting by Sex and Age

The data sets provide only a few demographic variables that can be used to analyze the vote (i.e., sex, age, and precinct of residence). Nevertheless, some interesting trends emerge. As shown in Table 2, registered Hispanic male and female voters tend to follow remarkably similar voting patterns. Roughly 55% of Latinos never vote, 29% vote intermittently, and nearly 16% always

Table 2. Population Distribution of Registered Latino Voters by Gender, Harris County, 1992 - 1998

Gender	Voting Frequency		
	Never	Intermittent	Always
Male	54.3	28.9	16.8
Female	55.7	29.3	15.0
Total	55.1	29.1	15.8

vote. Neither males nor females vary from those percentages by more than one percentage point.

Table 3 shows the population distribution of registered Hispanic voters by age group. A clear trend appears in this table. Although roughly 55% of the eligible Hispanic population never votes, there is a definite differentiation between age groups. There is a steady upward progression in the "always" column. Persons in the 18-24 age group are the least likely to have always voted, while those ages 65 and over are most likely to have always voted. This confirms the research which suggests that older persons are more likely to vote (Abrahamson, Aldrich, and Rohde 1995; Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee 2000; Graves and Lee 2000). The "% by Age" column indicates the proportion of the total number of registrants in each age group, i.e., 14.8% of all Hispanic registrants are ages 18-24.

Table 3. Population Distribution of Registered Latino Voters by Age, Harris County, 1992-1998

Age Group	Voting Frequency			% by Age
	Never	Intermittent	Always	
18-24	74.2	17.9	7.9	14.8
25-34	62.4	28.8	8.8	25.6
35-44	53.7	30.2	16.2	25.5
45-54	46.6	33.0	20.4	17.7
55-64	41.4	33.7	24.9	8.9
65 and over	38.7	32.2	29.1	7.4
Total ⁸	55.5	29.0	15.6	100.0

One might suggest that younger persons are disproportionately over-represented in the "never" column because they had fewer opportunities to vote. For those persons who reached their 18th birthdays between the 1996 and 1998 elections, failing to vote in the only election for which they had registered would place them in the "Never" column. The lack of opportunity may somewhat distort the analysis. However, those people constitute less than 3% of the overall registrant population. Furthermore, eliminating the individuals who are either 18 or 19 years old, thus excluding those who had only one

opportunity to vote due to the age restriction, would alter the figures in the youngest age group row to 71.2%, 22.2%, and 6.6%, respectively. Those figures continue to suggest that younger voters are less involved in the voting process than older voters.

To disaggregate the three categories of precinct density, we developed Table 4. Each panel in the table shows essentially the same progression as was found in Table 3. There are differences in the percentage numbers, but

Table 4. Population Distribution of Registered Latino Voters by Age

Panel A: Low-density Precincts			
Age Group	Voting Frequency		
	Never	Sometimes	Always
18-24	75.3	17.4	7.3
25-34	62.8	27.7	9.5
35-44	52.5	30.4	17.1
45-54	45.3	32.9	21.8
55-64	40.6	32.8	26.6
65 and over	38.5	29.2	32.3
Total	55.1	28.5	16.4

Panel B: Medium-density Precincts			
Age Group	Voting Frequency		
	Never	Sometimes	Always
18-24	74.8	17.3	7.9
25-34	63.4	29.1	7.5
35-44	56.1	29.5	14.4
45-54	49.2	33.1	17.7
55-64	44.0	35.1	20.9
65 and over	40.3	35.4	24.2
Total	57.7	28.9	13.4

Panel C: High-density Precincts			
Age Group	Voting Frequency		
	Never	Sometimes	Always
18-24	67.4	21.7	11.0
25-34	57.9	33.6	8.6
35-44	55.3	30.4	14.3
45-54	48.4	33.2	18.4
55-64	39.3	34.8	25.9
65 and over	36.9	34.4	28.7
Total	52.5	31.3	16.1

the likelihood of having voted in all elections for which one was registered increases with age, regardless of the concentration of Latinos in the precinct. The only exception is that the youngest age group's voters in the high- and medium-density precincts are more likely to have always voted than those in the 25-34 age group.

It is interesting to note that Hispanics in low-density precincts are more likely to have always voted than those in either medium- or high-density precincts. Only in the 18-24 age group is this not true. With only two exceptions, those in the medium-density precincts are least likely to have voted each time they were eligible. Given the available data, we cannot determine why is it that those in the medium-density precincts are less likely to vote than those in either the high-density or low-density precincts. However, this is an issue which deserves further attention.

On the other hand, comparing the "total" rows in each of the three panels of Table 4 indicates that Hispanics in high-density precincts are less likely to have never voted than those in either of the other two precinct-density categories. Although the "Always" column total in high-density precincts is virtually the same as the "Always" column total in low-density precincts, there is a 2.6 percentage point difference between the "Never" column totals in those two categories. Thus, combining the "Always" the "Never" columns suggests that Hispanics in high-density precincts may be somewhat more involved in the political process than those in lower-density precincts; however, that is unclear. It is much more clear that older Hispanics are much more likely to vote, regardless of precinct density.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Our analysis has explicated several key patterns:

1. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of Latino registered voters in Harris County. This growth has been characterized by a major spike that seems to be related to the increase in naturalization rates in the mid-1990s.
2. The increase in non-Latino registrants has been slower and more incremental.
3. Latino voter registration increased more in low-density Latino areas than in high-density precincts.
4. Latino voter turnout lagged significantly behind increases in registration.
5. The percentage of Latinos who always vote is greater than the percentage of non-Latinos who always vote, and the percentage of Latinos who never vote is greater than the percentage of non-Latinos who never vote. Combining the two suggests that a significantly lower percentage of Latinos relative to Anglos regularly votes.
6. There are no gender differences in Latino turnout patterns.

These results are a first step toward developing a longitudinal perspective of voter-turnout patterns of Latinos, even though they are derived from an analysis of Harris County, Tex., the most populous county in the state. To develop a complete picture that goes beyond Texas, it will be necessary to

develop a comparable national data set that includes not only longitudinal data, but also information on a wide range of variables so as to compare our research with the literature on voter turnout. As a step in that direction, we have gathered these types of data from a representative sample of the voters included in this analysis and are in the process of analyzing those results.

Notwithstanding those needed additions, the results we present here provide findings that should interest both academic researchers and community activists. As we noted, in Harris County, the number of first-time registrants increased considerably during the eight-year period we examined, but the increase in registrants did not translate into comparably substantial increases in new voters. Figure 5 showed that previously registered voters were significantly more likely to vote than newly registered voters. Furthermore, Tables 1 and 2 showed that while there was little differentiation between voting patterns among males and females, there was a clear divergence in the patterns among age groupings.

Given this information, one might reasonably argue that the gap between turnout and registration implies that the most effective means of increasing the impact of Latinos on the political process is to expend more effort in mobilizing registrants rather than trying to sign up new registrants. As shown elsewhere, efforts to increase registration have not necessarily translated into increased turnout (Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee 2000). Clearly, getting more people to the polls is the ultimate goal. However, the longer one is registered, the more likely one is to have voted. Registering voters is not an irrelevant activity, but placing more emphasis on increasing turnout may be the more productive strategy for the short-term and foreseeable future.

Finally, the increase in the number of registrants and voters has been substantially higher in low- and medium-density precincts than in high-density precincts. This is probably because Latinos in low-density precincts have higher educational attainment and income levels than in high-density precincts, which often correlate to higher voter participation rates. Regardless of the reason, Latino voter-turnout rates have been consistently higher in Harris County's low-density precincts. Therefore, one might argue that the voter-mobilization efforts previously mentioned be directed toward Latino residents in the high-density districts. Such efforts might be the most effective method to increase the impact of the Latino community on the political process.

Appendix A. Methodology

In order to develop this analysis, it was necessary to obtain data from two sources: the voter registration file and the voting record files. The voter registration file was provided by the Texas secretary of state's office. The voting record files were provided by the Harris County clerk's office.

The voter registration file lists the names of all persons who have registered to vote in every county in the state. We obtained this file for analysis of data from several counties. The file contains each registrant's name, voter

registration certificate number, mailing address, permanent address, county and precinct codes, date of birth, effective date of voter registration, sex, and suspense flag.⁹

The voting record files contain the names of persons who voted in the applicable election. We obtained the voting record files for the general elections held in 1992, 1994, 1996, and 1998. Each file contains the voter's name, voter registration certificate number, mailing address, permanent address, county and precinct codes, date of birth, sex, and voting method (election day, early voting by mail, or early voting by personal appearance). The file indicates only that the individual voted in that election. It does not indicate for which candidate the individual voted or even whether the individual completed the ballot. It merely indicates that the voter signed in at a polling place or returned an early voting mail-in ballot.

Since the area of interest in this research is the voting patterns of Latinos, we used a Spanish surname list provided by the Texas secretary of state's office to eliminate non-Hispanic voters. The list contains roughly 30,000 names that are generally considered to be Hispanic. One step in our computer program was to identify and delete from our file persons whose names did not appear on the Spanish surname list. This method is not fool-proof. It is possible that non-Hispanic persons were included in the file and that Hispanic persons were deleted. Hispanic women who marry and take the name of their non-Hispanic husbands would be deleted. Additionally, their progeny would be deleted. Conversely, non-Hispanic women who marry and take the name of their Hispanic husbands would be included. Furthermore, there are some names (such as Martín) which are not included in the Spanish surname list because they could be either Hispanic or non-Hispanic. In spite of these issues, the list is the one used by the secretary of state's office to identify Hispanic voters, and our efforts are consistent with theirs. Moreover, it is doubtful that the numbers of persons being erroneously deleted would differ so substantially from the number being erroneously included as to dramatically distort our analysis.

In order to perform this analysis, it was necessary to merge the four voting record files with the voter registration file. This was accomplished in a three-step process. The first step was to create a variable indicating that the individual had voted in a given election. To each of the four voting record files, we added an "e9x" variable.¹⁰ The second step was to create a single voting history file for each voter. We sorted each of the four voting record files by voter registration number and merged the files into one voting history file. Thus, each voter was listed in the file once. Those voters who have voted in each election had four "e9x" variable values equal to one. Those who had voted in fewer than four elections had a missing value for one or more of the "e9x" variables.

The final step was to merge the newly created voting history file with the voter registration file. We sorted and merged the two files according to voter registration number. Thus, we created a single file that listed all registered Hispanic voters in Harris County. The file includes all the variables from

each of the individual files; therefore, each registered voter has a value for each of the four election variables (e92, e94, e96, and e98). Those who had never voted had four missing values. We then converted all missing values for the four election variables to zeros (0) to facilitate the analysis.

Having created a single file that recorded the voting history for each registered voter in Harris County, the next step was to determine how many times each individual was eligible to vote. This required a number of steps. We based the eligibility determination on the individual's effective registration date and age. First, we established a criterion based on each person's effective date of registration, assuming that a person could not vote without having been registered first. Persons whose effective date of registration was on or before 13 November 1992, were eligible to vote in the 1992 election and in future elections. Unfortunately, we discovered that some persons had voted in elections prior to their effective date of registration. Discussions with personnel at the Harris County clerk's office suggested that this could occur if a person moved to a new precinct within the county. The individual voter would retain his or her registration number but could receive a new effective date of registration. It was also possible that data entry errors had occurred.

Therefore, we developed an age criterion that was based on the individual's age on the date of each election. For example, persons born prior to 13 November 1974 should have been eligible to vote in each of the four elections, using an age criterion. However, not all persons register in time to vote by the date of the election for which they are first eligible to vote. Thus, we used the effective date of registration as the primary criterion and applied the age criterion to account for those individuals whose voting record indicated that they had voted prior to their effective registration date. As a result, we developed a variable indicating the number of times an individual was eligible to vote, which ranged in value from one to four.

The suspense flag created an additional problem because it does not indicate when an individual's registration lapsed. Therefore, some individuals could have been eligible to vote four times according to the effective date of registration and age criteria but not eligible to vote that many times because they had departed the county. We had to make certain assumptions about those voters with suspense flags. For those voters with suspense flags, we assumed that they had departed the county after the election in which they last voted.¹¹ This may not be a valid assumption, but there appears to be no available data to either support or invalidate it.

