



# HARVARD JOURNAL OF HISPANIC POLICY

Volume 15 • 2002–2003

## Creating a National Latino Agenda

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Humble Roots: Mastering the Art of Making the Impossible Possible Cruz Bustamante, interviewed by *Lizelda Lopez*

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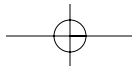
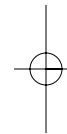
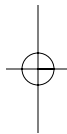
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## *Editor's Remarks*

In 2002, the Hispanic community experienced a significant demographic milestone by surpassing African Americans to become the largest minority group in the country. Nowhere is this more evident than in California, where Latinos now represent more than half of all children born in the state. This national demographic shift has generated a new interest in the Latino community among business leaders, academics, policy makers, and elected officials. The Latino community to capitalize on this growing interest must define its own priorities—it must create a national Latino agenda. If not, our priorities will be defined for us by people who know us the least. Therefore, we offer *Volume 15: Creating a National Latino Agenda*. Through interviews, commentaries, articles, and book reviews we present what we hope will be the beginnings of a national agenda that could further unify our diverse community. The agenda includes:

- Accurate numeration of the Latino population within the United States
- Increase political participation of Latinos living in the United States
- Improve economic opportunities for U.S. Hispanics through small business assistance and by fostering business ties with Latin America
- Transform educational opportunities and experiences of Latinos through civic participation and grassroots organizing
- Educate the American public about the growing interconnectedness of Latin America and the United States

Our interviews feature three well-known public servants who have more than 80 years of experience between them. California Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante gives his insights of the best means to achieve a national Latino agenda is through coalition building with other groups. Congressmen Silvestre Reyes and Albert Gonzalez present a vision of what a national agenda should have. Albert Gonzalez suggests that “education, education, and education” are the top three priorities of the Latino community. Congressman Silvestre Reyes, former chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, presents an agenda that must include economic opportunities, education, and national security.

The articles featured in this year’s *Journal* critically analyze three important components of the national Latino agenda—education, economic opportunities, and the accurate numeration of the Latino population. Nancy Taylor, a student at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, argues that “the paradigm of effective educational leadership needs to be transformed or adapted from the static administration of bureaucratic and state-mandated reforms to community-based efforts in order to truly effect and sustain improvements in low-income communities and schools that service an increasing number of Latino students.” Matt Barreto digs deeper into the growth of the Latino population by analyzing how the census “misidentifies” certain Latino ethnic groups, such as Dominicans. The Honorable Lincoln Diaz-Balart, the congressman representing the 21st district of Florida, writes about the economic opportunities provided to

the Latino community by the U.S. Hispanic-Latin America trade development initiative.

To create a better and more usable *Journal*, we have added a new section that covers commentaries by well-known members of our community. Larry Gonzalez, NALEO Washington, D.C., director, reflects on the growing political power of the Latino community and the electoral gains of the past three election cycles. Sen. Jarrett Barrios, who recently became the highest-ranking Latino official in Massachusetts, writes a scathing criticism of Gov. Mitt Romney's opposition to bilingual education as a political maneuver designed to help the governor be elected. Michael D. Kerlin provides fascinating insights to the *matrícula consular* phenomena. He argues that the dispersion of the Latino community from its traditional areas of concentration in the Southwest to the southern and eastern states have given more, not less economic and political power to the Latino community.

We conclude with two book reviews. Felicia Escobar reviews Carola and Marcelo Suárez-Orozco's *Children of Immigration*. This book focuses on how children of immigrants are faring in American society. Using the Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation (LISA) study, the Suárez-Orozco team provides one of the most comprehensive studies of immigrant children whose destiny is intimately tied to the future social and economic well-being of the United States. Although this book falls short of concrete policy recommendations, it is a necessary read for every policy maker focusing on social and educational policy. Adán Briones reviews Peter M. Ward's *Colonias and Public Policy in Texas and Mexico: Urbanization by Stealth*. Although this book does not focus on an issue that affects all fifty states, it does highlight the "interconnectedness of cities on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border."

As editor in chief, I would like to take this time to thank the student staff for making this one of the best years in the Journal's 20-year history. The numbers have all been going in the right direction, with an increase in the number of subscriptions, article submissions, and most importantly student participation. Our staff is committed to implementing an aggressive pro-growth strategy that continues to place the Journal as the preeminent Hispanic policy journal in the country.

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## *Reflecting on the Past, Looking Toward the Future*

*Interview with Silvestre Reyes  
United States Representative (D-Tex.) and Former Chair of the Congressional  
Hispanic Caucus*

*Congressman Silvestre Reyes, now in his fourth term, became the first Latino to represent El Paso in the U.S. House of Representatives. Reyes, who has dedicated his life to public service, began his career with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in 1969. He would eventually rise to become chief of the U.S. Border Patrol in the McAllen and El Paso sectors. Reyes continuously implemented innovative initiatives such as Operation Hold the Line, the Border Patrol's Canine Program, and the Border Patrol's National Anti-Drug School Education Program.*

*In December 1995, after serving more than 26 years with the INS, Reyes retired to run for Congress. He went to Capitol Hill promising to enhance El Paso's role as a center of U.S.-Mexico commerce, to protect veterans' benefits, and to support a strong national defense. On 3 January 2001, Reyes began his two-year term as chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC). He utilized his leadership position to actively promote U.S. and Latin American relations, to advocate for immigration law reform, to support Latino access to health programs, to protect Latino civil rights, and to increase the resources available to Latinos for education initiatives.*

*In his interview with the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy, Congressman Silvestre Reyes reflects on the past, offers his insights on America's present condition, and proposes recommendations for the future.*

*Adán Briones of the HJHP interviewed Congressman Reyes on 23 February 2003.*

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### **HJHP**

What made you decide to run for Congress? How did your experience as a Border Patrol chief for the El Paso and McAllen sectors help prepare you for your job on Capitol Hill?

### **Reyes**

As you may know, it wasn't originally my idea to run for Congress. I was approached by a group of fifteen members of the business community who were impressed with the work that I had done as the Border Patrol chief in El Paso. [They] thought that if they could convince me, then I would be somebody they

wanted to support to come to Congress. It took them a little more than six months to finally convince me—but I'm glad they did. I've enjoyed the experience, and I hope that I've made a difference for El Paso, and really for the country. When you're in a position like this, it has a lot of interplay with a lot of national issues, and in my case, for national security. So I've enjoyed the experience.

I think [my position] as chief of the Border Patrol helped to prepare me for this job because I am the only member of Congress that has an immigration background. I have been instrumental in a lot of the things we've been able to do to address immigration, homeland security since September 11, and the policies that affect border communities like El Paso.

The experience that I received as a manager, managing a sector and managing employees, I think definitely gives me a leg up on the ability to manage people, the ability to set priorities, and to understand the difference between what is doable and what isn't.

### ***HJHP***

What was your role as chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and what were the CHC's priorities for the 107th Congress?

### **Reyes**

As a member of the Hispanic Caucus, I had been very involved since I was elected. I helped [Congressman] Xavier Becerra [D-Calif.] in his tenure, and then again when [Congresswoman] Lucille Roybal-Allard [D-Calif.] was the next chairperson.

I felt that I was prepared, but I felt that we were missing a couple of things that were very important to our caucus that we hadn't focused yet on. And those two things were identifying individuals and recruiting candidates to run for Congress that could grow our caucus. And the second point that I wanted to stress was, in order to be able to succeed at that point, we had to start our own political action committee, which [we did]. We founded BOLD-PAC [BOLD-PAC is the political arm of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus—ed.]. And really, the results were that we were the only caucus in Congress that actually grew in the 2002 election. We identified and supported eleven candidates, and of those eleven, we elected three. So we felt very good about that.

The other point that I wanted our caucus to focus on was a better relationship and a better interaction with the business community. The census taught us that we are the largest minority in the country, the fastest-growing minority, and represent the fastest-growing segment—up until the Bush economic downturn—the fastest-growing segment of the small business community of this country. So we happened to hit on the right priorities—and I will tell you, I gave those priorities a lot of thought. As I went around soliciting support from my colleagues for that election, I explained to them why I felt it was important and why it was imperative that we focus a little more on business than we had been. The results I think speak for themselves.

**HJHP**

What still needs to be done, and what exactly are the priorities for the 108th Congress?

**Reyes**

Well, first of all, the moment you stop moving forward is the moment you start regressing. You can't stand still. You have to be very aggressive—not just in a political climate, but in any endeavor or business—you have to keep moving forward. So there remains a lot that we must continue to work on. We're going to continue to focus on going out and identifying candidates to run for Congress, so that we can continue to expand our caucus. We're also going to continue to focus on our ability to raise money with BOLD-PAC to be able to be major players on the national political scene monetarily, and not just for [Latino] candidates, but for candidates that support the issues that we care about.

I know that through our Task Forces, the new chair, [Congressman] *Ciro Rodriguez* [D-Tex.], has already told us that we're going to do much more outreach to Latin America. In fact, he has put me in charge of the International Relations Task Force. I am working with [Congresswoman] *Grace Napolitano* [D-Calif.], and we're going to move the caucus toward being more aggressive in representing Latin American issues both to the administration and to the Congress. So we're in the process of setting up those priorities, as well as continuing to focus on the business community.

Of course, we are as concerned as anybody else about how in two years we've gone from surpluses to record deficits. And we've gone from an economy that produced 22 million jobs to one that is losing, on the average, 131 jobs an hour since President Bush took office. All told now, 2.3 million jobs have been lost in his first two years. So we have both an opportunity and a challenge, and we're going to be staying focused on those things.

**HJHP**

Given the diversity of America's Latino population, do you believe it is possible to create a national Latino agenda?

**Reyes**

Not only is it possible, but it is imperative. We have learned a lot about the diversity that exists within our own Latino community. I think right now we're undergoing growing pains in terms of maturity because—if you've been keeping up with the Estrada nomination, you know that has the potential to be a very divisive issue for Latinos, but also has, I think, looking on the positive side, the potential to not just solidify, but rally the relationships that are built on working together for the betterment of the Latino community. And although this administration has been very vicious in trying to drive a wedge among us, my hope is that we're going to be mature enough to be able to handle it.

**HJHP**

What do you feel are the three most pertinent policy issues facing the Latino community today?

## Reyes

Like anyone else, economic development has to be on the very top of the agenda. Within economic development, there has to be opportunity for Latinos to be part of the mainstream in terms of the economy. That is why it is so important for us to be leading the effort to block the administration's and the president's efforts to cut the Small Business Administration by 50 percent. He tried it last budget cycle, and he's trying it again this time. So the economy, economic development, and our ability to persevere against a very vindictive Republican agenda so far is going to be important.

Secondly, we need to continue to focus on education—education that not only is meaningful, but one that doesn't just pay lip service under the catchphrase "Leave No Child Behind." We know that in our communities, hundreds of thousands of our children are being left behind. Hundreds of thousands of our students are running [into] obstacles and closed doors of opportunity. And the amount of money that is being cut out of essential programs like drop-out prevention programs, the Pell Grants, the bilingual and migrant worker programs—all of those are vitally important to our community. So I would put education as the second point that I would think would be important to our Latino agenda.

The third one is one is perhaps not traditional, but yet, when you stop and think about it, makes sense for all of us, and that is dealing with issues of national security. Within national security, you have things that are very important and vital to our caucus like immigration and immigration reform. I am increasingly concerned with the anti-immigrant rhetoric that is spewing from not just a small group of members of Congress on the House side, but on the cable news talk shows that are really revealing subliminally a racist attitude toward people of color. And that cannot be excused by September 11. Because that is no longer, in my mind, an excuse to allow the deterioration of human rights, civil rights, and Bill of Rights for everyone in this country.

The other part of that equation has to be issues like racial profiling, issues like election reform, issues that deal with proposals to allow individuals to remain in this country and work. While at the same time that's a benefit, we need to be mindful that that kind of relief for this country and for the economy has to be value-added. And by that, I mean that you have to take into account the fact that there are whole families that are here, that have been here, have been part of our community, have been paying taxes, going to our schools, shopping in our stores. And if we're talking about national security, those are the kinds of individuals we need to take care of and identify so that we can focus on the real bad guys that we know want to do us as they tried on September 11.