Using these criteria, we established a set of variables that indicate for which elections each individual was registered to vote. That information allowed us to determine the number of times that each individual was eligible to vote. We then divided the number of times a person voted by the number of times the person was eligible to vote to obtain the person's voting rate. Identifying the elections for which each individual was registered to vote also allowed us to compute the number of registered voters for each election. Additionally, we were able to compute the number of voters in each election. Thus we could calculate the voter-turnout rate for each election.

Endnotes

- 1 We use the terms Latino and Hispanic interchangeably.
- 2 For the purposes of this analysis, high-density precincts are defined as those in which more than 70% of the registrants are Latino. Low-density precincts are those with 30% or fewer Latino registrants, and the remainder are medium-density precincts.
- 3 Latinos were identified as those individuals having a Spanish surname as defined by the surname dictionary of the Texas secretary of state.
- 4 Research on "consistent" voting has long been neglected by political scientists. Our findings, therefore, will contribute to the developing literature on this topic. See Kaplan 2001.
- 5 We define "consistent" voting as having voted in each election for which the individual was registered. "Intermittent" means that an individual voted in at least one election but also failed to vote in at least one election.
- 6 The 1992 election is an exception since we have no data from previous elections.
- 7 There is no figure comparable to Figure 3 for non-Latinos since our non-Latino population was chosen exclusively from low-density precincts. This will also be true for other precinct density figures.
- 8 The total percentages differ slightly from those in Table 1 because the gender of some people is not included in the data set.
- 9 Voters registration cards are mailed to voters every two years. When a registration card is returned as undeliverable, the suspense flag is changed from "N" to "Y," indicating that the individual is no longer registered to vote in that county. However, the name is not removed from the file.
- 10 For example, everyone in the 1992 file was given a variable "e92" equal to 1, indicating that the individual had voted in the 1992 general election.
- 11 For example, if individual with a suspense flag was deemed eligible to vote four times based on previous criteria, and that person voted in 1996 but not in 1998, we deemed that person eligible to vote only three times. The fact that the person voted in 1996 indicates that the suspension did not occur until after the 1996 election. However, based on the data, we cannot know what the departure date was.

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High-Stakes Testing and U.S.-Mexican Youth in Texas: The Case for Multiple Compensatory Criteria in Assessment

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With the recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which calls for testing at virtually every grade level, a growing debate is taking place regarding the utility of mass (and especially high-stakes) testing whereby schools, principals, teachers, and students are held accountable for increased children's achievement (e.g., Scheurich, Skrla, and Johnson 2000; Scheurich and Skrla 2000; Valencia et al.2001).¹ Proponents of the current system of accountability in Texas, which does have high-stakes testing as its linchpin, see the system as bringing attention to previously underserved African American and Mexican American children, the majority of whom are poor (Scheurich, Skrla, and Johnson 2000; Scheurich and Skrla 2000; Skrla, Scheurich, and Johnson 2000a, 2000b).² High-stakes testing extends beyond the concept of standardized testing to denote the attaching of high-stakes consequences (like retention, promotion, or graduation) to test performance (Heuber and Hauser 1999).

Opponents take issue not with the concept of accountability, but rather with the high stakes that are attached to the tests themselves, as well as to

their collateral effects, including the marginalizing of curriculum, children, or both (McNeil 2000; McNeil and Valenzuela 2001). Sloan (forthcoming) reconciles these perspectives by suggesting that while proponents have an "outside-in" view, critics possess an "inside-out" perspective. In other words, proponents view the classroom from the outside (i.e., a "top-down" perspective) and note that previously underserved children have been accorded greater teacher and administrative attention. Critics, on the other hand, look at high-stakes testing policies from the perspective of the classroom, where they witness the collateral effects brought about by such high pressures to generate positive performance. These include narrowing the curriculum by "teaching to the test;" marginalizing children, their languages, and cultures; and "gaming" the system by doing such things as retaining children in their current grades or relegating them to test-exempt-status categories to produce positive test results and school ratings.

Regardless of one's perspective, I maintain that it is difficult to justify tying high-stakes consequences to younger children's grade-level promotion and retention as Texas is intending to do with all third-graders in the coming 2002-2003 school year. Given that the scholarly literature clearly suggests that retention has negative consequences on children (e.g., Alexander, Entwistle, and Dauber 1994; Holmes 1989; Shepard and Smith 1989; Valencia and Villarreal forthcoming), requiring them to repeat the same grade on the basis of a test score devalues their rights to a fair and comprehensive evaluation of their performance through as many means available. In theory, grade repetition helps children to master the curriculum that they previously failed to master. Nevertheless, as discussed in more detail below, not only do children often fail to improve academically, but retention can actually decrease their chances for future success. Research evidence further shows a consistent correlation to dropping out (Shepard and Smith 1989; Holmes 1989; IRDA 2001; Valencia and Villarreal forthcoming). Moreover, as with other educational outcomes like achievement and dropping out, patterns in grade-level retention correspond to racial/ethnic as well as overlapping class inequalities, suggesting an inability of our educational systems to teach to these subpopulations (Valenzuela 1999; Stanton-Salazar 2001; García in press).

Although issues of curriculum and pedagogy are beyond the scope of this paper (for an excellent review, see García in press), they inform the larger backdrop of inequality about which critics and opponents of accountability are concerned. After a brief review of this larger, historic backdrop, I examine current education policy in Texas, including projections regarding the expected impact of the state's new policy on social promotion. In the final section, I make the case for a "compensatory," rather than Texas's current "conjunctive," multiple criteria assessment system (Heubert and Hauser 1999; Valencia and Bernal 2000). In the conclusion, I further suggest how a multiple criteria compensatory assessment model can operate within a broader framework of culturally relevant, systemic change. In light of the current national appetite for mass testing embodied in the newly reauthorized ESEA,

my primary purpose, however, is to challenge the wisdom of attaching high-stakes consequences to tests.

The Larger Backdrop of Inequality

It is important to take both structural- and individual-level variables into account to begin to grasp the larger backdrop of inequality. At the macro level, research conducted by Orfield et al. (1992) and Chapa and Valencia (1993) shows that immigration patterns have combined with poverty, frustrated desegregation efforts, and systemic educational neglect to give U.S. Mexicans the unfortunate distinction of being the most segregated ethnic/racial group in our nation's schools: "Hispanic students attending schools in California and Texas experience greater segregation than Blacks in Alabama and Mississippi" (Orfield et al. 1992, 17). Moreover, such segregation is correlated with underachievement on numerous indices, including standardized tests, high dropout and retention rates, and ultimately, at the end of the educational pipeline, a very low matriculation rate to higher education (Murdock et al. 1997; Solorzano and Yosso 2000).

Important mediating variables that compound the problem of segregation are inequities in school funding, the availability of certified teachers, and the quality of the curriculum with which achievement is correlated. Although a decade-long litigation battle (1984-1993) challenged the state's system of school finance and resulted in a more equitable system of state funding to schools (Cárdenas 1997), Texas has not invested in public goods like schools, parks, and health care in proportion to either its wealth or demographic change (McNeil 2000; Murdock et al. 1997).

With respect to school funding, the increases have never been sufficient to ameliorate decades-long neglect (McNeil 2000). McNeil (2000) and Valenzuela (1999) find, for example, the existence of schools lacking in books, labs, and high-quality curriculum materials. To this, Valenzuela (1999) adds that the state curriculum to which youth are subjected is culturally subtractive. Historically, rather than building on children's social, cultural, and linguistic competencies, schooling, as a tool of Americanization, has played the role of subtracting from children their language, culture, and community-based identities (Valenzuela 1999; Spring 1997). Ironically, even as Latino and other minority youth have been "deculturalized" into monolingual English-speaking students, they continue being viewed as if they are in need of ever-more "fixing" or socialization (De Villar 1994; Spring 1997). Though outfitted today under the guise of "standards-based reform" and its attendant, high-stakes accountability system (Meier 2000), our state curricula may arguably be characterized as yet another instance of the state's role in the reconstitution of the class and racial/ethnic hierarchy (Blanton forthcoming; San Miguel 1987; San Miguel and Valencia 1998; Valenzuela 1999; McNeil 2000).

With respect to the prevalence of certified teachers, Treisman (1999; cited in Valencia and Villarreal forthcoming) analyzes State Board for Educator

Certification data in Texas and finds that one in five public school students in Texas are taught by teachers who are not certified in the subjects that they teach. Moreover, as the degree of segregation increases, the percentage of certified teachers decreases and achievement on the TAAS test also decreases.

Fassold (2000) complicates the picture of inequities through analyses of the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) own system for rating campuses, as well as the relation of TAAS scores to course-taking patterns in mathematics in analyses of the 1995 high school cohort. Ranging from high to low, a school or district may obtain one of the following four ratings: "exemplary," "recognized," "academically acceptable," or "academically unacceptable/low-performing" (see <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>). These ratings are further based on a formula that combines the following three criteria: the students' passing rates on the three sections of the TAAS (reading, writing, and mathematics), school attendance levels, and the school's dropout rate as a whole (Texas Education Agency 2001). He finds that African Americans and Latino students disproportionately attend the lowest accredited schools according to the TEA's own rating system. He finds that success on the math portion of the TAAS correlates strongly to access to higher-level math (e.g., geometry, statistics, and calculus). Ideally, by the students' sophomore year, they are enrolled in geometry. However, less than 48 percent of both African Americans and Mexican Americans—in comparison to 67 percent of Anglos—were enrolled in either geometry or higher-level math.

Worthy of note in the Fassold (2000) study are the stark differences in school ratings at elementary, middle, and secondary levels on campuses with high concentrations of either Anglo or minority (Latino and African American) students. He finds that on campuses where Anglo students are most highly concentrated (50 percent, 66 percent, or 90 percent majority), their campuses were consistently rated by the TEA as superior. For example, even in the most diverse contexts attended by Anglos, where they constitute 50 percent of the elementary, middle, or high school population, their campuses continue to receive the top two accreditation—i.e., recognized and exemplary—ratings.

Regional differences in the degree of inequality also have a long history, with poor schooling conditions being especially pronounced in Texas schools. The landmark 1970 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights study found, for example, that in comparison to other Southwestern states, Texas "has the highest proportion of grade repetition in the first and fourth grades, [and] also has 74 percent, the highest proportion of Mexican American eighth-graders, reading below grade level" (cited in Valencia and Villarreal forthcoming). According to Texas Education Agency data analyzed by Valencia and Villarreal (forthcoming), high rates of retention continue today. A further projection that Valencia and others make (IRDA 2001) is that the state's new policy against social promotion promises to aggravate these historic problems while placing the burden of change on children, as well as their families.

As with retention rates, Texas dropout rates are among the nation's highest. Evidence from the U.S. Department of Education (Haney 2001a) shows

that the Houston Independent School District (HISD), fifth largest in the nation, ranks 89th of the 100 largest U.S. districts in the percent of the students (46.7 percent) that it graduates (below both Detroit and New York City). Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin also rank low among U.S. cities.

Several scholars, including Haney (2000; 2001a), suggest that high dropout and retention rates may be key reasons why the TAAS scores have gone up, as well as why the racial/ethnic gap on the TAAS test has been narrowed (Texas Education Agency 2000). Haney (2000, 73) maintains that "one clear cause for the decrease in the racial gap in grade 10 TAAS scores in the 1990s is that Black and Hispanic students are increasingly retained in grade 9 before they take the grade 10 TAAS test." Haney argues that despite the myth of a problem with social promotion in Texas, retention in grade is a much more common experience than the rhetoric would suggest. In short, these historic patterns of undereducation and miseducation of Mexican American children, coupled with adverse structural conditions, overlap at the individual level with a high incidence of low rates of educational attainment and assimilation to which I shall now turn.

For the most part, the parents of both Mexican American and Mexican immigrant children are undereducated. Parents of first-generation, immigrant students attain an average of six years of school. Based on information provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, García (in press) offers a bleak portrait: Hispanics, of which 64.3 percent are of Mexican origin, register a nearly 50 percent dropout rate and a 50 percent rate of overagedness at grade 12, attesting to high retention rates in school. Consistent with Orfield's (1992) observations, 82 percent of Hispanic students attend segregated schools (García in press).