The last thing on national security would be the fact that we have a vested interest in the way the administration is trying to take us to war because we have so many Latinos that are a part of the Armed Services. And I might add, as a member of the Armed Services Committee and the House Intelligence Committee, I have been very disappointed that the leadership of our various military entities does not reflect the face of America. We have very few Latinos in leadership positions in the Navy, the Army, the Marines, the Air Force, and the Coast Guard. So when I

tell you that we still have a lot of work to do, those are the kinds of things that are on my mind that need to be prioritized as a national Latino agenda.

**HJHP**

Who are, in your opinion, today's most nationally prominent Latino leaders?

**Reyes**

I think that's an interesting question because if you're talking politically, certainly members of the Hispanic Caucus, I think, provide the leadership. And maybe not traditionally in that we do a lot of our work in the realm of the larger political focus, so sometimes that doesn't have the high-profile attention that perhaps it merits or deserves, but nonetheless, that's the environment we work in, and those are the successes that are so important and vital to the Latino community. We also have our Latino superstars like Henry Cisneros and Governor Bill Richardson of New Mexico.

The world of business is a good venue to identify very influential Latinos from both sides of the aisle that are high profile and part of a mainstream that I think eventually is where we want the Latino community to really get into to gain the kind of influence that ultimately will benefit from additional members of Congress who are Latinos.

We don't have a single Latino on the Senate side, so that is a priority and a focus for our caucus.

We sometimes have some very serious disagreements with the Latinos that President Bush has appointed to his administration because his idea of a Latino leader and ours are two different things. But I think, in the long run, it's a healthy process for the country. We not only have a lot to work on, but a lot to be proud of too.

**HJHP**

Do you feel the Republican Party is taking more seriously the voting power of the Latino community?

**Reyes**

Without a doubt. We're seeing an unprecedented effort by the Republican Party to try to recruit Latinos—and I think that's a good thing. I think the more Latinos we have in leadership positions, in both parties, and in all parties, the better understanding and the better representation issues will be given at the local, state, and national venues.

**HJHP**

What can Democrats do to keep its share of the Latino vote and attract future Latino voters?

**Reyes**

Very basically, to continue to focus on the issues we care about: health care, insurance coverage, education, economic development, and the fact that we are not represented proportionately. I gave you the military as an example, but you can also look at the nation's boardrooms; that's another disparity where there is a lack of Latinos in sufficient numbers to represent our community. The leadership of

companies should reflect the face of America. So we have a lot of work to do as far as that goes.

**HJHP**

Given that President Bush hails from Texas, do you feel that he has done a good job in improving the quality of life for those residing on the U.S.-Mexico border?

**Reyes**

I think he has been a very huge disappointment for me, personally. I see his budget come out, where he recommends that the Small Business Administration be cut by 50 percent, two years in a row. I see his proposal to eliminate critical and vital programs in education for communities like ours along on the border. I look at the fact that he has tried to eliminate the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program—again, a vital and important program that he championed as governor that now he wants to abandon as president. [SCAAP provides federal assistance to states and localities that incur the costs of incarcerating undocumented criminal aliens who have been accused or convicted of state and local offenses.—*ed.*]

For me, I've been hugely disappointed that his compassionate conservatism has translated to huge tax cuts, huge deficits, and the huge undermining of critical and important programs that are so important to the Latino community.

**HJHP**

Looking at the border, what do you feel are the three most pertinent issues facing El Paso?

**Reyes**

Like every other border community, I think economic development is important, and attention to infrastructure is vital. In fact, I was one of the members that tried to convince President Bush that instead of his huge tax cut that he managed to get through in his first year, that we ought to divide the projected surplus into three separate components.

The first component, go ahead and dedicate to tax cuts. The second portion, identify and dedicate to bolstering the nation's infrastructure, which has seriously deteriorated the last 50 to 60 years. And the third component of the surplus would go toward continued elimination of the national debt.

I just felt that we had a historic opportunity and that if we had a president who understood that our nation is in dire straits in terms of our infrastructure—whether you're talking about your roads, your bridges, your highways, your freeways, your railroad system, your air traffic control system—and now at a time when we need it desperately because our nation can be, at any point, attacked by terrorism—that's what I thought we should focus on. Instead, he continued forward and pushed through an unprecedented tax cut that, contrary to what he claims, I think was the impetus for the quick deterioration of the economy in his first year in office.

**HJHP**

A 30 November 2002 *New York Times* article, in describing the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), declared: "Cities like



Brownsville, Harlingen, and McAllen in the Rio Grande Valley benefited from investment as corporations built factories known as *maquiladoras* on the Mexican side of the border. Laredo, meanwhile, became the busiest inland port in the country as thousands of trucks poured back and forth every day between the countries. Only El Paso, at the western edge of Texas, did not enjoy much growth in the 1990s.” Why do you think El Paso has not benefited from NAFTA as much as other border communities?

**Reyes**

Well, the answer lies in part with the fact that we were a community that was heavily dependant on the garment industry, and when NAFTA passed, we lost almost 40,000 jobs that went overseas, and in most cases to Mexico, and that crippled our economy. To compound that, there were certain promises that were made to communities like El Paso in terms of support and programs that would help transition from those jobs lost to new jobs and training programs to prepare the workforce for jobs that would be available as a result for NAFTA. That combination was disastrous for El Paso.

**HJHP**

Where do you see El Paso 20 years from now?

**Reyes**

A lot of it will depend on a cohesive, well-thought-out, well-defined, long-term strategy for economic growth. The last couple of years have been very frustrating for us because we have had a fractured agenda—at least that’s been my sense at the federal level. And I’m hoping that we will have an opportunity to get our act together so that we can move smoothly forward at the local, state, and the federal level on things that are important to our community—things like economic development, pushing for additional training programs, pushing for concepts like the Center for Advanced Research and Technology that do a much better job of preparing our workforce so that we can do economic development that is meaningful and provide both better salaries and benefits for the community. That’s going to be key to where we will stand 20 years from now.

**HJHP**

Where do you see yourself in the future?

**Reyes**

Just still plodding away, trying to work on a common agenda for El Paso, trying to work on a long-term strategy that perhaps 10, 15, 20 years from now, people can look back and say, we were at that crossroads, we took the right path and provided the kind of leadership and the kind of focus on economic development that has now allowed us to prosper and allowed us to become the vital and successful community that we know we are.

**HJHP**

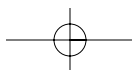
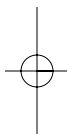
Do you have any advice for those hoping to affect public policy through a career in politics or public service?



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**Reyes**

Sure. I think the best advice I can give to someone who is contemplating this is to have an insatiable appetite for current events. Get a good, solid, basic education, preferably with a business background or economic background. Don't be afraid to tackle the issues and to express the opinion, and above all, do not be afraid to participate in the political process. The easiest thing is to find excuses [for] why you don't vote, or why you don't attend meetings, or why you don't get involved in elections, or why you don't hold accountable people that make decisions that affect your life, and your community, and your children's future. So all of those things are important. All of those things are vital. And only then will we be able to make not just a difference, but the kind of progress that we know we are capable of.



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## ***Humble Roots: Mastering the Art of Making the Impossible Possible***

***Interview with Cruz Bustamante  
Lieutenant Governor of California and Former Speaker of the  
California Assembly***

*It is difficult to imagine such an unassuming individual as I found in Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante, yet he is one of the most powerful individuals in California government today, with obvious potential toward the Governor's Mansion (if California had one). But, if you pay attention to his upbringing, you can easily imagine why he is such a humble individual.*

*From modest beginnings—he was on his way to becoming a butcher—he got his start in public service as an intern at the office of Congressman B.F. Sisk (D-Calif.) in 1972. Following his stint in Washington D.C, he was director of the Fresno Summer Youth Employment Program from 1977 to 1983 and followed that as district representative for Congressman Richard Lehman (D-Calif.) from 1983 to 1988. Before running for the state assembly, he was district representative for Assemblyman Bruce Bronzan (D-Fresno) from 1988 to 1993.*

*Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante has risen through the ranks of California government and beaten all odds. He began his career as an elected official when he was elected as only the second Latino assemblyman north of the Tehachapi Mountains in 1993. He continued his path, being elected speaker of the assembly in 1996. His hard work culminated in his 1998 election as the first lieutenant governor of Latino descent since 1878.*

*His accomplishments are too numerous to recount, but among those that stand out are his commitment to the Commission for One California, which studies and seeks solutions to the issue of diversity across California, and his support and commitment to making college more affordable for low- and middle-income Californians.*

*His comments and answers to the questions I posed were thought provoking and enlightening, while being based in reality and in a sincere desire to visualize and bring about a brighter future for the Latino community. They served as a testament to a man that attempts daily to master the art of making the impossible possible.*

*Lizelda Lopez of the HJHP interviewed Cruz Bustamante on January 14, 2002.*

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### ***HJHP***

How did your family come to reside in California's Central Valley?

**Bustamante**

My Bustamante grandparents emigrated from Chihuahua, Mexico, to New Mexico, and then from New Mexico to California. My mother's family was originally from New Mexico but decided to immigrate to California. My parents came to California at different times, but both of them ended up in Dinuba to work in the fields. My mother's family was living in the *barrio* in Dinuba, and my dad's family moved in next door. And that's how the Bustamantes came to be. I am the oldest of six brothers and sisters. We come from big families! On my dad's side, there were thirteen kids, and on my mother's side there were five.

**HJHP**

What obstacles have you encountered as a Latino in politics?

**Bustamante**

First, people allow their perceptions to become reality. I will not allow myself to get that cynical, and if I do, I'll probably stop doing politics. But to a lot of people, perception is based on a lot of different things, especially what they see on TV or some experience they've had: fear of some kind.

So they form an idea about a person, and they often will allow themselves the comfort of ignorance. Ignorance is bliss, and in a strange way it means you don't have to work at trying to understand differences in people. I believe most people are not racist. They just don't understand, so they allow stereotypes to guide them, guide their thinking.

People assume they know where you are coming from as well. Take for example the Democratic caucus in the California Legislature. When I was elected ten years ago in 1993, I represented the Central Valley, and was the second Latino north of the Tehachapi Mountains to be elected. People did not elect Latinos like they do now in Sacramento—Latinos like Deborah Ortiz (D-Sacramento), Nicole Parra (D-Hanford), Dean Florez (D-Shafter), Liz Figueroa (D-Fremont), and Simon Salinas (D-Salinas). You look at all the people who are elected now. When I was elected, it just didn't happen.

And so I come up here representing my district, a heavily agricultural and economically depressed area. And so of course, I talk about those issues: small business, water, agriculture, the economy. People couldn't understand that. They asked questions such as, "You want to talk about water and the economy? That doesn't make sense."

Now all of a sudden, the rural perspective wrapped in a brown package was something a little bit different, and so they try to put you away, ignore you. This happened among people that are supposed to be our enlightened leaders.

**HJHP**

At your first press conference when you were selected as speaker of the California Assembly, a reporter asked you if you had a radical ethnic agenda. You then gave four different views of what a radical agenda would look like. You said, "Good schools so our kids can grow up to be anything they want. Safe and clean neighborhoods so they can walk to school and play without fear. Decent jobs so we can take care of our families. And finally, an opportunity for every person to make the

most of their talents.” You finalized by saying, “That’s not an ethnic agenda, that’s an American agenda!” Do you think that this agenda can translate into a national Latino agenda?

**Bustamante**

I think it is a national agenda, period. Do we have some interests because of Mexico, for example? We have some differences, but mostly what we have are similarities. If you were to say that this is the agenda of Latinos, and then you go and talk to people individually, they’d agree that the agenda is for all Americans. And if you talk to people in the African American community or the Asian community or any other community, they’d agree as well. Generally, that’s what people want. This is an agenda for every person, whether they’ve been here for a short time or a long time.

And I think the translation isn’t something that just comes from California. I think it’s something that everybody wants in the nation.

**HJHP**

Do you think the Democratic Party, which is the party of your choice, would better fit this chosen agenda?