Generational comparisons, a proxy for level of assimilation, show that while parents of first-generation, Mexican immigrant youth average six years of schooling, parents of U.S.-born youth complete an average of no more than nine years of schooling (Chapa 1988; Valenzuela 1999; Fix and Passel 1994). Not only does this pattern correspond to the above-mentioned concerns over ninth-grade retention, it also means that, historically, far too many children have parents who have either a non-high school experience or a negative one as their experiential base. In an analysis of 1990 U.S. Census data, Chapa (1988) corroborates these results in Texas. Specifically, he finds that third-generation, adult Mexican Americans complete an average of 9.3 years of education and that the dropout rate is 56 percent. This evidence is consistent with numerous other studies which confirm that "straight-line assimilation," whereby the third generation is fully assimilated in socioeconomic terms, is atypical of the Mexican American experience (e.g., Vigil and Long 1981; Buriel 1984; Buriel and Cardoza 1988; Portes and Rumbaut 1990; Ogbu 1991; Matute-Bianchi 1991; Suárez-Orozco 1991; Kao and Tienda 1995; Steinberg, Brown, and Dornbusch 1996; Zsembik and Llanes 1996).

At school level, as various researchers have found (Romo and Falbo 1996; Valenzuela 1999; Fassold 2000), Latino children are further concentrated in the general, non-college-bound curriculum that reinforces teachers' and

administrators' views of them as culturally deficient. As Romo and Falbo (1996) aptly observe in the context of their study of Latino, underprivileged youth in the Austin Independent School District, Latino children's lack of placement in the privileged rungs of the curriculum jeopardizes their chances of obtaining the skills they need to be successful academically, including their passage of the state's standardized examination itself. More just and democratic assessment alternatives constitute an important step toward providing children with the educational opportunities that they need to be successful in life.

Education Policy Context

Texas's Current System of Testing

Since 1990-91, Texas has had a system of accountability that relies on mass, standardized testing. That is, the means of holding teachers and administrators accountable is the average passing rate of each school's children on the state's standardized 10th-grade exit test, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills, or "TAAS." Every school and district in the state is also rated, most visibly in state newspapers, though also on the TEA Web site. Despite wide-ranging differences between schools at elementary, middle, and high school levels, particularly in terms of access to certified teachers and other resources, judgments of school and district quality, in effect, assume a level playing field. School and district quality get reduced to single scores in reading, writing, and math based on a per-school calculation of average passing rates in these areas. These scores are typically further broken down by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Since schools are such highly complex enterprises with varying levels of quality across course offerings, programs, and staff, a single indicator violates common-sense assumptions and ways that parents have of talking about school quality.

While schools, principals, teachers, and students are held accountable in this manner, children arguably bear the greatest burden through—at the 10th-grade, exit level—their graduation or non-graduation based on their test performance. As previously discussed, educational outcomes for Mexican American children both reflect and are the product of a corollary system of advantages and disadvantages to which their scores correlate and over which they have no control. Placing this burden on children is therefore tantamount to "blaming the victim." Following students, teachers bear the next greatest burden as they are held accountable for the outcomes at the same time that they do not control the resources or the flow of finance to which the outcomes are tied (Dye 2002).³ Given existing disparities, it is therefore unjust for the state to hold all children and teachers accountable to a uniform standard.

Although technically, the TAAS exam is only high stakes at the exit level, its publicness in the form of regularly published school ratings in state newspapers render them high stakes at all levels were they are administered (McNeil and Valenzuela 2001; Sloan forthcoming). Test scores, for example,

translate into consequences attached to real estate values, as well as to the careers of both educational bureaucrats and politicians (Sloan forthcoming; Valenzuela and Maxcy forthcoming). Such pressures force districts and schools to divert their few discretionary dollars and limited instructional time to the purchasing of test-prep materials and extensive test preparation, particularly in poor, minority schools (McNeil and Valenzuela 2001).

High school youth in our state who are not passing the exit test are increasingly taking courses like "TAAS-Math" and "TAAS-Reading" for which they receive only "local credit" instead of credits for graduation. The sole purpose of the course is for the students to pass the TAAS test. If after taking the test they fail the exam, they get another semester of local credit during which time they could have been taking real math courses like algebra and geometry (McNeil and Valenzuela 2001).

High-stakes testing not only affects time allotted to math and language arts in the classroom; social science and science teachers are also asked by their principals to participate in test-prep activities alongside their colleagues in the English and math department (Sloan forthcoming; Hampton forthcoming). Instructional time for subjects that are not covered by the test is diminished while teachers that do test in the tested subject areas describe methods they used to narrow both instruction and delivery format to make them consistent with the TAAS format (Hampton forthcoming; Sloan forthcoming). Writing, for example, follows a strict, five-paragraph format on the exam. Rather than leave outcomes to chance, teachers often reduce the meaning of writing to a sterile, formulaic interpretation, particularly in schools that are largely poor and populated by minorities.

McNeil and Valenzuela (2001) and Valenzuela (2000b) argue that especially in poor, minority-based schools, logic dictates that when assessment gets tied to the threat of sanctions that teachers and administrators must bear if test scores drop or remain stagnant, perverse incentives exist to marginalize children through various mechanisms. Other popular strategies include the following: relegating them to test-exempt status categories (Valenzuela 2000b; Valenzuela and Maxcy forthcoming), as occurs with limited English proficient (or "LEP") and special education youth; "encouraging" the academically weak to remain so by retaining them at the ninth-grade level so that they do not become 10th-grade TAAS-test takers who lower school averages; and "pushing students out," such as by the practice of withdrawing students for lack of attendance (Valenzuela 1999).

A case in point is a virtually all-Mexican, large, urban school located in Houston's inner city. In a *Houston Chronicle* (4 May 2000) article titled, "HISD Sophomores Post Gains on TAAS," the author notes increasing scores at the school though fewer students were tested—254 students compared to 434 in the previous year. That is, the school registered higher scores though an astounding 42 percent fewer students than in the previous year were tested.

Around the same time that this newspaper report appeared, I observed a similar pattern of test score and exemption data in a case-by-case review of HISD schools through the district's Research and Accountability Office.

Consistently, albeit with some exceptions, HISD schools that showed higher scores were also those that exempted large numbers of LEP and special education youth. While there are sound reasons for exempting some children from testing, dramatic shifts in the number of exemptions, inasmuch as they exist, squarely implicate the testing system itself in the reproduction of inequality.

Whether or not accountability contributes to what appears to be a rising dropout rate, especially among Mexican Americans, is currently being debated (Carnoy, Loeb, and Smith 2000; Haney 2000, 2001a). What cannot be disputed, however, is that the dropout rate in Texas has continued unabated despite 12 years of accountability. This debate notwithstanding, since retaining children in grade is solidly correlated to the probability of dropping out, the emerging, ever-higher-stakes policy context in Texas merits careful attention and scrutiny from scholars and policymakers alike.

Texas's New Policy on Social Promotion: Ever-Higher Stakes

In the 1999 legislative session, two bills were passed that promise to increase retention rates among children in Texas. First, Senate Bill 103 was passed to further expand the accountability system to include additional end-of-course exams consisting of algebra, biology, chemistry, and physics. The difficulty level of the tests at all grade levels was also increased for the newly developed exams that go into effect during the 2002-2003 academic year. The new exam is called the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exam. In light of this change, I hereafter refer to the state's standardized exam as the TAKS test.

Second, Senate Bill 4 bans social promotion by attaching high-stakes consequences to the new generation of tests for the students in grades three, five, and eight. The new TAKS tests are to be phased in by 2008, and the 2002-2003 third-grade cohort will be the first to be subjected to a total of four corresponding high-stakes exams at the third, fifth, eighth, and exit level in order to be promoted to each respective grade level.

Students will be given three attempts to pass the TAKS test. Accelerated instruction will be provided to students who fail the test on their second try. If students fail a third time, they will be retained in grade. The student's parent or guardian may appeal the decision to a "grade placement committee" comprising themselves, the principal (or designee), and the child's teacher corresponding to the subject area on the test that they failed. However, not all parents will appeal, leaving the decision in tact. Among those that do, the process is prejudiced against them, particularly if they are poor, non-English-speaking, or minority. For a retention decision to be overridden in the context of an appeal, the committee must unanimously decide to promote.

The default assumption is that the child is to be retained unless reasons for promotion are otherwise adequately demonstrated—or, in the parlance of the legal system, the opposite of "innocent until proven guilty." Unfortunately, this presumption places the parent or guardian appealing the decision in a weak power position vis-à-vis the principal, teacher, and the strong arm of the

law. Especially for poor, non-English-speaking, and minority parents, discussions of extenuating circumstances that may suggest the need for an exception in their child's case, may be difficult to communicate in an effective manner. Such circumstances may include how other academic criteria should be weighted, the importance of certain aspects of the child's prior academic record, the presence of a non-certified classroom teacher, a lack of quality curricula or other resources, the effects of a family move at mid-year, and so on. A more equitable and just alternative would therefore be a default assumption that the child should be promoted rather than the obverse. The committee's conversation would then consist of whether a preponderance of evidence exists to retain the child with only a unanimous decision resulting in such a consequence.

Unlike so many other areas of social scientific inquiry where findings are consistently debated and challenged through consideration of other counterbalancing factors, research on retention strongly suggests that retaining children in grade is harmful to them (for an excellent review of the retention literature vis-à-vis Mexican Americans, see Valencia and Villarreal forthcoming; also see Shepard and Smith 1989; Holmes 1989). Great care should thus be taken in the making of all promotion and retention decisions. Given this weight of evidence, the passage of Senate Bill 4 may seem surprising. However, as suggested by Albert Kauffman (2000), former lead attorney of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, who opposed the bill, its passage partly reflects the fact that no researchers were present to provide expert testimony on the matter when the bill was heard in the Texas legislature.

As with conservative policies in bilingual education, such as Proposition 227 in California that essentially eliminated bilingual education, its passage also reflects the political whims and prejudices of some lawmakers rather than a commitment to research-based policies, even where a preponderance of countervailing evidence exists. The evidence shows that the practice of requiring students to repeat the same grade not only harms them academically, but also socially, with 50 percent doing no better the second time and 25 percent actually doing worse (IRDA 1999). Moreover, being retained in grade increases the child's probability of dropping out of school by 50 percent (Valencia and Villarreal forthcoming). Being retained twice results in a close to 90 percent probability of the child dropping out of school (IRDA 1999, 2001).

Before the TAAS system of testing was in place (prior to 1990-91), retention rates for minority students at the ninth-grade level were around 10 percent. After the TAAS test began to be administered, those rates went up to 25 percent. State data confirm that for every 1,000 children in the ninth grade, 250 of them have been held back (Haney 2000, 2001a). In light of the state's new policy on social promotion, these already high figures can expect to soar, beginning in the lower grades. Accordingly, researchers would do well to begin tracking retention rates in earlier grades (K-2) as schools prepare for high-stakes testing at the third-grade level.

The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) (2001), a non-profit, education research and advocacy organization for Texas's Mexican American community, has projection estimates regarding the negative impact of Senate Bill 4 based on 1996-97 retention data in combination with information on 2000 TAAS failure rates.⁴ Without taking into account the fact of a more difficult exam, an unprecedented increase in third-grade retention rates is expected to occur. In the third grade, for instance, instead of 4,400 children being retained—as were retained in 1996-97, approximately 28,300 students will be retained, constituting a net increase of 643 percent from the 1996-97 third-grade retention rate.

A mitigating factor may be the success of remediation provided through accelerated instruction to which the children are entitled according to Senate Bill 4 should they fail the test (Valencia and Villarreal forthcoming). Due to a lack of specificity in the law regarding the meaning of accelerated instruction, however, this will potentially translate into a continuance of test drills and test-prep rather than an authentic curriculum lodged in a disciplinary perspective. While assisting children's passing rates, their command of subject matter could be compromised (for an elaboration of this argument, see McNeil and Valenzuela 2001).