**Bustamante**

I believe so. The Democratic Party is the party of diversity. You look at Latino politicians that have been encouraged to develop, and it has all been under the Democratic aegis, not under the Republican, not under any other party. And most successes have also come from the Democratic Party. Look at California. The chair of the Democratic Party is a Latino [Art Torres], the person who ran the Democratic National Convention is a Latina [Lydia Camarillo]. The highest Latino elected official up until recently in the country was me, a Latino in California. You look at the number of people that are elected to higher office, and my guess is that around 85 percent of all Latinos that are elected in the state of California are Democrat. There is a substantial amount of concentration of effort, as well as of interest, in those agendas that are affiliated with the Democratic Party and the Latino community.

**HJHP**

That’s a good point. How do you think your role as lieutenant governor of this large state can help create a national Latino agenda?

**Bustamante**

I remember going to a meeting sponsored by former Vice President Gore. The meeting was for 35 high-ranking Latino elected officials throughout the country. And in that discourse, the question was asked, “Since you’re the highest ranking, Lt. Gov. Bustamante, why don’t you start us off with what you think is the most pressing issue facing Latinos?” I was thinking, “It would be easy to say education; it would be easy to say access to capital; it would be easy to say affordable housing; it would be easy to say a lot of those issues that we deal with all the time and everyone’s working on.”

But I said, "I think that there's a greater problem facing the Latino community, and it's how it interfaces with other groups that are considered to be minority communities, especially the African American community." It was interesting to see people's reaction to my statement. One person spoke up quickly and said, "Cruz, just when we're about ready to have real power as a Latino community, you want to give it away?"

That comment came from years of marginalization of the Latino community: We've been marginalized in politics, we've been marginalized socially, marginalized in many, many ways.

I said, "We're the best ones to remember how we were marginalized, but we should never marginalize anyone else. Even if we are growing and we do obtain some additional power, we need to understand that as we're growing, we cannot have our successes as a result of somebody else's demise. We have to share that power, even in a zero-sum game."

Somebody repeated the same statement and said, "Well, Cruz, just when we're about ready to have some power, you want to give it away?"

I said, "You're a city councilman, what kind of power do you think you have? The only way to really have power is through a coalition; then you become mainstream. This is the only way to become greater than your community. That's how you get power. If you don't do that, if you don't do that with the African American community, a community that has already demonstrated its ability to organize, its voting power, and its ability to stand up on issues of civil rights, which we all benefited from—if you're unable to make some kind of cooperation with that community, then who are you going to join up with? You can't do it alone."

And then the guys from Miami, the guys from New York, and Chicago, they all agreed with me because they knew the conflicts that are raging there. So even though we could have created an agenda that we would all agree with are important things, as lieutenant governor, I was able to go before this group of top-ranking Latinos and try to open up their minds, especially when you had the folks from Houston saying, "In Houston, we have the opposite problem. The African Americans won't let us in. And I said, "Don't you realize that's the other side of the same coin?"

I'm not the smartest guy; I've said that to people. But I have some sort of practical ideas, and I want to make sure that I share those with people. I wouldn't have been able to do that had I not been lieutenant governor. I wouldn't have been able to go and talk to the different major Latino national organizations to tell them about what really took place in Los Angeles in the race for mayor between James Hahn and Antonio Villaraigosa. The Latino community felt that African Americans had stabbed us in the back, but in fact their vote was a vote of loyalty to a name, the Hahn name. It wasn't about Antonio; it was about loyalty to a man and name that had served them well for 40 years.

On the other hand, I got elected as lieutenant governor by a 1.1 million vote margin in my first election, and I received 1.3 million African American votes. So they can say they elected me, too, not just the Latino community.

The point is can I have an impact on the national agenda for the Latino community? I think in those ways and—this has been a mantra with me—with the national leadership.

**HJHP**

We all know that the Latino community is very diverse, especially when you compare Cuban Americans, Puerto Ricans in New York, Mexicans in California. Given that diversity, do you think it'll be easy to create a national Latino agenda, or is it even possible?

**Bustamante**

It makes it harder because many people outside of the Latino community don't realize that we're not uniform, that we're not homogenous, that we're not of one mind.

There is an underlying cultural connection between this very, very diverse group, but their histories are very different. It is going to be difficult to create a political agenda and social agenda. That's why when I talk about this greater agenda, I think that that's as close as you can get. You can't expect Puerto Rican and Cuban and Mexican immigrants to agree on a real specific agenda, but you can get them to agree on a very general one.

**HJHP**

How do you feel we can increase Latino participation in the political process in order to further our national Latino agenda?

**Bustamante**

Well, I mentioned earlier the idea of coalition politics, and I feel very, very strongly about that. I think the demographics are changing substantially in many parts of the country. For example, there are nearly one million Latinos in Georgia, and there's well over one million *Mexicanos* in Illinois.

Latinos are popping up all over the place. It's going to be interesting to watch because many people don't see it coming and the Latino community is starting to be very, very engaged, especially in entrepreneurship. The Latino community in California has grown from about 30,000 Latino-owned businesses just 25 years ago to more than 450,000 Latino-owned businesses today.

With these numbers, comes responsibility. Latinos comprise 35 percent of the population, so the question or the political agenda shouldn't be how we get 35 percent of the state resources. Thirty-five percent of the population means 35 percent of the responsibility for the well-being of the state of California. Then you say, "What is it that we need to get us there? We need good schools; we need good houses; we need good jobs. We need an opportunity."

So that's the way you do it. You focus on something that is easy to understand. And you discuss it as a part of your agenda. And if everybody wants the same thing, then everybody else who's not Latino will understand that you want the same thing they do, and it puts them at ease.

Business people need to understand the following: If you maintain the level of high school dropouts and the low-wage jobs that 35 to 40 percent of the population has, you can't expect them to take care of this state in the future. The only

possibility of survival and to have a comfortable old age is to make sure that all those kids are getting the very, very best education. These are the people that are going to be taking care of you; you better make sure you take care of them now.

**HJHP**

I just have one final question. Before September 11, there were ongoing discussions between the Mexican government and the U.S. government in terms of better flow of immigration between Mexico and the United States. And after September 11, obviously that conversation has ceased. How important is it to continue the conversation between the United States, and how important is it for border relations in general?

**Bustamante**

There are sincere concerns with regard to access from the south concerning everything from drugs to terrorism to a variety of other things. But to think that immigration is the center of all of our ills is putting your head in the sand. The reason we have lower costs of goods and services in this country is because we have a whole group of people who are willing to come here and do those jobs, hard jobs, back-breaking work.

So yes, there is an advantage to us when we allow immigration. But we have to recognize that there may be some disadvantages as well. For example, our jails in California have thousands of immigrants who have raped, robbed, and killed people. Immigration is not black or white, yes or no. It's not simple, but overall the advantages outweigh the costs. So you look at everything on balance.

The recent departure of Jorge Castaneda, President Fox's Mexican minister of foreign affairs, is likely to be a blow as far as dialogue and focus on immigration policy. Also, it's uncertain if the Bush administration is seriously interested in pursuing this activity and dialogue.

So, do I wish they would continue the discussions? Absolutely. Should there be some way of being able to deal with the issue? Yes. Should they have an *amigo* program? No. I don't think anybody learned anything from the Bracero program. And until they do, I don't think you should have another one that's exactly like it. There should be some kind of work activity. There should be some kind of acknowledgment that people would rather come here for a short period of time and then go back.

**HJHP**

Is there anything else you would like to add? Any words of advice for future public policy makers such as myself?

**Bustamante**

Experience does not come merely from a book or a few interviews. You have to get out and experience life. You have to go deal with the issues; you have to go and understand the world. I wish everybody who did public policy had to go spend a year or two with the hotel workers or with the janitors or with the United Farm Workers or with a soup kitchen, just so that they get an experience of life before they go on and get their master's.



People have said that politics is the art of making the impossible possible, but it's much, much more than that. You're in an environment where it's totally creative and yet totally stifling; totally fluid, yet totally controlled. And when you understand how to communicate, you will you be able to solve people's problems. It's more often ... the messenger, rather than the message. For example, how many times have you heard the speech, "I Have a Dream"? How many times have you heard that done by many, many groups, many people? And yet, how many times when you're hearing that do you remember how Martin Luther King, Jr., did it that day? And has there been anybody who's done it better?

So it's the messenger. Both people, all those people, all said the exact same words, but the messenger was able to deliver that message a certain way. We need a lot of messengers. We need a lot of messengers in public policy. We don't need a lot of people imitating people. We need people who are actually delivering messages, real messages. Messages that come from experiences, messages you don't find in a book.

So much like the book is a very, very important tool, you have to have the diploma; you have to be able to get all of that activity. But you also have to have the experience that goes along with it, so that you can understand reference points and you can understand context, texture. And so I would hope that in terms of public policy, that although there are a lot of folks who try to get experiences, I hope that they will understand that they don't become mature in their thinking until they actually do have those experiences.

My policy director is a better public policy person today because he has ten years of experience working in this building. He had a lot of ambition. You become something after you've gotten the basics. You don't go immediately into brain surgery after you graduate from medical school. You don't get the big case after you graduate from law school. And so I would just suggest to students and others who are thinking about higher degrees to go to some state legislator or federal legislator and get the experience, and then go to work in a community activity so you can get the other side of it. Then you can understand and then you can extrapolate. Then you can do other things, but you'll understand that there's a human context under which all this works, too.

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## *Doing Well for America*

*Interview with Al Gonzalez*

*White House General Counsel (2000-Present), Former Texas Supreme Court Justice, and Former Texas Secretary of State*

*Justice Alberto “Al” Gonzalez was appointed White House General Counsel by President Bush in 2000. His parents never finished elementary school and his seven siblings never attended college. To many, within and outside the Hispanic community, his present-day position represents an accomplishment and a success story based upon hard work.*

*From the age of 12, he was selling soft drinks at Rice University stadium in Houston, Tex., where he always dreamed of being a student. However, upon graduation from high school, he enlisted in the Air Force. He later applied and entered the Air Force Academy and then transferred into Rice. Upon graduation from college, he entered Harvard Law School, graduated in 1982, and was admitted to the Texas bar the same year. He joined the firm of Vinson and Elkins, L.L.P., in Houston and practiced general corporate business law for 13 years.*

*In 1994, Justice Gonzalez was asked to be then-Governor Bush’s general counsel and moved to Austin, Tex. In this position, he reviewed and made recommendations on everything that crossed the governor’s desk. In 1997, then-Governor Bush appointed Al Gonzalez as Texas secretary of state. In 1998, he was then appointed to the Texas Supreme Court, where he made decisions that affected the lives of all Texans.*

*When President Bush was elected in 2000, he asked Al Gonzalez to join him once again, this time in the White House. President Bush has stated that Justice Gonzalez is a trusted advisor and friend, with both great judgment and integrity. Al Gonzalez has a deep commitment to do well for the president, for the Hispanic community, and for America. Now that Al Gonzalez is a national public figure, how does his position affect how Hispanics are viewed in the United States? How does his position affect the ability to create a national Latino agenda?*

*Wendolynn Montoya of the **HJHP** interviewed Al Gonzalez on 11 January 2003.*

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### **HJHP**

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me. I’m going to start by asking a few background questions as an introduction. First of all, when and how did your family finally end up in Houston?

**Gonzalez**

I was born in San Antonio—actually, my mother was from San Antonio, and my father was born in Kenedy, Tex., which was not far from San Antonio. I guess that was sort of the origin of my family. My father worked construction after the kids started coming. The opportunities in Houston were good, so we moved to Houston, Tex., and that’s where I grew up—in Houston.

**HJHP**

When you were appointed as President Bush’s general counsel, several articles were written about your background—that you came from a family of eight and grew up in a two-bedroom house. Your parents were not college graduates, yet you joined the Air Force, entered the Air Force Academy, and transferred to Rice University after a few years. The popular question many Latinos and people in general ask is how did you do it? What was your motivation for pursuing an education? How did you understand what that meant for you in the future?