How the effects of Senate Bill 4 shall play out remains to be seen. The potential for success through remediation will probably help some children reach the next grade level. For others, the fact of a more demanding exam coupled with inadequate resources for remediation provided within the law shall be a stumbling block. IDRA (2001) makes note of rising costs associated with retention that include the need for additional teachers and classroom space as a result of increased retentions in the affected grade levels. IDRA's admonition that "a train wreck [is] scheduled to happen in spring of 2003" is thus well heeded. Though time, as well as a conservative political legacy are countervailing factors, legislative remedies are still within reach, including an assessment system that makes use of multiple compensatory criteria.⁵

The Case for a Multiple Compensatory Criteria Assessment System

To make the case that Texas needs a multiple *compensatory* criteria assessment system, it is important to differentiate this proposal from the multiple *conjunctive* criteria system that is in place (Heubert and Hauser 1999; Valencia and Bernal 2000). Under the latter system, Texas students not only have to pass the test, they must also maintain a 70 grade point average, meet a certain number of credits for graduation, and attend school a certain number of days annually. A student's test performance, however, is the decisive hurdle since it can neither be offset by the other criteria, nor by any other showing of their cognitive abilities. In other words, students with extremely high grades still have to obtain a 70 on the TAKS to graduate. A single point shy of the 70-point cutoff score disqualifies the student from receiving their diploma. While students have eight opportunities to pass the test, many never get

that far and many of those that do, still fail in high proportions (Fassold 1999, 2000).

A preferable policy alternative is an assessment system premised on multiple compensatory criteria whereby grades, portfolios, teacher recommendation, and even other test scores and assessment information could be used to offset a low TAKS score.⁶ This assessment model would mirror the college-admissions process whereby decisions are based on a multiplicity of factors of which test scores are a part. Low scores, for example, can be offset or compensated for in admissions decisions with some combination of the following: high school rank, grade point average, letters of recommendation, or writing samples. At all levels affected by the state's new policy on social promotion, similar kinds of criteria can be applied in promotion decisions. A multiple compensatory criteria system in K-12 education is thus desirable for the following reasons:⁷

- **The current system of testing violates professional ethics.** Most fundamental is the moral argument advanced by national reputable associations like the American Educational Research Association, the National Research Council, the American Psychological Association, and the National Academy of Sciences—alongside the makers of the tests themselves—that *no single test be used as the basis for any high-stakes decision like retention, promotion, or graduation.*
- **Multiple assessment criteria allow decision making to reside among various parties.** The use of multiple assessment criteria moves the process of assessment away from an unregulated testing industry toward those who best know their children's capabilities—namely, teachers and parents.
- **The use of multiple assessment criteria promises to provide a more reliable and valid measure of the students' abilities and potential, strengths and weaknesses.** Under the current system of testing, the chances are greater that children will be evaluated in a way that hurts, rather than helps them. Decades of research on college testing shows that multiple criteria and a sliding scale of test scores and grades results in more valid decisions, as well as decisions that have a smaller adverse impact on both minorities and females rather than using test scores in isolation (Haney 2001b). Multiple assessments guarantee that all children will be fully and fairly evaluated and that children will not be misevaluated and unfairly penalized, especially LEP students for whom the tests are particularly challenging (Valenzuela 2000a). In a word, this approach promotes equity rather than favoring individuals on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, income level, or language ability.
- **The use of multiple assessments safeguards against curricula being driven by standardized testing.** Given that the state exam is wide in scope but shallow on content vis-à-vis the state curriculum standards, the narrowing of the curriculum that follows from any excessive "teaching to the test" will be minimized.
- **Multiple assessments encourage the use of extended projects, portfolios, exhibitions, presentations, and other classroom-based work.**

Personal development and citizenship thus acquire greater prominence as central goals of education reform. Furthermore, diverse and multiple sources of assessment information will result in better guidance to teachers and parents on ways to improve their children's performance in school.

- **The use of multiple assessments provides relief to teachers, children, and their families of anxiety associated with "the test."** Multiple assessments encourage students to focus their efforts on learning the curriculum instead of simply passing the test. Increased interest and motivation in school is therefore encouraged.
- **The use of multiple assessments shifts the burden of change away from students to schools.** Students have no control over the quality of instruction, staff, and resources. A de-emphasis on the state exam as the primary criterion for accountability means that the state's role may be focused more on fostering excellent programs rather than standardizing achievement at the expense of both children and real standards.
- **Promoting multiple criteria is not equivalent to opposing the state's system of testing.** Instead, this is an argument *for* multiple assessment, thus quelling the concerns of potential detractors who might see this move as reducible to an attack on "the test." More information on children means both better assessment decisions and, thus, better accountability.

Conclusion

Though proponents of the current system of accountability in Texas see it as a system that has brought attention to previously underserved children, I submit that this system reflects yet another way in which children and their communities are objectified, or treated as objects. From its development to its implementation, this system is something that has been done *to*, rather than *with* them and their communities. I address this issue of objectification of students in my book, *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring* (1999). The TAAS—and now TAKS—test is part of a larger system that subtracts resources from youth, one that subtracts students' language, culture, and their definition of what an education should optimally be.

Children need to be affirmed both as individuals and as cultural beings and as members of communities that they cherish. Schools alienate children and rob them of meaning when becoming a better human being and being well-educated in the "Mexican" sense (*ser bien educado*) is a non-existent goal (Valenzuela 1999). Rather than feeling that schools have their best interests in mind, many children grow distrustful toward school officials whose bottom line is, at best, a self-serving agenda and, at worst, a lifeless and alienating treatment program that reduces students' worth to bureaucratic exigencies. In the words of one educator with whom I recently spoke, "It's [testing] killing their spirits." He referred specifically to the impact of the testing system on both teachers and children in his Rio Grande Valley (south Texas) school.

This assault on the spirit is well documented in my three-year, qualitative and quantitative study of a Houston inner-city, virtually all-Mexican school.

Ethnographic research on Mexican American and Puerto Rican youth in Los Angeles and Chicago schools, respectively, provide additional evidence of widespread student alienation among our youth (Patthey-Chavez 1993; Flores-González 2002; also see Stanton-Salazar's (2001) research in a San Diego, Calif., school). These combined studies suggest a much-needed refocusing of reform efforts in ways that both bring added resources to schools and valorize the language, culture, and richness of children's identities in order for them to make better, more meaningful, sense of schooling.

Minimizing the use of the TAKS test, perhaps through a multiple criteria assessment system, will not eliminate the more fundamental problems facing minority youth. Indeed, major systemic change is still necessary. A return to the earlier, pre-high-stakes, status quo is not the solution. However, because the current status quo exacerbates a previously problematic status quo of high dropout and retention rates and, ultimately, a low matriculation rate to higher education (Murdock et al. 1997; Solorzano and Yosso 2000), bold, progressive change is necessary.

In the present context, frustrated efforts at educational reform (as evidenced in Texas's chronically high dropout rate) are predictable when children and their teachers are held accountable for reaching a uniform educational standard when they do not control the resources that relate to the outcomes (Dye 2002). This suggests a need to sidestep the current framework such as through a multiple assessment system rather than to pursue change by adding ever-higher-stakes consequences to students' test scores.

When restaurants, hotels, and other public establishments were forced to integrate several decades ago, it would have been illogical to have held either the clients or workers accountable to this policy. In a parallel fashion, it is irresponsible to have a policy framework that requires teachers, but especially children, to bear the greatest burden of accountability. This responsibility must be shared with higher-level administration (i.e., district superintendents and the Texas Education Agency) and translate into a reciprocal process whereby they address, in a substantive manner, the historic inequities that Mexican American and other minority youth continue to face.

The Coalition for Authentic Reform in Education (CARE) in Massachusetts provides an excellent point of departure for reconceptualizing accountability because of its core principles that local schools know students best and that the state should not be making decisions about individual students.⁸ In the view of the coalition, ensuring students' access to high-quality teaching, resources, and schooling conditions to guarantee their success is the state's appropriate role. The state's role in the area of curriculum is to define an essential, but limited, body of knowledge and skills. This essential curriculum in turn should be based on a predetermined set of broadly defined competencies (Valencia et al. 2001). Within these parameters, school districts and schools will be free to define and create their own assessment systems tailored to their unique student population, as well as to the particularities of their local economies.

In the area of assessment, the CARE proposal suggests the creation of school quality review boards at state and regional levels. The primary respon-

sibility of the review board at the state level is to assess on an annual basis the quality of resources, opportunities, instruction, and curriculum in publicly funded schools. The state then reports any findings of extant disparities to districts and communities so that all can work constructively together toward reducing these. Precedence for this in some sense already exists in Texas with respect to the state's annual review process associated with charter schools. A key goal of this board is thus to ensure equity and reciprocity in terms of the state's responsibilities to schools (Dye 2002).

Through quality review boards at the regional level, schools would be required to report on student progress annually to their communities. Such boards would be comprised of various stakeholders, including teachers, parents, administrators, business representatives, members of the community, and state education staff. In Texas, all 20 Regional Service Centers could potentially serve this purpose. These centers currently provide various forms of services to schools within their purview, including developing and maintaining curriculum; training of school personnel; facilitating the flow of information across local, regional, and state units; and supporting research, development, and evaluation initiatives pursued by local districts. These functions make them good candidates for quality-review-board status and responsibilities.

With assistance from the state educational agency as well as their local districts, teachers could develop portfolios of their school's reform effort that illustrate progress along a set of indicators that extend beyond standardized test scores and that demonstrate how students have met the state curriculum. For instance, student exhibitions, products, and performance tasks, and external reviews or evaluations can be brought into the mix of how schools can demonstrate accountability to their communities or to regional quality review boards. In this framework, schools can decide for themselves which types of assessment they wish to deploy both within and beyond state curricular guidelines. All school-level plans would be approved by each school district and quality review board to ensure the presence of high-quality instruction, appropriate assessments, and coherence.

In this framework, it would be possible for districts and regions to evaluate the state's educational agency in terms of its responsiveness to providing technical assistance, support, and meeting targeted equity goals of their communities. Rather than elaborating a full proposal, my intent here is to stimulate discussion on an alternative accountability design (also see Padilla forthcoming). To be sure, careful thought in designing such a process would have to be undertaken, in order to not create another layer of bureaucracy.

To frame this more authentic model of assessment in terms of a "return to local control" is to misinterpret this proposal. The issue is hardly one of local versus state control over education. Rather, a different division of labor, whereby the state controls the resources while assessment rests in the hands of the local community, is proposed (Dye 2002). The intent here is to create an evaluation process that is fluid, participatory, and constructive, promoting equity and excellence not through a prefabricated, prescriptive meaning of

reform, but rather through a transparent, institutionalized framework for innovation.

As Sloan (forthcoming) suggests, I do enter this debate from an inside-out perspective. On the basis of my three-year qualitative and quantitative study in a Houston school, I saw firsthand how the logic of the testing system played out at ground level (Valenzuela 1999, 2000a). McNeil (2000) and others (Hampton 1997; Sloan forthcoming) in different districts throughout the state are seeing the same or other collateral effects as those observed in Houston schools (Valenzuela 1999; McNeil and Valenzuela 2001; Martinez 2001). The advantage of this perspective is that it enables us as scholars to determine whether a state policy is yielding its intended effect. Assuming that the intention never was that any child should be harmed or that many children would be left behind, the view from the bottom affords little comfort.

A more democratic, participatory framework of the kind embodied in the CARE proposal, coupled with a pedagogical concern over the development and elaboration of children's cultural and linguistic competencies, needs to supercede the top-down, rigid, and culturally biased framework that exists. In the interest of fairness and due process alone, a major shift in how we educate our youth is needed lest we leave far too many children behind through ill-conceived promotion and retention policies.

If all children really count, "accountability" needs to indeed reflect a commitment to a rigorous and complete assessment of students' capabilities based on multiple compensatory academic criteria (not multiple tests). A more robust assessment system is not only fair and valid, but also more humane and democratic than the high-stakes environment that children and their teachers currently endure. A multiple compensatory criteria system is thus an important step toward equity for Texas and other states to take.

Endnotes

* Acknowledgements: The author wishes to acknowledge Albert Cortez, Doug Foley, Walter M. Haney, Albert Kauffman, Brendan Maxcey, Linda McNeil, Kris Sloan, and Richard Valencia for providing helpful suggestions and feedback.

1 The final act (House Resolution 1) is called "No Child Left Behind." Among its many provision all states must develop school report cards for individual schools and make them available to all parents. Achievement data shall be based on each proficiency level provided by state assessments, with information disaggregated by gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, disability status, and migrant status.

2 I use the terms, Mexican American, U.S.-born Mexicans, Hispanic, and Latino interchangeably when no distinction based on nativity is necessary.

3 For evidence on the salience of resources to outcomes, see Berliner and Biddle (1995), Grissmer, Flanagan, and Williamson (1997), and Grissmer et al. (2000).