**Gonzalez**

You know, a lot of it is luck, just dumb luck. My parents were strict and they realized the importance of an education, so they kept us in high school. I enjoyed school very much, but like a lot of Latinos, when I graduated from high school, there really wasn’t much encouragement to go to college, I didn’t have any role models. So I enlisted in the Air Force, and I was stationed in Alaska. There were two Air Force academy graduates [in Alaska] who took an interest in me, so I applied for an appointment to the academy because I wanted to go to school and I did well there. Throughout my life, I’ve always met people at critical moments who gave me the right encouragement or who served as role models for me in terms of understanding the importance of education to success in this country.

**HJHP**

Throughout all your experiences, was there a defining moment—an event or a person—that influenced you to choose your party affiliation? How do you feel that the Republican Party better fits your agenda?

**Gonzalez**

You know, I’ve been asked that question before. I don’t know if it was a defining moment when I thought, “I’m going to be a Republican.” I do know there are a lot of things I learned growing up that are, in my judgment, more consistent with the Republican theme in terms of self-reliance [and] less reliance on government, for example. My father and mother—even though they were dirt poor, weren’t educated, and had to feed eight children—not once did they ever ask for a handout from the government. My father worked harder than any person I’ve ever known. He felt it was his responsibility and his alone to take care of the family, and [that is] something that I learned: No matter how bad things [get], no matter how tired you are, or how discouraged you are, you have all the responsibility for your family. You don’t look to anybody else or government to help with that.

And so that is something that I learned very early in life. In terms of an alliance with the party, I looked more at the policies and the people. And I’ve often said

publicly that I would support George W. Bush if he were a Democrat just because of the kind of person that he is, because of the kinds of policies that he supports.

**HJHP**

Following up on that, given that the majority of Latinos are Democrats, have you encountered any obstacles or issues as a Latino that is Republican?

**Gonzalez**

I don't think I've encountered any obstacles. I think the party has been very encouraging. I think they've been supportive. I know people like the president have been supportive in terms of giving me opportunities, wonderful opportunities. So I think the opportunities are there for anyone who's talented, educated, and willing to work hard. I don't think that I have faced obstacles, per se.

I will say quite candidly I wish there were more Hispanics in the Republican Party. I think that would be good for Hispanics, and I think it would be good for the party. If you look at the population growth of certain key states like Texas, California, and Florida, in some ways you can see why people say that Hispanics represent the future of those states and the country. For the Republican Party to continue to grow and to flourish, we need to make inroads in the Hispanic community.

**HJHP**

In reference to the growth in key states and in many non-traditional Latino states, as general counsel, what do you find will be the most difficult legal issues that Latinos will encounter as the population grows and is predicted to be the majority by 2010?

**Gonzalez**

Well, it's hard to predict the kind of legal issues that will be unique to Hispanics. Hopefully, some issues like racial profiling and things like that will be issues of the past. I know we're now wrestling with issues relating to immigration and Hispanics. In my judgment, [we're seeing] a shift and a change in opinions about having completely open borders. The president has historically supported an open border to facilitate the free exchange of goods and ideas and people. Americans generally are more suspicious about having totally open borders because it provides easy access to our country for terrorists. I think it's just something we'll have to deal with, trying to change those attitudes. Maybe over time, with the passage of time as the federal government and local authorities implement procedures and protections against terrorist acts, attitudes will change and we'll see more access of information and goods and services across the border.

**HJHP**

In reference to the population growth once more, if you were to create a national Latino agenda that could appeal to all Latinos in the country, what three policies would you list as priorities?

**Gonzalez**

Oh, education, education, and education. [Laughs.] I think education is probably the most important thing. There's five years of wonderful work by wonderful peo-

ple, organizations, groups around the country, to keep our kids in school. There are so many Hispanic children dropping out of school, not getting an education. The president has said many times [that] education represents freedom in our country. We've got to figure out a way to stop the terrible tragedy of dropouts in the high schools of our people and our community.

**HJHP**

Do you feel that a majority of Latinos would rally behind and unite with that issue? Given the diversity of the Latino community, is it possible to create a national Latino agenda with three policy issues that every Latino could rally behind?

**Gonzalez**

Well, [with education], there's no question in my mind that there would be unanimous support as a rallying theme. I think everyone understands how important education is.

**HJHP**

Now, being from Texas, I have to ask some questions based upon your experiences in Texas. In 1994 Judge Sam Sparks ruled in a U.S. district court that the University of Texas Law School's affirmative action admissions program was unconstitutional. In 1996, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals released an opinion that overturned Judge Sam Spark's decision. Can you share your opinion of the case from a legal perspective and then specifically about whether affirmative action would be an issue that would be included in a national Latino agenda?

**Gonzalez**

You know, I have a lot to say about it, but we're presently in the process of looking at that whole issue. There is a case pending now before the Supreme Court on affirmative action. I think it would be better if I didn't comment on that.

**HJHP**

Understandable. In 1997, when Secretary of State Tony Garza resigned and then Governor Bush appointed you to the post, you were later quoted as saying, "It was a wonderful job, pure joy. I enjoyed the opportunity to recommend policy and implement policy on a state-wide basis." What was the policy area that you enjoyed dealing with the most or what was the issue that you enjoyed working with the most?

**Gonzalez**

Probably the two that I enjoyed the most were elections generally and ... issues relating to the colonias on the border. Those are the two I enjoyed working on the most. On the colonias, obviously it was important for me to see what we could do to make sure that all Texans had adequate housing. And it saddened me to learn that so many do not—particularly along the border, but primarily Hispanics. In fact, I visited a couple of colonias when I was secretary of state. We began, under Governor Bush's direction, working on proposing a plan to deal with colonias, and because of my appointment to the court, I never saw that to fruition. Secretary Bomer, my successor, announced a plan shortly after he became secretary of state,

building on some of the work that I had done. I think that's important because you know home is a wonderful thing, and oftentimes if you can have a stable home, a place to go home, it provides a more stable family atmosphere. Children can learn.

**HJHP**

As Texas Supreme Court justice, you had input on decisions that impacted the lives of the people of Texas. What is the decision you helped make that you feel most affected Latinos in the state of Texas?

**Gonzalez**

Oh, that's a hard question. I don't know, I'd have to go back and look at my opinions, which I rarely do. I don't know, I'd have to go back and look at that.

**HJHP**

In all of your experiences with all of the issues you have dealt with, how do you feel that we can increase Latino participation in the political process in order to help further the empowerment of Latinos in general in this country?

**Gonzalez**

Well, I don't know if I have anything new to recommend in that area other than we continue to provide opportunities to Hispanics to serve in government, to hold elective office, to run for office. There are organizations around the country whose sole function is to encourage Hispanics to participate, to register to vote, and to vote on election day. Those are all things that are very important. We need to continue to educate the Hispanic community about why it is important to vote, get them educated on issues, have them interested in issues, have them understand that these [issues] really do have an impact on their lives and they can be a catalyst for change by participating in the political process in a wide variety of ways.

**HJHP**

Jesse Jackson has been viewed by some as a leader and national figure for the African American community. To help educate the Hispanic community on the variety of issues you mentioned previously, do you feel the Hispanic community needs one Hispanic leader, or many leading the community? Do you feel the Hispanic community has anyone with a voice that leads the community?

**Gonzalez**

You know, I think it's kind of presumptuous to say that this person is a spokesperson for a particular community, at least in one as large and as diverse as the African American community. I think it's probably more important to have as many voices as possible. I think that would probably be a more effective way to see changes made for our community—to try to develop and cultivate as many leaders as we can for our community.

**HJHP**

In discussing leaders and public figures, if the ongoing rumors that the president is considering a Hispanic appointee to the Supreme Court hold true, what do you say that would signal about Hispanics in this day and age, if anything?

**Gonzalez**

That's a difficult question because the most important thing is to put someone on the court who would do a good job. The president has certain expectations about what he would like to see in his judges, and so that would be the number one criteria in terms of making that judicial appointment. Obviously, I think he has a special place in his heart for the Hispanic community, and he would welcome the opportunity to make that kind of historical point. But what will always be foremost in his mind in making the decision would be the type of judge that a person would be. Their character, their competence, and integrity as a jurist would be primary.

**HJHP**

In terms of public figures, once again, what is your personal opinion on the recent gubernatorial election in Texas—more specifically, the fact that there's a Latino candidate running for governor? From a nonpartisan point of view, what do you feel that represents for a state like Texas to have a Latino candidate running for governor?

**Gonzalez**

Well, I think it's inevitable. I mean, one might say I'm surprised it hasn't happened before, given the importance and size and strength of the Hispanic community in Texas. I think it's something that was inevitable. I think that someday soon you'll see candidates from both major parties are Hispanic.

**HJHP**

Now, how do you think your role as the president's general counsel, as a national figure, can help create a national Latino agenda?

**Gonzalez**

You know, I don't know. What I work on isn't really uniquely significant or important to the Hispanic community. I work on issues that are important to every American. Quite frankly, most Americans probably don't even care that I'm Hispanic. They care if the job gets done, and that's the way it should be. I do know that because of the position I hold and the special interest from the Hispanic community in what I do, I think there's a special pride that a Hispanic is occupying this position. I know that some people view me as a role model and I think anybody who's in that position should do the very best they can. I know I do. I work hard to do the best I can because I want to do well for myself and my family, I want to do well for the president, I want to do well for the Hispanic community. I just want to do well for America generally.

**HJHP**

In the years leading up to your appointment as general counsel, you were president of the Hispanic Bar Association; you were named Latino Lawyer of the Year by the Hispanic National Bar; and you were picked as one of the 100 most influential Hispanics by Hispanic Business Magazine in 1999. Now given your role as general counsel—I know you somewhat alluded to this before—do you feel that you hold a responsibility to the Hispanic community?



**Gonzalez**

I think all of us hold a responsibility. All professional, successful Hispanics hold a responsibility to the Hispanic community. I mean, I think we have a responsibility to our families; we have a responsibility for our neighbors to be there, to help, to encourage, to serve as role models. So yes, I do still feel that responsibility.

**HJHP**

You moved to Austin in 1995 to become then-Governor Bush's top staff lawyer. Did you imagine that five or so years later you would be working in the White House? What does that mean to you to be there today?

**Gonzalez**

[Laughs.] Of course not. I'm not even sure then-Governor Bush imagined that he would win for president. What does it mean to me? It's an incredible privilege. Every time I come through the White House gates, I realize how fortunate I am to have this opportunity, and I'll always hold this opportunity very close, very dear to me. I'm proud, and I'm committed to do the very best I can for the American people.

**HJHP**

What do you predict for yourself in the future, if you can make any predictions right now?

**Gonzalez**

It's hard to predict. I never could have predicted this job, or being on the Texas Supreme Court, or being secretary of state, so we'll just see what comes. You know, I'll just do the best I can, and I know everything will work out.

**HJHP**

Thank you so much, Judge Gonzalez. I appreciate you taking the time to speak with us at the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy.

**Gonzalez**

All right. Good luck to you.

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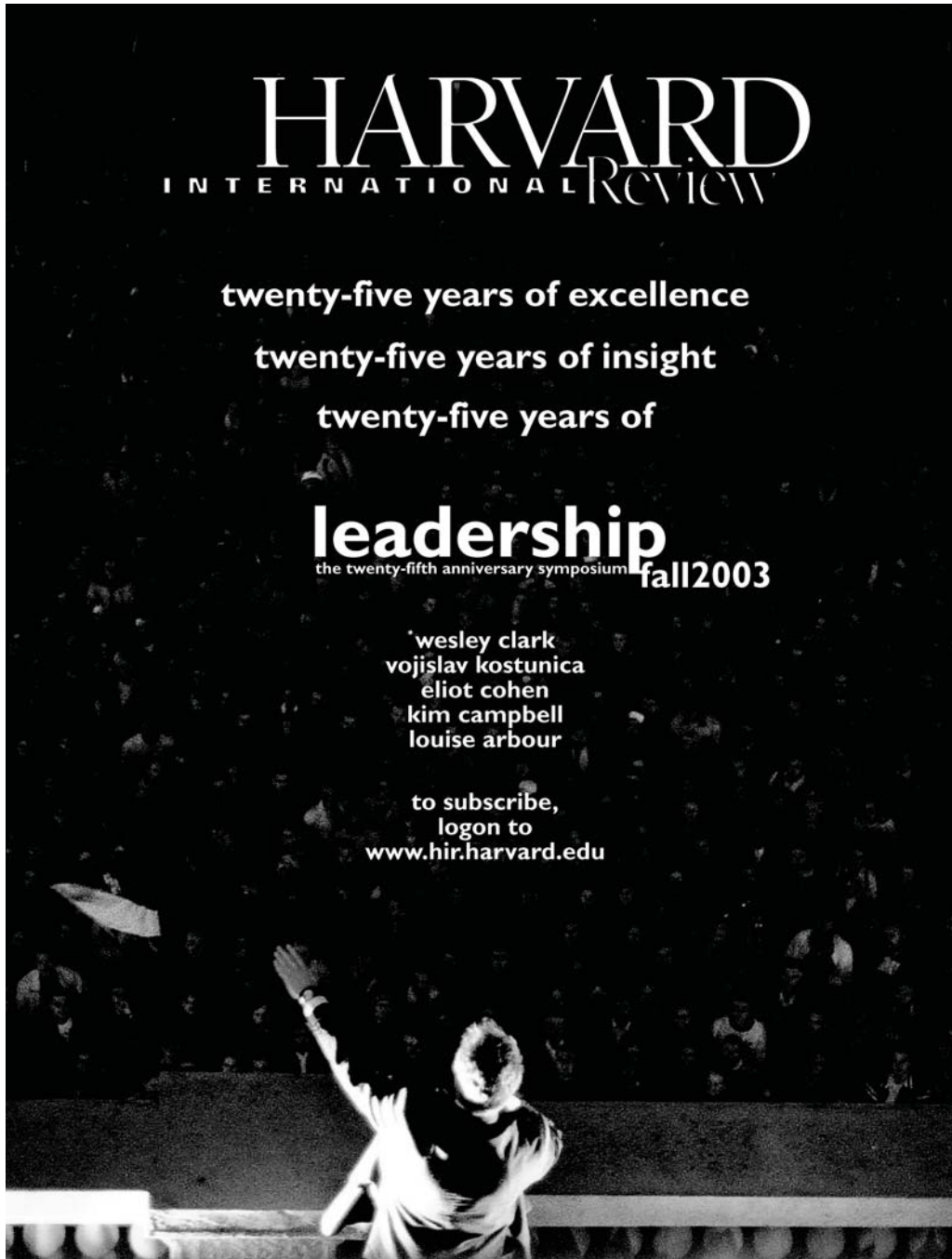
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# ***The U.S. Hispanic-Latin America Trade Development Initiative: A Vision for Economic Empowerment and Prosperity for U.S. Hispanics***

***Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart***

*In 1992, Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.) was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Florida's 21st Congressional District, which encompassed much of western Miami-Dade County. He grew up in south Florida, attending public elementary schools in south Florida and high school at the American School of Madrid, Spain. Subsequently, he received a degree in international relations from New College of Florida, in Sarasota, and also obtained a diploma in British politics in Cambridge, England. He received his law degree from Cleveland, Ohio's Case Western Reserve University. Diaz-Balart practiced law in Miami, where he worked for Legal Services of Greater Miami, providing free legal services to the poor. He was subsequently an assistant state attorney in Miami and a partner in the law firm of Fowler, White.*

*Lincoln Diaz-Balart was first elected to the Florida Legislature in 1986 by the largest margin of victory of any state representative in Florida and was chosen "best in debate" by colleagues during his freshman term. In 1989, Diaz-Balart successfully ran in a special election for an open seat in the Florida Senate and was reelected in 1990. During his tenure in Congress, he has served on numerous committees, including the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the House Rules Committee, and the Select Committee on Homeland Security. Currently, he serves as the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee's Subcommittee on Rules.*

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## ***Abstract***

In his article, Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart discusses the potential for U.S. Hispanic-owned businesses to strengthen business ties with Latin America. He contends that while the United States already has several competitive advantages when conducting business in Latin America, the explosive growth in U.S. Hispanic-owned businesses present an incredible opportunity for the United States to expand and diversify trade with Latin America. First, he examines the strength of U.S. Hispanic businesses, highlighting the growth of Hispanic-owned businesses and factors that will enable these businesses to succeed in Latin America. In addition, he underscores past U.S. policies and current proposals for strengthening Latin American business relations. Next, Diaz-Balart explores the approach of Europe in targeting the Latin American region for business development. Finally,

he offers policy recommendations that will help U.S. Hispanic-owned businesses overcome the challenges to building relationships in Latin America.

### *Introduction*

Despite its numerous crises, Latin America is economically one of the fastest-growing regions in the world. At this time, the United States has several major competitive advantages when conducting business with Latin American countries:

- Longstanding business relations
- Historical, political, and cultural ties
- Geographic proximity
- Favorable logistics through air travel, telecommunications, and freight patterns

Additionally, the explosive growth of U.S. Hispanic business owners and executives presents a new, and up to now underused, asset when conducting business in Latin America. Many Hispanics have political, cultural, and personal ties with Latin America, which position Hispanic businesses as natural choices to conduct trade and create joint ventures in the region.

In spite of these advantages, other countries, especially from Europe and Asia, are challenging the United States' position of economic leadership in the region. Spain has strengthened its trade and political ties with Latin America. Former prime minister Felipe Gonzalez created the Ibero-American Summit for this purpose with the help of former Mexican president Carlos Salinas de Gortari. Felipe Gonzalez, by forming an *Ibero-American Summit* and not a *Latin American* one, was able to exclude participation by France and Italy, making Spain the indisputable leader in this effort by the European Union (EU) to economically elbow out the United States in Latin America. The Ibero-American Summit has created a permanent foreign and financing secretariat in Madrid, technically led by a Mexican.

Just as the Spanish are acting as the bridge to Latin America for the EU, we must empower the Latino community in the United States to act as our bridge to Latin America. We must seek to match the Spanish/European financing strategies, and reduce hemispheric trade barriers to better enable our community. To date, the growth in trade between the United States and Latin America is mostly due to increased trade with Mexico. Between 1990 and 2001, total U.S. exports to Latin America, excluding Mexico, increased by 126.5 percent. However, total exports to Latin America including Mexico increased by 195.4 percent. Similarly, over the same period, U.S. imports from Latin America, excluding Mexico, rose by 99.4 percent while total imports including Mexico increased by 210.5 percent (Hornbeck 2002a).

Latino entrepreneurs are uniquely positioned to change the trend of economic erosion by developing new and extensive ties and joint ventures with Latin

American companies and governments that will purchase and use American products, equipment, and services. Several developments substantiate this:

- According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, there are almost two million Hispanic-owned firms in the United States today.
- More than half of all immigrants to the United States are from Latin America, often bringing with them contacts and business experience in their countries of origin.
- Hispanics are the fastest-growing group in the United States, generating ever-increasing ties between U.S. residents and Latin America.
- Hispanic-owned businesses are diverse by business categories.
- Hispani-owned businesses are strategically located for trade with Latin America as many are in Florida, California, Texas, and New York.

Because many U.S. businesses now understand the potential of Latin America as fertile ground for joint ventures and investments, Hispanic-owned firms could seize this opportunity to expand business ventures in Latin America. For U.S. Hispanic businesses to grow and prosper, the following three steps are required:

- Make information on federal resources targeting Hispanic small and medium-sized businesses readily available.
- Increase U.S. support for financing of small and medium-sized business ventures in Latin America.
- Encourage government and private partnerships.
- Economic and trade research clearly indicates that a lack of suitable financing is a major hurdle for U.S. small business owners, and for Hispanic business owners in particular, when attempting to start or expand a business venture with Latin America. This disadvantage is evident when compared to the government support and financing sources provided to European and Asian companies by their respective governments.

It is possible for the U.S. Hispanic community to act as our bridge to Latin America. The longstanding ties with Latin America will deepen with the development of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Aided by federal financing and streamlined regulation, the natural advantages of U.S. Hispanic businesses will solidify the economic relationships within our hemisphere.

### ***The Strength of U.S. Hispanic Businesses***

U.S. Hispanic firms have several advantages that make them an effective bridge to Latin America. First, Hispanic businesses are growing within the United States at an impressive rate. The entrepreneurial spirit demonstrated by Latinos is translating into jobs and revenue. Second, Hispanic businesses have an advantage due to their longstanding historical, political, and cultural ties within Latin America.

Third, Hispanic firms have another advantage, particularly over Europe, in their geographical proximity to Latin America. Finally, another important advantage for U.S. Hispanic businesses that will help solidify economic relations with this hemisphere will be the creation of the FTAA.

### ***Growth of Hispanic Businesses***

U.S. Hispanic owned firms are already a force for economic growth in the United States. Pursuant to the data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau in 1997, there were 1,199,896 Hispanic firms constituting 6 percent of U.S. businesses (U.S. Census Bureau 1997a).<sup>1</sup> This number has significantly increased since the data was collected. Furthermore, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the above-mentioned firms created 1,388,746 jobs, serving as an engine of growth in this country and abroad.

Hispanic businesses have also shown strength compared to other minority communities. Among minority firms, Hispanic businesses showed the largest numeric increase at 349,335 between 1987 and 1992, followed by Asian Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaska Native firms (229,715), and African American businesses (196,747) (U.S. Census Bureau 1996). According to the Census Bureau, “Hispanics owned the largest number, 1,199,900, or 39.5 percent, of firms owned by minorities. Hispanics also owned the largest share, 40.0 percent, of firms owned by minority men, 36.6 percent of firms owned by minority women, and 43.3 percent of firms that were minority equally male-/female-owned” (U.S. Census Bureau 1997b).

Latino entrepreneurship is prevalent in U.S. cities across the country. The states that displayed the largest activity include those expected, such as California, Texas, Florida, and New York. However, also among the top ten are Colorado, Illinois, and Virginia (U.S. Census Bureau 1997a, 10).<sup>2</sup> Natural gateways to Latin America such as Miami are to be expected, but as Hispanic communities increase in size across the United States, so will the strength of Hispanic-owned businesses, thus increasing the potential bridges between all regions of the United States and Latin America.

### ***Longstanding Historical, Political, and Cultural Ties***

As the percentage of Hispanics in the United States grows as well as the number of Latino businesses, the ties between our population and that of Latin America increase. U.S. Hispanic firms often have crucial longstanding ties to Latin America that help create business relationships in export-import scenarios. It is natural that minority small business owners are more inclined to export to their country or region of origin where they are familiar with the linguistic, political, and common business practices. A study published in the *Multinational Business Review* noted this correlation: “Asian American business owners and Hispanic American business owners export predominantly to customers in countries with whom they have the most cultural affinity” (Ekanem 2000). While cultural ties do exist between Spain and Latin America, the lion’s share of migration from the region is directed toward the United States.

### ***Geographical Proximity***

Hispanic businesses are strategically located for trade with Latin America, with traveling times between U.S. shores and Latin America obviously smaller than those with Europe. Commerce can move more efficiently between ports, and personal interaction between business men and women is increased by the shorter travel times. Many ports within the United States already have longstanding ties with Latin American countries. For example, the geographic location of Miami has contributed to making it the “Gateway of the Americas.” From the port of Miami, carriers serve 33 countries and 100 ports in Latin America and the Caribbean. In fiscal year 2002, the volume of cargo moving through the port of Miami exceeded 8.7 million tons. The port’s traditional customer base has been Latin America and the Caribbean, accounting for 61 percent of the port’s total volume (County of Miami-Dade, Fla., 2002). At \$4.1 billion, Ecuador was included in the top five trading partners with the port of Los Angeles in 2000 (Port of Los Angeles, Calif., 2002). For the port of Houston in 2001, Mexico, Brazil, and Venezuela were included in its list of top trading partners (Port of Houston, Tex., 2002).

Location within the United States, however, does not present a barrier to exporting to Latin America. For 2001, the top exporters to South America were Florida, California, Texas, Illinois, and New York. To Central America, the top exporters the same year were Florida, North Carolina, California, Texas, and New York. Finally, the top exporters to the Caribbean were Florida, Texas, New York, California, and New Jersey. Thanks to the U.S. transportation and shipping infrastructure, access to Latin American markets is available to all U.S. regions (U.S. DOC 2002).