4 Since the TAAS test has increased in difficulty over time, 2000 data on passing rates provide a better basis for making projections than 1996-97 data.

5 Two multiple criteria bills were indeed pursued in the last legislative biennial session. Carried by State Representative Dora Olivo (Fort Bend), House Bill 2118 and House Bill 2570, respectively, called for using multiple criteria at the exit level, as well as at the third-, fifth-, and eighth-grade levels affected by the new social promotion policy (<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlo/billnbr.htm>). Both bills passed the House of Representatives with a majority vote but were blocked in the Senate. These bills will be considered again in the 2003 meeting of the legislature—hopefully in time to affect the state's new policy on social promotion with testing going into effect literally during the months that the legislature will meet.

6 Haney (2001b) appropriately expresses concern over the phrase “compensatory criteria” because it implicitly assumes the validity of test results. Consequently, he prefers the phrase “sliding scale” guidelines to convey the idea of taking grades as well as test scores into account.

7 Though substantially revised, the following rationale is drawn from Valenzuela (2000b).

8 The document by the Committee for Authentic Reform in Education is titled, “A Call for an Authentic State-wide Assessment System—Summary” and may be obtained from the following Web site address: <http://www.fairtest.org/care/Accountability-sum.html>.

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The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute 2000 Issues Conference Policy Recommendations

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus, organized in 1976, was originally formed to serve as a legislative organization to monitor government action to ensure that the needs of Hispanics were being met. The founders' goal was to strengthen the federal commitment to Hispanic citizens and heighten the Hispanic community's awareness of the operation and function of the American political system.

The three founding members, Congressman Edward Roybal, Congressman E. "Kika" de la Garza, and Congressman Baltasar Connada, wanted to develop educational programs and other activities that would increase the opportunities for Hispanics to participate in and contribute to the American political system. In 1978, the members of Congress therefore established a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization to serve as an educational institute whose programs would serve the national Hispanic community.

The mission of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) is to develop the next generation of Latino leaders. The last annual CHCI Issues Conference took place on 18-19 September 2000, wherein leaders of the Hispanic community, including members of Congress, community activists, policy experts, academic scholars, and corporate executives, gathered to discuss issues of importance to Latinos and create a legislative agenda. The following are three excerpts from the conference, including the summits on the census and civil rights, business and economic development, and health.

Summit: Census and Civil Rights
Census 2000 and Its Impact on Latino Civil Rights

By Summit Moderator Arturo Vargas

Mr. Arturo Vargas is executive director, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO).

Special thanks to Congressman Charles Gonzalez (D-TX) for his contributions.

Introduction

Census 2000 was declared the most important civil rights issue facing the Hispanic community during the 1999 Issues Conference. A masterful initiative was launched, heavily promoted by Hispanic leaders and organizations, to raise awareness and promote participation in the decennial count. Access was a key concern, and for the first time a massive media campaign was launched to bring census information into every household.

The Hispanic community mobilized to help produce what is hoped to be a more accurate count of the population than occurred in 1990. (Minority population numbers will not be available until spring 2001). The Census Bureau acted on numerous suggestions and recommendations from its advisory committees and from leaders from communities most at risk of being undercounted. In response, the bureau made significant changes to the enumeration process. For the first time, the Census Bureau allocated funds to purchase advertisements, thus eliminating the need to rely exclusively on public service announcements and other forms of free media to disseminate information.

In many traditionally Hispanic neighborhoods, more bilingual enumerators were made possible by the bureau's early decision to waive the U.S. citizenship requirement for certain census jobs. Many Hispanic organizations assist-

ed the bureau in advertising the census jobs and assisted in recruitment and training efforts. The schools integrated the census into the curriculum, helping to bring the census message into the homes of millions of families.

Census Bureau Director Dr. Kenneth Prewitt, reported, for example, that five states met the Bureau's "90 + 5" challenge, which was a call for jurisdictions to improve on their 1990 mail-back response rate by at least five percentage points. California was one of these five states, driven by a higher than expected response rate from heavily Hispanic Southern California communities.

While there is much to celebrate, there were notable shortcomings, in addition to operational issues, that may result in a repeated undercount of Hispanics. Director Prewitt made it clear that while 2000 was a good census year for America—and a good census for Hispanics, improvements are still possible. The U.S. Supreme Court's ruling to require that the reapportionment of the House of Representatives be based only the actual enumeration, and not on statistical sampling, means that Hispanics may not be guaranteed fair representation in the 107th Congress.

Challenges

Accuracy in identifying vulnerable populations during census-planning exercises remains a concern. Some areas with emerging Hispanic populations, including western Pennsylvania and western New York, experienced a shortage of bilingual enumerators and Spanish-language census forms. These communities, likewise, did not benefit from supplemental funding in support of census activities. Better efforts to monitor demographic trends during the off years will improve decennial census enumeration efforts.

Information about the location and hours of operation of the newly created Questionnaire Assistance Centers was poorly disseminated. Some partnership specialists were ill-informed and undertrained. The much-heralded media blitz actually fizzled in many communities. In some markets, including regions of Texas, print advertisements came late. Hispanic media concerns received a very small share of the Census 2000 advertising budget.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment of Census 2000 was the inability, once again, of the Census Bureau to make the Spanish-language census forms easily accessible in a timely manner. Acquiring a Spanish-language form was a two-step process. Those needing the form had to first respond to the advance letter notifying the public of the availability of non-English language forms. Many who subsequently requested a Spanish-language form had to wait several weeks to receive the form. In some cases, the Spanish-language form was never received.

The Hispanic community applauds the decision by the Immigration and Naturalization Service to refrain from high visibility enforcement tactics while census employees were in the field so as not to undermine the count. This no doubt contributed to higher participation rates among vulnerable populations.

Recommendations

Make sustained efforts to promote census awareness

Promotion and outreach on the census must be a sustained, decade-long activity. Only with constant reinforcement of the importance and confidentiality of the census can we expect to have a more successful enumeration in 2010. Hispanic organizations must take a leadership role in promoting census awareness in all venues throughout each decade.

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus should work to ensure adequate funding for the Census Bureau to continue its partnership activities with local community organizations. The Census Bureau and the Department of Commerce have expressed a commitment to maintaining these partnerships throughout the decade; however, congressional funding support will be required.

Annual appropriations for the American Community Survey are of critical importance. This annual sample survey of the American population is designed to collect data currently included in the long form. The Census Bureau plans to eliminate the need for the long form in the decennial census through implementation of the ACS. The ACS can also be used as a tool to reinforce the importance of census data throughout the decade.

Public schools should be encouraged to incorporate census information as a permanent element of school curriculums. "Census in the Schools" was a particularly successful element of the 2000 Census outreach plan and should be repeated each year.

Supplemental outreach funding by cities and states in the decennial census should be supported and promoted. In 2000, jurisdictions such as California and Houston allocated their own resources to census outreach and promotion with considerable success in increasing their mail-back response rates.

Funding for Census Information Centers should be continued. Several Hispanic organizations have been designated as Census Information Centers, but others are unable to raise the funds necessary to analyze, publish, and distribute the data they receive. Congress should appropriate resources to make these centers viable.

Review and work toward improvement in specific areas of the Census, including:

- Timely access to Spanish-language census documents in an effort to curtail confusion and frustration during enumeration activities.
- Availability of bilingual enumerators in areas with emerging Hispanic communities, such as western Pennsylvania and western New York.
- Distribution of advertisements in those media outlets most watched/listened to/read by Hispanics.
- Increased Hispanic representation in policy positions at the national office in Suitland, Md., and in senior management positions in the regional offices.

Ensure access to and viability of census data

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus should work to encourage the federal government to publicize its reports of the census. This information must be accessible to the Hispanic community.

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus should continue to insist that the federal government and the states use the corrected census data for redistricting and the distribution of public funds. Several states have passed legislation prohibiting the use of corrected census data for redistricting. This issue currently is being litigated in federal court in Virginia, which passed comparable legislation. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus must work to ensure that the most accurate data is used in order to safeguard the civil rights of Hispanics. While the summit participants endorsed the use of statistical sampling, they also acknowledged that the Supreme Court's prohibition on the use of corrected data means that more resources must be invested in outreach and education to promote a better count.

Endnotes

Summit Chair:

Congressman Charles Gonzalez (D-TX)

Financial Services Committee

Small Business Committee

Panelists:

Mr. Jorge H. del Pinal, Ph.D., United States Bureau of the Census

Ms. Marisa J. Demeo, Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)

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Summit: Business and Economic Development Revitalizing Our Communities from Within

By Summit Moderator Stephen Denlinger

Mr. Stephen Denlinger is CEO of LAMA, the Latin America Management Association.

Special thanks to Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez (D-NY) for her contributions.

Introduction

At the dawn of the 21st century, the United States is on the threshold of a demographic transformation of unparalleled proportions. The stage is set for the minority community to become a co-equal segment of the overall population of the United States, and the Hispanic community will be a central player in this demographic shift.

At present, the population of the United States is 263 million. By the year 2050, the population will grow to about 394 million. Approximately 7% of this growth will be from within the majority White population while the minority population will grow at a rate of more than 169% (U.S. Census Bureau 1999).

Minority populations are growing much more quickly than the majority White population, but at significantly differing rates. Between now and mid-century, the Black community is expected to grow 83%, the Native-American community 95%, the Hispanic community 258%, and the Asian community 267% (U.S. Census Bureau 1999).

At present, Hispanics constitute roughly 10% (or 27 million) of the U.S. population. Blacks represent 13% (33 million), Asians 4% (9 million), and Native Americans 1% (2 million). Taken together, minorities represent about 28% of the population (roughly 70 million) (U.S. Census Bureau 1999).

Over the next 50 years, the most significant component of the population growth will be in the Hispanic community. The Hispanic population in the United States will grow by more than 250%, from 27 million to 97 million, a population increase of about 70 million. By the year 2010, Hispanics will become the largest minority population. Soon after the year 2050, Hispanics will represent almost 25% of the total U.S. population, constituting one in every four Americans (U.S. Census Bureau 1999).

The tremendous growth in the Hispanic and minority populations will be accompanied by significant increases in purchasing power. The current purchasing power of all Americans is approximately \$6.5 trillion (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). This is expected to reach \$14 trillion by mid-century.

Minority purchasing power reached \$1.3 trillion in 2000, representing almost 20% of total U.S. purchasing power. Approximately \$400 billion of this purchasing power lies in the Hispanic community. By around mid-century, it is projected that minority purchasing power will increase to \$4.5-\$6 trillion, representing 32%-45% of total U.S. purchasing power (U.S. Census Bureau 2000).

There is presently no data with respect to what the purchasing power of individual ethnic communities will be by mid-century. However, since the Hispanic population will represent approximately 50% of the total ethnic minority population in the United States, LAMA estimates that Hispanic purchasing power will be approximately half of the total minority purchasing power of \$4.5 to \$6 trillion, amounting to \$2-\$3 trillion dollars.

The stunning growth in the Hispanic community, and the massive increase in its purchasing power over the next fifty years, is also accompanied by an incredible rate of growth in business ownership and revenues.

Between 1987 and 1997, the number of minority businesses grew by 17% per year. This 17% rate of growth is almost six times greater than the rate of growth of the overall business community in the United States, which was 3% per year. During this period, the number of Black businesses increased 10% per year, Asian-owned firms increased by 18% per year, and Hispanic-owned firms increased by 23% per year (U.S. Census Bureau 1999).

The increase in sales revenues by minority firms grew by even greater proportions. While sales for all U.S. firms grew by 13% per year during the referenced decade, sales by minority-owned firms grew by 34%. Sales by Black-owned firms rose 11% per year. Sales by Asian-owned firms grew by 42% per year. Sales by Hispanic-owned firms grew 46% per year, vastly outnumbering the 13% composite growth rate of all U.S. firms (U.S. Census Bureau 1999).

Projecting these rates of growth for the Hispanic business community over the next 50 years reveals growth of staggering proportions. Applying a very conservative model, LAMA estimates that there will be 7 to 8 million Hispanic businesses by the year 2050, with revenues of \$1.5-\$2 trillion.

From all of the foregoing analysis, it is evident that over the next 50 years, the Hispanic community will be the most dynamic segment of the U.S. population in terms of growth in absolute numbers, purchasing power, and busi-

ness formation and revenues. This Hispanic surge will be unfolding in the most powerful economy in the world, during an era of unprecedented economic growth.