### ***Andean Trade Preference Act***

On 4 December 1991, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA) originally as a strategy to provide alternatives to employment other than illicit drug production. For 10 years, it provided preferential, mostly duty-free, treatment of selected U.S. imports from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. The 107th Congress reauthorized the program (retroactively) and expanded it in the Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act (ATPDEA). President George W. Bush signed it into law on 6 August 2002.

The ATPA countries are four democracies facing significant challenges. Free trade must exist amongst free peoples. Reauthorization and expansion of the ATPA program was one of the strongest signals that we could have sent that we appreciate their friendship and that we look forward to working with them to mutually seek progress and prosperity in the United States and our hemisphere.

### ***Free Trade Area of the Americas***

The creation of a free trade agreement in the Americas was originally championed by President George H.W. Bush in June 1990. As part of the Enterprise for the

Americas Initiative (EAI), President Bush envisaged the creation of a “free trade system that links all of the Americas: North, Central, and South. And we look forward to the day when not only are the Americas the first fully free, democratic hemisphere, but when all are equal partners in a free trade zone stretching from the port of Anchorage to the Tierra del Fuego” (Bush 1991). Such a system would provide the strongest tool for U.S. Hispanic businesses to successfully compete with their European counterparts.

Also, one of the surest ways to support democracy in our hemisphere is by facilitating the emergence of a common market for the democracies of the Americas, the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Free trade among free people is good policy, and good for the people of our hemisphere. Such an agreement will also help our Hispanic business leaders in solidifying themselves as our bridge between the United States and Latin America. In the 1990s, U.S. exports to Latin America grew faster than exports to any other region. U.S. businesses, however, still face many market access barriers in the region, such as import taxes that are often five times higher than U.S. import taxes.

There are challenges to overcome before the FTAA becomes a reality. First, serious economic crises in a number of countries, while not an impassable barrier, must be surmounted as the populations of Latin American countries gain confidence in the idea of the FTAA. Second, the demands on countries to negotiate the complex agreements will stretch many of the smaller economies in the hemisphere to make the structural adjustments necessary to benefit from the FTAA. Third, new political leadership throughout the hemisphere, particularly in Brazil, must be tracked carefully to gauge support for the creation of the FTAA (Ahearn 2002).

Despite challenges, the 34 hemispheric democracies continue to move the negotiations forward in accordance with the schedules set by ministers and leaders. The Quito FTAA Ministerial, which took place in November 2002, strongly contributed to the completion of an agreement. The United States and Brazil will co-chair the FTAA process through the conclusion of negotiations in January 2005 and will next meet in Miami in late 2003.

In Quito, Ecuador, the United States won endorsement for a comprehensive trade capacity-building program, the Hemispheric Cooperation Program, to help small and developing countries in the region fully benefit from the FTAA. Also, Robert B. Zoellick, the U.S. trade representative, announced at Quito that President Bush will seek a 37 percent increase in U.S. trade capacity-building assistance for the region to \$140 million (USTR 2002). The FTAA process is headed in the right direction.

With more than 800 million people throughout the Western Hemisphere, the FTAA will be the largest free trade area in the world. The benefit will be significant for the United States, particularly for Hispanic small businesses. The United States, along with Canada, has the lowest average tariff rate in the Western Hemisphere at 4.5 percent. Brazil, by contrast, has the second highest average regional tariff rate at 14.3 percent and has resisted prioritizing tariff discussions over other negotiating areas (Hornbeck 2002b). Lowering these tariff rates will make market access possible for a range of businesses that previously have not been able to penetrate these barriers.



### ***Europe's Actions***

Unless the United States focuses on its strengths in trading with Latin America, it will fall behind in the growing competition with Europe. The EU<sup>3</sup> is Latin America's second trading partner, and the first partner for MERCOSUR (*Mercado Comun del Sur* – Southern Common Market)<sup>4</sup> and Chile (European Commission 2002a). To further connections between Europe and Latin America, in an attempt to displace the economic influence of the United States within the Western Hemisphere, several summit structures have been created to stimulate economic and political ties. The Ibero-American Summit's permanent foreign and financing secretariat promotes connections within the region. The EU has also held a series of ministerial meetings with the Rio Group, which was created to further political, economic, and cultural ties within the region.

### ***Ibero-American Summit***

The Ibero-American Summit is a forum for political harmonization on matters concerning the region. This mechanism saw the light of day in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 1991 with the common element of cultural identity between the Latin American and Iberian peoples (Brazil Ministry of Foreign Relations 2002).

The conference includes 21 countries, comprising a total population of just over 489 million and an area of 21,352,017 km<sup>2</sup>.

The formal, public objectives of the secretariat are:

- To contribute to the consolidation of the Ibero-American community of nations;
- To contribute to the development, approximation, and interaction among the actors in Ibero-American cooperation; and
- To strengthen specific Ibero-American characteristics.

### ***The European Union***

The EU, as a whole, has also established additional means for furthering ties with Latin America. The countries of Latin America created a forum for political consultation called the Rio Group in 1986. The Rio Group began with an initial membership of six, but now comprises all of Latin America as well as representatives from the Caribbean countries. It is administered by a rotating and temporary secretariat, which is currently held by Costa Rica (European Commission 2002a). Ministerial meetings between the EU and the Rio Group have been held annually since 1987.

A key objective of the relationship formed by the EU-Rio Group ministerial meetings is increased investment between the regions. Specifically, the Santiago Declaration at the 10th ministerial meeting stated, "The Ministers reiterated their conviction that promoting new productive investments constitutes a fundamental

objective and agreed to promote the development of initiatives aimed at greater flow of interregional investments” (European Commission 2002b).

A series of summits have also sought to create additional European advantages in dealing with Latin America. The first summit between the heads of state and government of Latin America, the Caribbean and the EU was held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1999. The stated objective of the summit was to “...strengthen the links of political, economic, and cultural understanding between the two regions in order to develop a strategic partnership” (European Commission 2002c).

The EU has clearly recognized the importance of strategies to increase economic, political, and cultural relations with Latin America. The EU-Latin America relationship focuses on intensifying economic relations between both regions consistent with the European goal of replacing the United States as the predominant economic power in Latin America. The United States must create a strategy to remain competitive in dealing with Latin America. The potential for the United States to maintain prominent in Latin America despite the EU’s strategic efforts is evident from the trade statistics below, but the United States cannot rest on its laurels.

### *Trade Facts*

The ripples of the Latin American economic crisis are apparent in trade numbers with the European Union. Though the EU displayed an increase in exports to Latin America from 1996 to 1998, exports dropped from \$49.8 billion in 1998 to \$43.5 billion in 2001. EU imports from Latin America increased slightly from \$38.6 billion in 1996 to \$41.9 billion in 2001 (European Commission 2002d). Comparatively, U.S. exports to Latin America from 1998 to 2001 increased from \$142.4 billion to \$159.5 billion. Imports from Latin America to the United States from 1996 to 2001 increased from \$123.1 billion to \$198.7 billion. U.S. policy must build on the current U.S. economic presence in the region and develop a strategy for ensuring greater access to Latin America by U.S. Hispanic businesses.

### *Policy Recommendations*

If Hispanic small businesses in the United States are to be competitive in Latin America, U.S. policy must reflect a two-pronged approach of support based on access to information and access to financing. There are already a number of programs provided by the U.S. government to help minority-owned businesses export goods to Latin America. Much more coordination is needed, however, to keep pace with European efforts.

### *Access to Information*

A major barrier for any small business is a lack of access to pertinent information. Knowledge about what government resources are available to assist small busi-

nesses in developing their overseas ventures can help companies gain the foothold necessary to compete. Much more needs to be done in terms of assistance for Hispanic-owned businesses.

Currently leading this effort is the Minority Business Development Agency, located in the U.S. Department of Commerce, followed by a piecemeal effort by other government agencies and departments. While agencies such as the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the Small Business Administration, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, and the International Trade Administration have outreach efforts, what is needed is a coordinating office in the Department of Commerce to ensure that each agency provides a clear list of resources to U.S. Hispanic businesses. Such an office can serve as a central clearinghouse for businesses to review all the support available from the U.S. government.

### *Access to Financing*

One of the most important supports for Latino businesses to bridge the gap between the United States and Latin America is access to financing. Without such access, many U.S. Hispanic-owned businesses will continue to struggle to gain the capital necessary to start an export relationship with Latin American clients. Fortunately, there are federal agencies to support such ventures, but more resources must be made available to these agencies.

At the forefront of the government's ability to support minority-owned businesses is the Export-Import Bank of the United States. The ExIm Bank, created in 1934, provides export financing solutions for U.S. businesses with three primary products: guarantees, insurance, and loans. The products protect against nonpayment by a foreign buyer, guarantee loans to produce goods or provide a service for export, and help importers obtain financing at advantageous terms.

The Ex-Im Bank has a special focus on small and minority businesses. More than 80 percent of the transactions covered are on behalf of small businesses. The Ex-Im Bank has an initiative to reach out to underserved markets such as minority- and womenowned small businesses. Under the bank's guarantee product, underserved markets are offered a 100 percent loan to produce their export goods or services versus a typical 90 percent loan (Export-Import Bank 2002).

There is also a longstanding relationship between the Ex-Im Bank and Latin America. According to Eduardo Aguirre, Jr. (2002), vice chairman of the Ex-Im Bank, the bank has relationships with Mexico and Central America dating back to the 1930s. Also, one-third of the Ex-Im Bank's financing in 2001 was for Latin American trade. The Bush administration is on the right track in supporting the Ex-Im Bank's efforts to bridge the gap between U.S. businesses and Latin America.

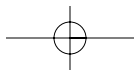
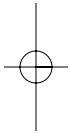
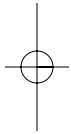
### *Conclusion*

We need a dynamic, forward-looking U.S. strategy to remain the premier economic force in our hemisphere, successfully competing with the European Union. We must, among other things, take effective steps to help U.S. Hispanic businesses compete in the region. It is possible for the U.S. Hispanic community to act as our bridge to Latin America if we provide federal financing and streamlined regulation to increase the natural advantages of U.S. Hispanic businesses. Also, the longstanding ties of U.S. Hispanic businesses with Latin America will deepen with the development of the Free Trade Area of the Americas—a development that will solidify our economic relationships with this hemisphere. By concentrating on the effective coordination of federal support for U.S. Hispanic businesses and bolstering the resources available to these firms, we can help ensure that the United States remains competitive in our hemisphere throughout the 21st century.

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# ***National Origin (Mis)Identification Among Latinos in the 2000 Census: The Growth of the “Other Hispanic or Latino” Category***

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## ***Abstract***

The 2000 census revealed unprecedented population growth among Latinos in the United States with the total Latino population growing to more than 35 million. However, the census also revealed its inability to accurately count and distinguish between countries of ancestry among the Latino population. Over 15% of all Latinos living in the United States indicated “other Hispanic or Latino” when asked for specific country of origin for their family heritage. This misclassification has led many groups of Latinos to question the validity and accuracy of the census instrument and has frustrated others expecting to find big gains in their population. Using data from the Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1), I model identification as “other” Latino at the county level. Not surprising, I find that Dominicans, Colombians, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans were among the top nationalities miscounted by the 2000 census. In sum, nearly two million Central and South Americans were misidentified by the census, putting their numbers and clout in question. Through OLS regression analysis I can identify which groups are most misrepresented and what regional variations exist. This research holds great promise not just for advocacy groups that are eager to see a more accurate count of their population, but also for policy makers responsible for designing official government survey forms. It is my hope that this research will lead to a more accurate understanding of the Latino population in the United States, and help address problems associated with the large population identified as “others.”

## ***Introduction***

Identification can take many forms. We can identify ourselves, or be identified by others. When identifying ourselves, we may express our racial or ethnic heritage, our gender, our religion, our age, our profession, our class status, our sexuality, and so on. While we may have multiple identities, we are often asked to select

one—typically our race or ethnicity—with which we most identify. However, racial categories are still broad and lack the specificity of nationality or heritage. In the early 20th century, Italian and Irish immigrants were both classified as White although their identities ran much deeper and were tied to their national origins. Now, in the early 21st century, Hispanic Americans, the largest minority group in the United States, are facing a similar identity dilemma in which Mexican Americans, Cuban Americans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Colombians, Salvadorans, and more are being identified as “Latino” but also have multifaceted identity claims connected with their national origins.

Undeniably, the federal government shapes how we view ourselves and we are viewed by others (including the state) through the decennial counting of the population. The census, required by the Constitution, plays a key role in measuring population growth, dividing state representation in the House, and proportioning federal resources. However, beyond merely counting the number of inhabitants of each county and state, the census has evolved to classify and categorize the American population. What originated as distinguishing “Colored” from “Anglo-European” progressed to the classification of multiple racial and ethnic groups.<sup>1</sup> Because of the power in numbers, minority groups put considerable stock in the findings and official enumeration of the American population according to the census. However, the style, format, and terminology employed by the federal government on the census questionnaire have severely constricted, and in some cases entirely prevented, self-identification.

More specifically, I will examine the impact of the various methods used by the census to count Hispanic and Latino subgroups and how recent census statistics have been viewed negatively by many sub-nationalities within the Latino community. For example, according to the official numbers from the 2000 census, some groups, such as Dominicans in New York, and Guatemalans in Los Angeles, experienced population declines between 1990-2000, despite considerable evidence of population growth from “non-official” sources. Changes in the census form have potentially resulted in less recognition and fewer resources for specific Latino communities living in the United States. In Los Angeles County alone, more than 600,000 Latinos were identified only as “other.” Many fear that future changes in the officially recognized census could lead to their groups eventually vanishing from the political landscape and thereby erasing their identity and culture. In this respect, this research will incorporate many contemporary theories addressing identification and the importance of maintaining multiple cultural/ethnic outlets of recognition.

One of the main problems has been the large increase in the number of Latinos who were identified simply as “Other Hispanic or Latino” by the 2000 census. In 1990 only 8.5% of the Latino population was categorized as “other” while in 2000 it doubled to over 17%. In an attempt to uncover what groups are most likely to identify as “other,” rather than specifying their national origin, I will conduct a simple regression using county-level data to determine what nationalities are predictors of the “other” category, and what regional variations exist. In addition, I will incorporate the opinions and statements of various advocacy organizations to highlight the importance of subgroup identification among Latinos.



This analysis begins by reviewing the multiculturalism literature regarding racial and ethnic identification. Milton Gordon, Will Herberg, Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor, Michael Omi and Howard Winant, Amy Gutmann and others have all addressed this issue from different angles, and an understanding of their theories provides an important framework for this paper. Next, I will incorporate interviews and statements by Puerto Rican, Dominican, Colombian, Salvadoran, and other Latino advocacy groups to demonstrate the salience of identification with national origin. Following this review, I will examine census findings beginning with an exploration of the wording of the census questionnaire and moving on to an evaluation of the undercounts of specific Latino subgroups. Finally, I will detail the findings of my regression analysis in hopes that a clearer picture of Latino identification will emerge.

### *Theories of Identification*

According to Gordon (1964, 19), the first question of human civilization was asked when a Pleistocene hunter roamed too far away from the safety of his home and encountered a person he had never seen before. "That question is 'Who are you?'" But how then will the hunter respond? As Gordon maintains, "he places himself in a group which is a political unit, which is culturally uniform, and which occupies a definite geographical place, and within this group he occupies more specific relationships of kinship." Since this first "encounter" the world has evolved, and the simple question of self-identification is now quite complex. While an individual may have multiple identities as depicted earlier, there is often a group of people with whom an individual may share many identities, such as language, cultural practices, religion, and race. "Peoplehood" then is roughly "coterminous with a given rural land space, political government, no matter how rudimentary, a common culture in which a principal element was set of religious beliefs and values shared more or less uniformly by all members of the group, and a common racial background ensuring an absence of wide differences in physical type" (Gordon 1964, 23). This sense of peoplehood is best described as the individual's ethnicity (from the Greek *ethnos*, meaning "people") that may encompass his or her race, religion, national origin, language, and more. Not only is ethnic identity as a whole quite important, but each of the layers within one's ethnic identity is equally important to the individual.

Although ethnic identity is fluid, a society may develop seemingly fixed categories for identification that serve to reinforce each identity as separate and unique. Eventually, all people are expected to fit neatly into one identity or another. Early works on religious identity found that in America a person must be Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish, or else nothing, regardless of their formal connection with any religion (Herberg 1955). Further, during the 1950s, racial status was usually fixed to either "White," "Negro," or "Mongoloid," and no other options were available. As Herberg (1955, 25) notes, "The way in which one identifies and locates oneself to oneself ('Who, what, am I?') is closely related to how one is identified and located in the larger community ('Who, what, is he?')." Although

he is referring to religious cleavages, his description of “belonging” and group association is equally applicable to ethnic groups and national origins. Herberg (1955, 54) states, “to be ‘something,’ to have a name, one must identify oneself to oneself, and be identified by others, as belonging to one or another of the three great religious communities in which the American people are divided.” More broadly, Herberg (1955, 24) advances the following theory on self-identification:

Everyone finds him/herself in a social context which he/she shares with many others, but within this social context, how shall he/she locate him/herself? Unless he/she can so locate him/herself, he/she cannot tell him/herself, and others will not be able to know, who and what he/she is; he/she will remain ‘anonymous,’ a nobody – which is intolerable. To live, he/she must “belong”; to “belong,” he/she must be able to locate him/herself in the larger social whole, to identify him/herself to him/herself and to others.<sup>ii</sup>

Thus, there is strong internal pressure to identify oneself as well as external pressure to be identified as belonging to one group or another. If a group does not appear large enough or salient, it loses its identity and falls into a category where “all other forms of self-identification and social locations are either (like regional background) peripheral and obsolescent or else (like ethnic diversity) subsumed under the broader head of religious diversity” (Herberg 1955, 53). Gordon (1964, 29) agrees with such an assessment and finds that group categorization is a powerful force in society: “Group categorization, then, has its own social momentum once it is set in motion and is by no means purely a matter of individual volitions acting in concert.” The social constructions of group identification, whether real or not, guide individuals to take their place in a group and act as a member of the group, which may or may not be congruent with our personal interests, preferences, and happiness. Thus, a variety of ethnic and other group identities should remain open to all people as viable alternatives.

Ethnic and national origin identities are important for a number of reasons. Primarily, they provide a psychological foundation for group identification and are central to the intimate sense of peoplehood. In a more practical sense, such identity is important because it provides a patterned network of associations, organizations, businesses, and institutions that allow group members to define their primary relationships within their ethnic or national origin group. Finally, the overarching national cultural patterns and values are absorbed and reflected through the unique cultural heritage of the group (Gordon 1964). Dominicans, Peruvians, Hondurans, and Argentineans all have distinctive cultural traits that are important to their group members’ identity and that are certainly different than if all members were considered “other Latinos.”

There are parallels of racial and ethnic classification in our nation’s history. Slaves brought to America from Africa were stripped of their unique national and tribal identities and categorized simply as Black, based on their shared physical traits. Omi and Winant (1986) write that the “establishment and maintenance of a ‘color line’” rendered the specific African identities such as Ibo, Yoruba, and Fulani obsolete. In their investigation of racial formation in America, they argue

that the otherizing of people of color reproduced by social, economic, and political forces negatively impacts the individual and collective psyche of minorities. This fixed generalization of racial/ethnic categories is dangerous because it ignores the fluidity of self and group identification. Instead, race must be understood as “*an unstable and ‘decentered’ complex of social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle*” (Omi and Winant 1986, 67, emphasis added by author). The official and political classifications of ethnicity by the state bear serious consequences on people of color. Indeed, “racial minorities pay a heavy price in human suffering as a result of their categorization as ‘other’ by the dominant racial ideology” (Omi and Winant 1986, 67).

The struggle for recognition then is a serious one and can have many personal and political implications. The identity that one reveals is impacted (negatively) by the lack of recognition or misrecognition that the group receives. In his book, *Multiculturalism*, Taylor (1994, 25) argues that “our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or a group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves.” For those with stable and clearly recognizable identities, the process of misrecognition may seem trivial or inconsequential; however, “nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being” (Taylor 1994, 25). In this example, to be nothing more than “other Latino” is not even to be Latino, but to be less than Latino, meaning the individual somehow lacks a complete and sufficient identity. In fact, the official census enumeration lists the total number of respondents within each possible national origin group that comprise Latinos, and then lists a category called “other Hispanic or Latino” that includes Spanish, Spanish-American, and Spaniard identities, and then further lists a quite sizable category called “all other Hispanic and Latino.” This sub-delineation further segregates the respondents in such a category that places them at an inferior level. In fact, Taylor (1994, 26) concludes that “misrecognition shows not just a lack of due respect. It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need.”

Further, suppressing the national identity of minority groups is not conducive to stable racial/ethnic communities. The linguistic, cultural, and religious bonds to the groups’ national heritages generally run deep and are well established, and attempts to restrain claims of identity may actually intensify the level of isolation and hostility between the dominant and minority groups (Kymlicka 1995). Further, having access to our specific societal cultures is an important part of our liberty and freedom. “Put simply, freedom involves making choices amongst various options, and our societal cultures not only provides these options, but also makes them meaningful to us” (Kymlicka 1995, 83).

As mentioned above, identity — in particular ethnic or national origin identity — is not only shaped by the individual members of the group, but also by the larger American society. This partly explains why groups fight for recognition and are so concerned with their population size. As the group grows, its legitimacy

grows. African American scholars have noted that Black identity is in large part influenced by the core American society and institutions, and focusing solely on internal community identity building is naïve (Appiah 1994, 155). Thus, it is important not only for individuals to express their national origin identity, but also that this identity be accurately depicted and accepted by the dominant culture and government institutions. Further, the existence of subcultures and national identities is not guaranteed, especially in an environment where a dominant cultural identity exists. Where such identity is “threatened with debasement or decay, we must act to protect it” (Kymlicka 1995, 83).

Speaking directly to the issue of Hispanic or Latino identity, Kymlicka (1995, 16) notes the many problems with focusing on a single all encompassing label:

The category of ‘Hispanic’ should be used with caution. Since the 1960s, the U.S. Census has treated ‘Hispanic’ as a common ethnic group or origin, but most Hispanics themselves view their ethnic or national identity in a more particular way — as Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Cubans, Mexicans, Spaniards, or Guatemalans — reflecting the very different histories these groups have experienced in the United States...At present however, ‘Hispanic’ is little more than a statistical category covering a range of national minorities, immigrants, and exiles, all with their own distinct identities and demands.

However, a counter-argument might state that as long as subgroups such as Ecuadorians, Panamanians, and Uruguayans can still identify as Latino, they have not lost access to cultural identity. While there are ethnic ties across all Latino national origins, it is unreasonable to suggest that one can replace his Panamanian identity with an overarching Latino identity. In fact, the very essence of Hispanic or Latino ethnic identity is its incorporation of multiple Latin American national cultures and its diversity of customs, celebrations, and even language. While leaving one’s culture behind is technically possible, Kymlicka (1995, 86) compares it to taking a vow of eternal poverty and celibacy—possible, but not desirable. Similarly, he argues that “in developing a theory of justice, we should treat access to one’s culture as something that people can be expected to want, whatever their more particular conception of the good. Leaving one’s culture, while possible, is best seen as renouncing something to which one is reasonably entitled.”

Intracultural diversity then is just as important as intercultural diversity. It is not enough to say that an individual can officially identify as Hispanic (as was the case for the first time in 1970), but within the Latin culture, there needs to be a range of viable national origins with which individuals can meaningfully identify.

National origin identity in particular serves as the main focus of self-identification because it is based on simple notions of belonging, rather than accomplishment. This type of cultural identity provides an anchor for an individual’s self-identification and the security of belonging. In turn, the individual’s self-respect is connected to the respect of the national group within larger society. If the national culture is not respected, or appears to be eroding, so too will the dignity and self-respect of the individual members erode (Kymlicka 1995, 89).