Introduction by Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez

In order for the powerful demographic trends discussed above to result in the greatest benefit to the Hispanic community and to the country as a whole, a number of issues regarding economic and business development must be addressed. As Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez indicated in her opening statement:

The Business and Economic Development Summit will address major issues that are critical to our communities: affordable housing, business opportunities, and public/private partnerships.

Despite the unprecedented growth of our economy over the past decade, the stock of affordable housing in this country continues to shrink, seriously impacting struggling low and moderate income families. The number of affordable rental units decreased by 372,000 units across the U.S. from 1991 to 1997—a 5% drop.

In addition, capital is not readily available in low- and moderate-income communities, and capital to facilitate the growth and development of Hispanic and minority businesses is not readily available either. More needs to be done with respect to these capital needs. Partnerships [must be formed] between the public and private sectors and our low-income communities and our minority businesses, which are undernourished and need serious attention.

We need innovative thinking in all of these areas, and this business and economic development summit attempts to address some of these areas.

Problems and Needs Overview

The panel covered a wide range of issues, including Hispanic business development, trade, housing, economic development, access to capital, and public/private partnerships. During the discussion sessions, other issues arose, including the need for better access to information; gender-specific policy analysis focusing on Latina issues; safety-net issues such as child care, homelessness, and aid for distressed families; and services and economic development in rural areas.

Business Development

The presentations and discussion focused on the need for greater participation by the Hispanic business community in procurement programs of the federal government and the private sector. The historic pattern of under-representation of the Hispanic business community in the SBA 8(a) set-aside contract-

ing program was highlighted, along with the need for increased access to equity capital to support the incredible growth in Hispanic businesses in the U.S. economy. The equity fund being developed by the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, in concert with major financial institutions, was cited as an example of the power of partnerships in bringing equity capital to the Hispanic business community.

Other business issues were addressed, including contract bundling, which is having a devastating impact on small and minority businesses in the public and private sectors. Contracting with minority firms under the SBA 8(a) set-aside program dropped by 17,000 contract actions in FY 99 alone (a 20% reduction in contract actions in just one fiscal year) (U.S. SBA). This is due primarily to the effects of contract bundling at the federal level, as well as the increased use of credit card purchases and purchases from the GSA schedules by federal buying offices.

In addition, the need for increased availability of surety bonding was discussed, along with the need to do something about the double-bidding and bait-and-switch tactics of federal prime contractors.

Housing

The sessions focused on programs and public policy issues affecting the availability of housing for low- and moderate-income communities throughout the country. Major points of concern are providing education and credit assistance to the newer Hispanic arrivals who lack understanding as to how U.S. financial markets and institutions work.

There was discussion about the need to curb predatory lending practices in the housing market. "Sub-prime lenders" are engaging in predatory lending practices directed at the vulnerable low-income community.

Other discussion included the importance of the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), the need to retain CRA, and the unique needs of Hispanics in the housing markets in terms of the language barriers, lack of knowledge of how financial markets work in the U.S., and financial literacy in terms of readiness for home ownership.

Recommendations

Hispanic Business

- Support the preservation, expansion, and improvement of the 8(a) program.
- Establish a statutory goal for the SBA 8(a) set-aside program.
- Pass legislation to reinstate set-aside contracts for competition limited to SDBs.
- Press the administration for a management plan (with goals and timetables) designed to redress the historic under-representation of Hispanic businesses in the SBA 8(a) set-aside contracting program.
- Press the administration for a management plan (with goals and timetables) for redressing the historic pattern of under-representation of

Hispanics in the staffs of the federal small business offices, and in the national, regional, and district offices of the SBA.

- Pass legislation to protect small and minority business from bundling of federal contracts.
- Pass legislation that would put the review of bundling decisions in the hands of a third party, such as the OFPP, in bundling cases wherein SBA has formally indicated its opposition to specific bundling actions by federal agencies.
- Pass legislation that would prevent federal prime contractors from engaging in bait-and-switch tactics and double-bidding tactics in their subcontracting relationships with minority businesses.
- Pass legislation that would require that the 5% minority subcontracting goals be based on the total dollar value of subcontracts by prime contractors.
- Retain current language that provides the 8(a) program contracting preference over the HUB Zone program.
- Press for funding authorization levels that address the long-standing decline in funding of the Minority Business Development Agency at the Department of Commerce.
- Pass legislation that requires minority participation in the R&D and technology programs of the federal government and its hundreds of laboratories throughout the country.

Access to capital

- Increase support for the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI) under the Treasury Department.
- Support the New Market Initiatives for making capital available in low- and moderate-income communities throughout the country.
- Support the creation of a national equity investment fund to make capital available for minority businesses.

Housing

- Support the goal of increasing Latino home-ownership in the United States.
- Encourage legislation to provide for affordable housing.
- Reinstate the Purchase Rehab (Rehabilitation) Program FHA 203(k).
- Support reauthorization of Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).
- Support reauthorization of Mortgage Revenue Board (MRB).
- Provide services to immigrants and create awareness of their unique housing need within the banking industry.
- Provide bilingual access to housing information.
- Increase federal tax dollars for housing subsidies.
- Build more low-income housing.
- Seek legislation to curb predatory "sub-prime" lending practices.
- Increase federal funding for rentals.
- Ensure that the CRA stays in place.
- Ensure stronger compliance of CRA as there are more bank mergers.
- Oppose predatory lending practices.

Public/Private Partnerships

- Develop partnerships to reach out to groups not currently served by traditional markets (e.g., low-income and rural areas).
- Encourage corporate support of communities through grants, scholarships, job creation, and partnerships with the public sector.

Latina Issues

- Promote gender-specific research and analysis to focus on Latina participation rates in housing, employment, training/education, loan programs, computer literacy, and so forth.
- Support existing programs on financial literacy for women.
- Support legislation protecting women from domestic violence.
- Support DOL's Women's Bureau and use as guideline for other agencies.

Access to Information

- Develop financial literacy initiatives with public and private financial providers to better reach low-income communities.
- Develop junior and high school programs on financial literacy to create awareness of the importance of creating a good credit history.

Safety-net Issues/Social Services

Child Care

- Promote universal access to childcare.
- Encourage childcare tax credits for employers.
- Ensure adequate training for childcare givers.
- Support after-school programs to assist working parents.

Homelessness

- Promote public and private sector partnerships to provide food, shelter, literacy, health care, and job training for the homeless.

Distressed Families

- Promote public and private sector partnerships to provide food, shelter, literacy, health care, and job training for parents of distressed families.

Rural areas

- Support and expand support for rural CDCs.
- Encourage the Hispanic Caucus to work closely with the Rural Caucus for improved economic development of rural areas with high Hispanic concentrations.

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Endnotes

Summit Chair:

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY)
Ranking Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
Small Business Committee, Financial Services Committee

Panelists:

Mr. George Herrera, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Laura Garcia, Rural Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Ms. Stacey H. Davis, Fannie Mae Foundation
Mr. Darryl Chisolm, Lower East Side Family Union Corporation, Inc.
Mr. Bill Burrus, ACCION USA
Ms. Jill Kelly, Citigroup, New York City

Summit: Health
Access to Health Care: Where the Sick Get Sicker

By Summit Moderator Dr. Marta Medrano

Dr. Marta Medrano is Clinical Assistant Professor of Family Practice; University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Special thanks to Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (D-TX) for his contributions.

Introduction

Access to quality health care remains elusive for a majority of Hispanics Americans. Lack of insurance coverage, poor quality of care at public facilities, language barriers, and under-representation in national research programs threaten the health and well-being of many Hispanics. The result is a large population predisposed to life-threatening diseases. They are underserved in the provision of primary health care services and largely invisible in statistical renderings of the state of the nation's health. The globalization of health with the movement of people across borders heightens the need to address concerns about access, quality of health care, data collection, and research.

In the face of notable progress in the nation's health care delivery system, serious health disparities persist among Hispanics compared to the population as a whole. This is due to exposure to environmental agents and family history. Hispanics are at an increased risk for diseases such as diabetes, Hepatitis C, and asthma (CHCI Conference 1999). Healthy People 2010—objectives developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—sets national health goals aimed toward the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities by the year 2010. A campaign of culturally sensitive and accessible

promotional materials promises to increase public awareness of the importance of healthy living.

The absence of significant numbers of Hispanics in the health care professions is an ongoing concern. In urban and rural areas and centers of emerging Hispanic populations, there is a need for professionals attuned to the health needs of the Hispanic community.

Over the past 10 years, both the number and percentage of Americans who lack health insurance coverage has continued to grow. Today, 44 million people in the United States lack health insurance coverage. Hispanics constituted 35.3 percent (15.6 million) of the total uninsured population (CHCI Conference 1999). Uninsured low-income workers often earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but do not earn enough to afford adequate health insurance. However, differences in income only partially explain differences in health coverage across racial and ethnic groups. Being poor tends to blur distinctions in health coverage between minority and White Americans. Minorities are at much greater risk at income levels above the poverty line.

The high uninsured rate among Hispanics is due in large part to the fact that fewer have job-based coverage, although nearly 90 percent of uninsured Hispanics come from working families. Hispanics are more likely than Whites to work in businesses where health benefits are not offered (30 percent versus 13 percent) and are more likely to earn low wages putting premium costs beyond reach (CHCI Conference 1999).

Moreover, the Medicaid program does not reach many Hispanics despite the fact that 60 percent are poor or close to the poverty line. Undocumented residents do not qualify for Medicaid coverage, except on an emergency basis. Although the great majority of Hispanics are U.S. born, naturalized citizens, or legal residents, much confusion remains about eligibility for legal residents and their children with the recent changes in immigration policy.

Substance abuse, mental health, HIV/AIDS, cancer, and diabetes are growing in many Hispanic communities. While substance abuse has declined for non-Hispanic White and African American youth, it increased among Hispanic youth between 1995 and 1997. Those at greatest risk appear to be Hispanic girls: they lead girls nationwide in rates of suicide attempts, alcohol and drug abuse, and self-reported gun possession.

HIV/AIDS is the third leading cause of death among Hispanics (CHCI Conference 1999). In 1999, 19 percent of AIDS cases reported were among Hispanic adults and adolescents, yet Hispanics made up only 11 percent of the population (National Minority Council on AIDS). A lot of states that have high numbers of Latinos often do not have a system in place for HIV data collection. Consequently, the number of Hispanics living with HIV may be much higher than current statistics show (CHCI Conference 1999).

One in every 10 adult Hispanics and one in every three elderly Hispanics live with diabetes (CHCI Conference 1999). Hispanics are at high risk of developing Type (II) diabetes. The numbers are higher among Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans. Currently, Type II diabetes is occurring with a greater frequency among Hispanic children.

Challenges

Culturally Sensitive Care

The issue of under-representation of Hispanics in health care professions is a widely recognized problem. Incentives for graduates in the field to practice in underserved areas fail to satisfy the growing demand. Stronger partnerships are needed between Hispanic health care professional organizations, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), and administration policy makers to increase coordination of program needs with policy initiatives.

Health Insurance Coverage

Programs that provide health insurance are desperately needed for the working poor, elderly, and vulnerable populations, which include single mothers, undocumented workers, and adult dependants caught in limbo over their immigration status. The CHC will have to monitor and actively participate in the health insurance coverage debate to ensure that the concerns of these Hispanic population groups are included.

Chronic Health Conditions

Adapting to a new culture, poor economic conditions, low education rates, and low self-esteem among the Latino population appear to be significant factors for mental health problems and substance abuse. A disturbing trend is the tendency of Hispanics to avoid seeking health care out of fear about their immigration status. This downward trajectory of poor choices and avoidance of primary health care must be addressed.

In 1999 and 2000, the Congressional Black Caucus pushed to secure more than \$420 million for minority HIV/AIDS initiatives. Millions of dollars were allocated for HIV/AIDS programs in Africa. CHC must fight for inclusion of the Caribbean and Latin America in HIV/AIDS eradication efforts. A major concern is the lack of a methodology for monitoring the rates of diseases within Hispanic communities. Because they are traditionally underserved, Hispanic communities lack access to health care assessments, clinical research protocols, and the growing influence of telemedicine.

Recommendations

- Raise concerns about the health of Hispanics in America in every venue.
- Convene a White House Hispanic health summit to introduce new administration and policy makers to poor conditions in the Hispanic community.
- Advocate for CHC representation on the House commerce committee to ensure a voice for Hispanic health concerns during policy deliberations.
- Provide testimony by CHC members during committee hearings on health issues. It is important that legislative language reflect Hispanic concerns.
- Draft regulations governing implementation of new laws. Partnerships with policy makers in the federal agencies will be an important strategy to protect the interests of the Hispanic community.

Work to Make Health Insurance Accessible to All

- Advocate for universal access to national health insurance. Promote incentives for affordable employer-sponsored insurance programs.
- Provide for bridge coverage for individuals transitioning from Medicaid to private insurance programs.
- Call for removal of restrictions that prohibit legal immigrants from accessing benefits until they have been U.S. residents for at least five years. Provide resources to publicize public health programs to Hispanic community-based organizations.
- Establish a waiver for Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) funds to states that have failed to adequately address complaints of roadblocks to enrollment.

Work to Ensure Parity in Access to and Coverage of Social Services to Hispanic Populations

- Increase funding for primary health care services, which will assist in the detection and treatment of mental and substance abuse disorders.
- Build coalitions between CHC and the Congressional Black Caucus and other groups seeking funds to fight HIV/AIDS in vulnerable populations.
- Work to include HIV/AIDS funding initiatives in foreign aid and development assistance legislation targeting Latin America and the Caribbean. Ensure that any Medicare prescription plan covers individuals with AIDS.

Work to Improve Accountability through Increased Surveillance of Hispanic Health Care Programs

- Monitor and evaluate federally funded programs administered by the states. Success must be based on outcomes as opposed to implementation goals.
- Call for increased reporting by the National Institutes of Health on the state of health among Hispanics in America.
- Review the effectiveness of Healthcare Financing Administration outreach programs, particularly Medicaid/Medicare enrollment programs located in health care facilities.
- Establish benchmarks for accreditation of facilities providing care to uninsured Hispanics, particularly the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- Enforce data collection of the race and ethnicity of populations served under the Healthcare Fairness Act. Pay particular attention to programs targeting Hispanic populations in the border regions.
- Develop uniform prevention guidelines and bilingual Center for Disease Control-approved forms for community- and family-oriented programs are essential.

Provide Incentives for Hispanics to Enter the Health Care Professions

- Increase tax credits, low-interest loans, and other funds to attract qualified graduates to underserved areas, and provide ongoing subsidies to health care professionals who remain in areas reliant upon Medicaid coverage.

- Allow the Disproportionate Share (DSH) fund to be distributed to providers/practitioners, hospitals, and ambulatory care centers serving Hispanic communities.
- Revamp the formula for calculating DSH reimbursements so that they are based on the number of doctor/patient encounters. Compensation levels must reflect costs of uncompensated care delivered by those institutions and individuals.

Improve Access to Health Care

- Work to establish Medicaid/Medicare application centers for rural populations in churches and schools. Ensure enforcement of Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (National Origin Discrimination Against Persons with Limited English Proficiency).
- Provide interpreters to all patients who do not speak English seeking care from any Medicare/Medicaid-funded health care organization.

Promote Prevention in Hispanic Communities

- Incorporate primary prevention and preventive medicine in the reauthorization of the SI 754 Health Professions Education Partnerships Act of 1998.
- Assure that prevention-oriented materials are incorporated into the health and continuing education programs in the teaching curriculum of medical and other health professions.

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Endnotes

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Panelists:

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***Race and Social Justice Movements:
Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres, The Miner's
Canary: Enlisting Race, Resisting Power,
Transforming Democracy (Harvard University
Press 2002)***

Reviewed by Héctor G. Bladuell

Héctor G. Bladuell is co-editor-in-chief of the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy. He received his bachelors degree in sociology from Haverford College in 2000, where he was also co-chair of the Latin American and Caribbean Students Association and a Dr. José Padín scholar. He received his masters in public policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2002.

In their new book *The Miner's Canary*, law professors Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres argue that race can be used as a diagnostic tool to identify and begin to remedy the flaws in our democracy that disenfranchise everyone. Guinier and Torres advance the concept of political race—a new methodology to achieve social justice that revives the spirit of minority activism and multiracial coalitions envisioned by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blending stories with theory, they posit that race is more than a mere biological category; it is an experience that facilitates understanding about the challenges of our democracy and provides an advantage for cooperation among similarly situated groups. *The Miner's Canary* highlights the contribution that racial minorities can make to our democracy, especially if they unite and organize politically. The book advances a social justice vision that could inspire innovative public policy alternatives, as it advocates for changing the structure of society rather than for compensating under-represented groups for past injustices.

Guinier and Torres compare race to the miner's canary. Miners often used a canary to determine when the toxins in a mine reached dangerous levels. When the canary showed distress, the miners knew to leave the mine. Like the canary's distress, the distress of racialized groups in society indicates that everyone is being poisoned, and it is time to change the environment. The miners knew that the canary's distress indicated a problem with the environment and not the canary itself. Likewise, the privileged should not assume there is a problem with racialized groups when they show distress; the problem is within the structure of society.

While the distress of minority groups may signal major flaws in our society and system of government, some may argue that racial minorities should not be canaries for social justice to emerge. Ideally, social justice should be a goal ingrained in everyone's consciousness; minority group distress should not be the primary stepping-stone for thinking about how we can achieve a more just and democratic society. In addition, this framework does not engage privileged Whites, those who apparently have the most to lose from the political race project. A social justice vision should aim to engage them by appealing to some commonly shared values.

A Critique of Colorblindness

The political race project emerges as a response to the discourse of colorblindness, which has three basic premises: 1) race is all about skin color, 2) race consciousness requires a commitment to unscientific notions of racial biology, 3) racism is a personal problem (38). Since race is nothing more than skin pigmentation, all racial classifications have equal status. Thus, policies and laws based on race are morally wrong and should not be allowed. Under this view, racial discrimination and inequality are not institutionalized phenomena, but isolated social events caused by individual people.

Guinier and Torres reject this view. Race is more than a phenotype; race is the experience of being identified as part of a political category, of being "raced" into a group. Racial discrimination and inequality are not problems of individuals, but a consequence of the structure of our society. Ignoring the experiences of those "raced Black" is turning our backs to the systematic inequalities between Whites and non-Whites; it is disguising or normalizing relationships of privilege and subordination (42). Thus, colorblindness does not ameliorate racial discrimination and inequality. These problems are tackled effectively through the mobilization of those "raced Black" and the cooperation of Whites, which are key features of the political race project.

The Political Race Project

The political race project consists of three steps: race-consciousness, social justice critique, and democratic experimentation. First, minority groups should recognize the injustices that they suffer *as a group* and that solidarity is an asset for critiquing the status quo. Second, they should move beyond

race-consciousness to articulate a broader social justice critique. People of color should identify how others are also being disadvantaged because of their class, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnic origin; those who have been “raced Black” and are suffering the same perils. Third, they have to move from consciousness to action by advocating new democratic practices that go beyond favoring a particular racial group. The second and third steps differentiate political race from other race-based social movements such as identity politics or affirmative action. Political race is a social justice movement that aims to change the structure of society rather than “improving” the current structure by including more people of color in positions of power. Moreover, political race is not a state of being, but a state of action; it is a choice one makes to challenge existing power hierarchies in the quest for a more just society.

The Texas 10 percent plan is an example of the political race project. In Texas, various minority community leaders, politicians, academics, lawyers, social activists and students united to respond to the *Hopwood v. Texas* decision by the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which declared affirmative action policies unconstitutional. As people discussed the problem, they realized that admission policies to state schools were not only affecting Blacks and Latinos, but also rural working-class Whites. These meetings resulted in a broader critique of social justice that moved beyond the racial remediation/racial diversity language of affirmative action and generated an innovative democratic solution that came to be known as the Texas 10 percent plan. Under the plan, the students graduating in the top 10 percent of their class in every school were to be granted automatic admission to the state’s flagship campuses. This innovative solution democratized access to public higher education in Texas. Before the plan, 10 percent of the high schools in Texas were filling 75 percent of the freshmen seats at the University of Texas-Austin, disenfranchising Blacks, Latinos and poor Whites from rural West Texas. The Texas 10 percent plan demonstrates how race served as a lens through which major injustices in the admissions process to the state flagship university were revealed. The solution challenged existing power hierarchies and instituted a new social arrangement that worked for everyone.

The Texas 10 percent plan illustrates important features of the political race project. First, racialized groups are expected to take the lead. Since minority groups face the injustices of our democratic system first-hand, they are more prone to recognize them. Second, racialized groups are expected to reach out to other affected groups and build coalitions to radically change the structures that disenfranchise them. In these respects, political race is different from affirmative action and identity politics. The foundation of these strategies must be revised since having a few minorities in positions of power often does not bring about fundamental social changes that benefit all minority group members.

Reconceptualizing Power

Traditional liberal policies like affirmative action and movements like identity politics assume that putting more minorities at the top of the hierarchies of

power will inevitably lead to favorable outcomes for these groups. However, repopulating the hierarchies of power with more minorities is an insufficient remedy for social injustice because it does not change the structure of social institutions in a way that they become more democratic. In addition, traditional liberal strategies suffer from other major weaknesses: 1) they create resistance from people already in positions of power who might feel threatened; 2) such cosmetic diversity could artificially legitimize the power structure and hinder the prospects for change, potentially sending the message that the hierarchy is acceptable and merely needs to be more inclusive; and 3) newcomers could learn to exercise power in the same way.

As an alternative for these strategies, Guinier and Torres advance the practice of “power-with,” which is “the psychological social power gained through collective resistance and struggle and through the creation of an alternative set of narratives” (141). “Power-with” attempts to revive democracy by putting a high value on collective decision making and action. It assumes that through group discussion and action communities are built and empowered regardless of the outcome of a social movement. This transcends the immediate changes brought about by elections, regulations and litigation. It requires working together over time in groups rather than as individuals in isolation, seeing the problems in context rather than as small units independent of the whole, approaching problem-solving in ways that spark joint participation from diverse perspectives, and defining problems locally, by the immediate stakeholders, and then networking to similar efforts going on elsewhere (146). “Power-with” is making a commitment to be engaged in the struggle to turn down old-fashioned top-down individualistic power hierarchies that are antagonistic to the democratic ideal.

Electoral Politics and Black-Latino Coalitions

While race could be a stepping-stone for groups to gain “power-with,” it could become an impediment when it is seen as the mere physical and cultural symbols rather than the social experience that results from being “raced” into a group. This often occurs in high-stakes electoral politics. The electoral races in Los Angeles and New York are examples of the lack of unity between Blacks and Latinos and the deleterious consequences of identity politics. Antonio Villaraigosa had the support of a multiracial coalition of Latinos and progressive Blacks that had been brewing from many historic labor struggles. However, the historic antipathy between Blacks and Mexican Americans, the opposing candidate’s political legacy,¹ and, most importantly, a progressive strategy based in winning zero-sum electoral victories impeded the formation of a Black and Latino coalition in Los Angeles. Fernando Ferrer’s campaign for mayor in New York faced similar obstacles. When he sought the Rev. Al Sharpton’s endorsement, Sharpton asked Ferrer to support two Black candidates in return—a proposal Ferrer refused. This incident demonstrates that constructing a candidate-based coalition is tough because issues of identity dominate and exacerbate friction between ethnic groups. Electoral races

expose identity politics and thus are not the best way to mobilize longstanding social movements of racialized groups.

In Los Angeles and in New York, as in many other cities, Black and Latino coalitions are fragile. Three factors could explain the weakness of Black and Latino coalitions. First, Blacks might not trust Latinos to fight alongside them because Latinos have been offered what Guinier and Torres call a "racial bribe" to join Whites if they abandon their indigenous roots. While it has been difficult to offer the racial bribe to Latinos because of the diversity of the Latino community and their celebration, in general terms, of the idea of *mestizaje*, some light-skinned Latinos with a stronger tie to European heritage have accepted the bribe. Second, Blacks resent that immigration has boosted the Latino community in former predominantly Black areas. They feel that Latinos will monopolize the good jobs and displace them as the racial group with the strongest moral claim on existing resources (244).² Third, and perhaps more importantly, the focus on building coalitions is for zero-sum-power-type electoral politics. Multiracial coalitions that aim to attain electoral wins naturally propel identity politics, accentuate the divisions between different racial groups, and do not create the conditions for sustained mobilization beyond election day (245). Long-lasting and successful coalitions between Blacks and Latinos have to be based on the commitment of participants to broader themes of social justice and not simply to narrow self-interest. Their energy to continue comes from the struggle to redefine what their identity means in economic, political, and moral terms (246).

Guinier and Torres's discussion of the racial bribe downplays the relevance of class in minority group dynamics. They do not consider seriously the fact that the bribe to "become White" is opened to Blacks and other minority groups that move up the economic ladder and disassociate themselves with Black culture and political identity. In other words, the racial bribe is not only open to minorities that are lighter skinned but, in many instances, is open to minorities who can pay their way into "Whiteness." Class is as important as, or more important than, skin pigmentation in assessing who is offered the racial bribe.

The discussion of the racial bribe among Latinos also leaves out the distinction between involuntary and voluntary minorities. Voluntary minorities, mainly immigrants and first-generation citizens, are less concerned about their disadvantaged position in society than involuntary minorities, mainly second and further generations, because they often compare their position in the United States to their position in their home country and prefer the former. On the other hand, involuntary minorities tend to resist assimilation and tend to fight against their subordinate status in society. Therefore, voluntary minorities have a different cultural frame of reference than involuntary minorities, who develop an "oppositional culture." Many voluntary minorities do not associate with Blacks and Latinos who are involuntary minorities because they do not share their cultural frame of reference. However, not associating with the struggle of involuntary minorities is different from assimilating and "becoming White." Guinier and Torres's analysis of the racial bribe would have been more complete if this distinction was addressed.

Problems with Political Representation in the United States

Guinier and Torres dedicate a considerable portion of the book to denounce winner-take-all elections and the power of politicians to draw electoral districts as two inherently undemocratic practices that disenfranchise all citizens. When a candidate with the most votes becomes the representative of a district, the people who voted for another candidate are negated the right to be represented by someone of their choice. In addition, giving politicians the power to draw electoral districts is essentially giving them the right to choose their electorate. These practices alienate the losers from meaningful political participation and diminish voter turnout.

Guinier and Torres also criticize the opposition of the majority in the Supreme Court to race-conscious districting. They argue that the court's opposition to this practice is inconsistent with its endorsement of partisan gerrymandering. Why is a minority candidate seen as a bad representative of the White citizens in a district that has been race-consciously drawn while a democratic candidate is seen as an adequate representative of republican electors in a district where partisan gerrymandering is practiced? The court's decision reflects the colorblindness ideology, and it reinforces outdated democratic systems that were put into place by the privileged to ensure their control over society, disguising their intentions under the maintenance of order rhetoric. Proportional representation should be implemented because it is a more democratic practice. It will ensure that people are represented by the candidates they chose and it would increase democratic participation.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the shortcomings already discussed, the political race project proposed in *The Miner's Canary* is crucial for building strong and long-standing multiracial coalitions. The major contribution of the book is the articulation of a social justice vision that uses race as a diagnostic tool to make the structures of power in society more democratic, rather than focusing on the inclusion of minorities in power hierarchies. Furthermore, it stresses the value of minority grassroots mobilization as an empowering mechanism in the quest for social justice, rather than advocating for electoral or legal solutions that have proved to be ineffective in strengthening democracy and delivering justice for all.

Endnotes

1 The candidate's father, Kenneth Hahn, was a county supervisor who represented a majority-Black district for 25 years and spent four decades fighting for civil rights.

2 The 2000 U.S. census shows that Latinos have surpassed African Americans as the nation's largest minority group.

***The Changing Dynamics of U.S.-Mexico Relations:
Jorge Dominguez and Rafael Fernandez de
Castro, The United States and Mexico: Between
Partnership and Conflict (Routledge 2001)***

Reviewed by Alexander Harris

Alexander Harris received his masters degree in public policy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 2002. Before attending the Kennedy School, Alex helped coordinate a small nonprofit organization that infused the resources of the business community into a New York City high school.

This new century has given rise to an unparalleled relationship between the United States and Mexico. Until recently, neither neighbor was particularly capable of collaborating on issues ranging from foreign trade to national security. Now, however, the warm friendship between George W. Bush and Vicente Fox embodies the new spirit of partnership and collaboration between both nations. Passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) ensured Mexico's dominance as one of the United States's most important trading partners. This relationship blurs borders as well; Latinos are poised to become the United States's largest minority group, with more than 7 million Mexican immigrants fueling this demographic explosion.

Not all developments are positive, however; illegal immigration, poverty, and drug trafficking cause both governments great concern, particularly those local and state governments situated near the U.S.-Mexico border. The negative spillover effects from the shared border present growing challenges as both countries consciously attempt to improve their relationship. Given both the strengths and challenges inherent in collaborative relationships, what factors fuel the recent shift towards a cooperative partnership? How can the United States and Mexico effectively navigate between partnership and con-

flict? In *The United States and Mexico: Between Partnership and Conflict*, Jorge Dominguez and Rafael Fernandez de Castro seek to answer these questions and explain the historical, domestic, and international contexts that lead to the current interdependent relationship.

This book is one in a 10-part series entitled *Contemporary Inter-American Relations*, which focuses on the changing relations between the United States and various Latin American countries. Each book represents a collaboration between an American and a Latin American author. While somewhat academic in nature, the book is easily accessible to a lay audience.

This book explores how the relationship between the United States and Mexico began from a foundation of general neglect punctuated by intense conflicts. It follows the relationship as it grows to a partnership encompassing economic, cultural, environmental, and demographic issues. The authors provide a detailed investigation of this shift. Among the questions they investigate is how this transformation has altered aspects of the U.S.-Mexican relationship such as trade, security and foreign policy. More fundamentally, they seek to explain the factors contributing to this transformation.

The opening line sets the tone, reading, "for better or worse, Mexico and the United States are wedded to each other." The first chapter provides a detailed history of this relationship. The authors highlight three crucial phases. The first phase encompasses a pattern of conflict that began in the 19th century and lasted until approximately 1940. During this time, Washington behaved as the dominant power and imposed its will upon Mexico. This conflict was often further exacerbated by domestic instability in Mexico and territorial fights between Mexico and the United States. We can see examples of this period in 1846 when the United States declared war on Mexico and eventually conquered Mexico City. These aggressions forced Mexico to surrender vast territories that we now know as California, Arizona, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado and Nevada. The U.S. government repeatedly intervened in Mexico to protect favored leaders and prevent others from coming to power.

The second phase was between 1940 and 1984. The authors maintain that neither country worked to improve relations. They term this a period of bargained negligence; U.S. foreign policy almost exclusively focused on Cold War politics. As long as Mexico did not support the Soviet Union, the United States was content to leave Mexico to its own devices. During this period, there were, however, brief moments of bilateral cooperation. The foreign threat of World War II highlighted the need for Mexican oil and military support. The war led to severe labor shortages in certain sectors of the economy. The Bracero Agreement enabled Mexican workers to work within the United States for limited periods of time as guest workers in the agricultural and rail industries. Despite these brief periods of bilateral cooperation, this time frame was largely marked by both countries studiously ignoring the other.

During the third phase, from 1984 till the present, the presidents of both countries have increasingly nurtured their political relationships with each other. Primary threats to cooperation include conflict over drug trafficking and migration, legislative branches that are less supportive of the relationship

that the executive branches pursued, and increasingly active border governments whose relationships often became contentious. The authors hold that one of the primary turning points in this relationship was the NAFTA negotiations, which embody the spirit of economic integration. They also argue that the presence of U.S.-trained Mexican neoliberal economists in leadership positions within the government moved the relationship forward. Thus, the strongest interests driving this new relationship are economic and security issues. These interests have led both governments to increasingly commit to seeking bilateral solutions.

The next chapter expands upon complex security problems that threatened the bilateral relationship in the 1990s, with a particular focus on drug trafficking. The authors note that while relations were improving between high-level officials, this often did not extend to the lower-level security officials. They note that there were few formal mechanisms to facilitate the interaction of these individuals. In addition, the United States was becoming increasingly more comfortable with the use of force near the border area, employing military troops to stem the flow of illegal migrants and drugs. These tactics placed additional stress upon the relationship.

As previously mentioned, there were few bilateral opportunities for collaboration until the early 1990s. In fact, Mexican foreign policy was strictly autonomous from the United States. One of the events that changed this was NAFTA. NAFTA grew out of U.S. frustrations with GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and the failure of fixed exchange rates in the 1970s. The NAFTA negotiations brought the three North American countries to the bargaining table and resulted in extraordinary collaboration. In particular, the authors maintain that NAFTA changed the relationship from geographic happenstance to mutual economic interests. Perhaps most importantly, the relationship became institutionalized at the federal, state, and local levels as all levels of government concentrated on joint trade, environmental, and labor policies.

Not surprisingly, this multiplied the number of political actors exceedingly. The next chapter deals with the domestic context for foreign decision making. It demonstrates how post-NAFTA decision making eventually shifted focus from the federal level to local governments, the private sector and even the court systems. It also shifted the focus of Mexico's economic industry to the *maquiladores* (border factories) to the north, which led to a significant population shift within the country. These factors tied the two countries closer together than ever before. This transformation fundamentally changed the manner in which Mexico had governed its country. Previously, Mexico assiduously kept foreign relations separate from domestic affairs. However, interdependence would no longer allow for this separation.

Although the United States continued to enhance its border security, many of Mexico's social problems persisted in spilling over into the Southwestern border states and migrating throughout the United States. The last chapter focuses on the change and growth of transborder relations. The authors reiterate many of the well-documented issues such as migration and crime, but

focus upon the joint management of these problems at every level of government. Rather than discussing the effectiveness of this policy shift, the authors focus upon the political challenges and opportunities engendered by jointly managed border issues.

Throughout the book, the authors are optimistic that bilateral cooperation can successfully address many of the common problems plaguing both the United States and Mexico. The book concludes by noting that the U.S.-Mexican border is the longest shared border between a wealthy country and one that has millions still living in poverty. Dominguez and Fernandez de Castro remind readers of the daily pain, trials, and difficulties engendered by this disparity. Nevertheless, their tone is one of hope—hope that political commitments will give birth to more than just platitudes, and confidence that the spirit of cooperation at the highest echelons of government is also taking root in local border communities and between business people.

The book sets out to describe the changing relationship between the United States and Mexico, while providing an analysis of the transformation and noting the challenges of sharing an extensive border. To be successful, the authors must highlight historical changes through a variety of lenses, provide causal connections, and ultimately tie the analysis to an overarching theme. *Between Partnership and Conflict* effectively accomplishes these goals. The far-ranging analysis comfortably transitions through an assortment of disciplines and arrives at a conclusion that provides hope for the future. It also cautions policy makers against the potential pitfalls and conflicts inherent in unequal partnerships. Overall, this book provides a succinct examination into one of the most hopeful transformations in North American foreign relations.

The book, however, falls short in suggesting and analyzing the public policy considerations of the U.S.-Mexico relationship. Interdependence is leading to the formation of entirely new types of communities along both sides of the border. For example, the spillover effects between El Paso and Ciudad Juarez are tremendous, and polluted air, water, and lasting poverty are not limited to the Mexican side of the border. How should leaders consider these new problems? Are there additional policy mechanisms that can reduce the economic disparities and their concomitant social problems between the United States and Mexico?

Besides the lack of analysis of public policy considerations, there are three additional shortcomings. First, the book fails to provide a picture of the potential future developments of the U.S.-Mexican relationship (particularly the changing dynamics among flash-point communities along the border). Second, the authors neglect a complete consideration of the domestic effects of interdependence upon both countries. Finally, the book could also be strengthened by a more thoughtful analysis of the entrenched interests of the major stakeholders. Despite these shortcomings, this book's examination of past successes and mistakes is critical to inform policy makers as they strive for a more enlightened vision of the future.

LANI GUINIER

ENLISTING RACE,
RESISTING POWER,
TRANSFORMING
DEMOCRACY

THE MINER'S CANARY

GERALD TORRES

THE MINER'S CANARY

Enlisting Race,
Resisting Power,
Transforming Democracy

LANI GUINIER AND
GERALD TORRES

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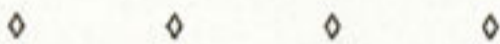
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