More often than not, official government measures of identity discourage specific national origin identity which may be problematic for issues of representation.

Th[is] challenge is endemic to liberal democracies because they are committed in principle to equal representation of all. Is a democracy letting citizens down, excluding or discriminating against us in some morally troubling way, when major institutions fail to take account of our particular identities? (Gutmann 1994, 4)

### *The Community Perspective*

Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States and trace their ancestry to more than twenty Latin American nations. In order to fully understand the diversity of the Latino community, it is essential to get an accurate picture of the immigration patterns and size of the various national origins. In particular, community activists and organizations seek an accurate count of Latino nationalities to promote and protect their group members. In addition to explaining the importance of proper recognition of national origin identity, as assessed by Gordon (1964), Taylor (1994), and others, the statements and opinion of community leaders within different Latino nationalities embody the everyday significance of this identity.

In New York City, Dominicans are a large and growing segment of the Latino community. As a group of predominantly African and Spanish descent, Dominicans have a unique heritage and culture separate from “other Latinos.” Their identity is complex, and their numbers are important to their community’s growth. Alianza Dominicana, the largest Dominican agency in New York City providing social services, was deeply troubled by the release of the Census 2000 results. Moises Perez, executive directory of Alianza Dominicana, calls the initial census numbers for Dominicans “ridiculous” and states that the government form was too confusing and did not provide an opportunity for many members of his community to correctly identify themselves as Dominican (Scott 2001). Perez recalls dealing with Dominicans after the census was taken: “I remember a few times people telling us, ‘Dominican? I didn’t find that category.’ People were obviously confused” (Cheng and Janison 2001). For Perez and other Dominicans, their ability to count themselves and be counted by the government is an integral part of the growth and legitimization of their community.

In addition to Dominicans, Colombians and Ecuadorians in New York were considered undercounted by representatives of their communities. In Los Angeles, Central American-based advocacy organizations noted that Guatemalan and Salvadoran numbers appeared to have been underestimated by the census. Arturo Ignacio Sanchez, a professor of urban planning and community leader, notes that each group’s political capital is inherently tied to their official standing with the census: “If Colombians are perceived to be a decreasing group over the long run, what political presence will they have when they speak to elected officials?” (Scott 2001).

In California, despite over 40% population growth for Latinos as a whole between 1990 and 2000, the census counts 100,000 fewer Central Americans in the state. This finding has Guatemalan and Salvadoran organizations puzzled and angry. Carlos Vaquerano, director of the Salvadoran-American Leadership and Educational Fund, says reports that the Salvadoran population in Los Angeles has declined are wrong. His organization has conducted separate studies that show growth among the Salvadoran population. "I don't think that can be accurate. We've taken a lot of pride in being the second-largest Latino group here, and the fastest-growing. We expected the census to prove that" (Field 2001).

Official Census Bureau reports (see Appendix A, question E) recognize the importance of collecting specific ethnic and national origin identity through the census and point to the Voting Rights Act, Civil Rights Act, Public Health Act, and Community Reinvestment Act as prime examples of why such information is significant. These federal laws, and others, require fair representation among all people in the United States, and an accurate census is vital to this effort.

Among Latino organizations that work with the Census Bureau, there was a somewhat mixed response. The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) both claim the increase in the "other" category may be primarily due to a growing pan-Hispanic identity rather than misidentification (Field 2001; Spangler 2001). Other groups, such as the Puerto Rican Legal Defense Fund (PRLDEF) and the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI), insist that more clarity is needed from the census to accurately count Latinos of all nationalities. Angelo Falcon (2001), senior policy analyst with PRLDEF, wrote a letter to the director of the Census Bureau demanding clarification:

*I am writing to express my organization's concerns about the significant misidentification that has occurred in the year 2000 Census for Latinos forced to use the "other" category in the Hispanic question. As you may be aware, this has caused considerable controversy in at least New York and New Jersey, where large numbers of Dominicans, Colombians and other Central and South Americans reside. We believe that the Census Bureau can and must correct this problem in a timely fashion.*

Likewise, Harry Pachon, TRPI president, noted that "you can't really tell anything about where their roots are from" without a proper identification of all Latino nationalities (Field 2001).

Some members of Congress from New York echo these sentiments. Representative Jose Serrano (D-N.Y.) of the commerce appropriations subcommittee described the "Other Hispanic" category as "this incredible new number that, one, we do not know how to service; two, we do not know where they come from; and three, we do not know how best to deal with all of their needs" (Lowenthal 2001). Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), introduced an amendment to a census bill that would have required a recalculation of the "Other Hispanic" category, but the amendment did not win support in the House. Maloney commented, "All Hispanics deserve to be counted accurately. The census is supposed to pro-

vide a snapshot of America. But this vote leaves Hispanics out of the picture” (Maloney 2002).

An important question that needs to be answered before moving on is the degree to which the growth in the “other” category was error or misidentification. If persons of Latin American heritage are beginning to purposely identify only as “Hispanic” as some have suggested, those means of self-identification should be respected. To put the issue in perspective let us consider the demographics of the new Latino population between 1990 and 2000. To begin, the Latino population as a whole grew by 13.1 million between the two census counts, of which 4.3 million<sup>3</sup> were foreign-born immigrants from Latin American nations. Because of their strong cultural ties to their home countries, it is unlikely that many of these new immigrants would have intentionally opted for the generic Hispanic label when allowed to specify their national origin. Further, the Latino population continues to lag in educational attainment, with 43% obtaining less than a high school diploma,<sup>4</sup> making them more reluctant and less capable of understanding the vague directions given on the 2000 form. Further, estimates from the 2000 Current Population Survey (CPS) reveal that, when specifically asked about their national origin, only 3% did not specify, suggesting that the 2000 Census results of 17% without national origin is indeed erroneous (see Table 2).

The political implications of misidentification are clear for advocacy organizations and city planning departments. Social services and electoral clout are only two components of what’s at stake for Dominicans, Colombians, Salvadorans, and other undercounted Latinos. John Logan, director of the Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research, has argued that “the decisions about how to allocate and channel resources depend on what public officials see as the size and needs of these communities. Undercounted can easily turn into underserved” (Field 2001). In addition to social services, citizenship status may be on the line for many Central Americans because “the diminished figures for Salvadorans and other Central and South American groups might influence the ongoing national debate about whether and how to expand legal residency to undocumented immigrants” (Field 2001).

Falcon, in his 8 September 2001 letter to the Census director summarizes the implications of misrecognizing Latino subgroups as threefold:

The consequences of this underreporting of specific Latino subgroups are serious. First, the lack of public awareness of the actual size of these communities will adversely affect resources and strategies for addressing their specific needs. Second, the confidence that organizations like ours expended a great deal of effort and resources in developing over the last few years for Census 2000 and beyond (as did the Bureau’s expensive advertising campaign) is already being seriously eroded in these communities. Third, important research and other uses of Census data on and by these newly emerging Latino communities will be undermined. The result is not only an underestimation of the size of these growing communities but also making it more difficult for Latino advocates to encourage greater community

participation in future Census programs.

### *The 2000 Census*

Although some Latinos trace their ancestry to the early 1600s when Spaniard settlers founded townships in New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, and Arizona, the U.S. government did not begin to recognize Latino identities until 1930. In 1930, 1.3 million “Mexicans” were reported; in 1940, 1.6 million persons of “Spanish mother tongue” were counted; in 1950 and 1960, “persons of Spanish surname” were counted by the census at 2.3 and 3.5 million respectively. In 1970, the census formalized the count and called the category Spanish origin and turned up 9.1 million such persons. In 1980, the census began using the word Hispanic and counted 14.6 million. In 1990, 22.4 million Hispanics were identified, and most recently the 2000 census used the classification of “Hispanic or Latino” and counted 35.3 million Latinos (U.S. Census Bureau 1993, 2001). The chronology of Latino identity in the United States demonstrates the diversity of the population as well as the government’s inability to understand the population. Early categories such as Mexican and Spanish show an understanding of national origin (although a limited one), while the categories “Spanish mother tongue” and “Spanish surname” demonstrate an attempt to group together like individuals of Latin American heritage. Indeed, Hispanic, Latino, and Chicano identities have been constructed and misappropriated by the state for more than 200 years. In a recent historical investigation of Mexican American racial identity, Menchaca (2002) notes that Spanish, Mexican, and American authorities created artificial racial hierarchies that marginalized Mexicans, restricted their political rights, and stripped them of the land. What the historical and contemporary state has ignored, according to Menchaca, is the uniqueness of Latino/Chicano identities and importance of these roots to the community.

In 1990 the Census Bureau appeared to be moving in the right direction by recognizing the unique national origins of the Hispanic population. That year all respondents had to answer question number 7 which asked whether or not the individual considered him or herself of Spanish/Hispanic origin. The question had five possible boxes for the respondent to check: No (not Spanish/Hispanic); Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano; Yes, Puerto Rican; Yes, Cuban; and Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic. Recognized as the three largest national origins among the Hispanic population, Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban origin warranted their own boxes, while the remaining groups had to check the other Spanish/Hispanic category. In addition to checking the box, respondents were instructed to specify their country of national origin, and many examples were provided: “Print one group, for example: Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on” (U.S. Census Bureau 1990).

In 1990, of the 22.4 million Latinos counted, only 1.9 million, or about 8.5%, did not specify their national origin. Although the form was fairly clear, there may have been some respondents that did not understand the question accurately and failed to specify their national origin and others (likely third or fourth generation



**Figure 1**  
**Comparison of 1990 and 2000 Census Short Form Question #7**

**Excerpt from 1990 Census Form**

<p>7. <b>Is this person of Spanish/Hispanic origin?</b>                  Fill ONE circle for each person.</p>   <p>If Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic,                  print one group →</p>	<p> <input type="radio"/> No (not Spanish/Hispanic)  <input type="radio"/> Yes, Mexican, Mexican-Am., Chicano  <input type="radio"/> Yes, Puerto Rican  <input type="radio"/> Yes, Cuban  <input type="radio"/> Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic                  (Print one group, for example, Argentinean,                  Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan,                  Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.)             </p> <div style="border: 1px dashed black; width: 200px; height: 20px; margin-left: auto; margin-top: 10px;"> <span style="position: absolute; top: -10px; left: 50%; transform: translate(-50%, -50%); font-size: 12px;">7</span> </div>
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**Excerpt from 2000 Census Form**

Found at <http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/2000quest.html>.

→ **NOTE: Please answer BOTH Questions 7 and 8.**

**7. Is Person 1 Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?** Mark  the "No" box if **not** Spanish/Hispanic/Latino.

No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino       Yes, Puerto Rican  
 Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano       Yes, Cuban  
 Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino  Print group. ↗

7

respondents) that choose to identify only as Hispanic, rather than specifying their national origin. In 2000, the census questionnaire changed the wording of question 7, and the percentage of Latinos identified as “other” doubled nationwide.

On the 2000 census form, people were asked if there were Spanish/Hispanic/Latino or not. Again, the same five check boxes were available as in 1990 with the addition of “/Latino” to the 1990 Spanish/Hispanic categorization. However, the last option: Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino had no additional instructions or examples besides “print group.” Many have suspected that without examples of national origin, or even the instructions to “print national origin” rather than “group,” some non-Mexican, non-Puerto Rican, and non-Cuban Latinos were confused or viewed the question as a multiple choice between “Spanish,” “Hispanic,” and “Latino.” Indeed, the number of respondents that checked the box, and then wrote in one of these three ethnic labels soared in 2000. As argued previously, this misrecognition creates numerous problems.

However, some responded that the growth of the “other” category represents a new pan-Hispanic consciousness and uniformity of the Latino community. While certainly a few individuals may hold this viewpoint, it is unlikely that more than 6 million Latinos, or roughly 17% of the U.S. Latino population, share this perspective. Further, with increases in Central and South American immigration to the United States between 1990 and 2000, many of the Dominican, Colombian, Salvadoran, and Guatemalan respondents are new residents in the United States who are unlikely to have shed their national origin identities and immediately identify with a pan-Hispanic image. In fact, Logan and other demographers dismiss the idea of such a large pan-Hispanic identity. His analysis of the March 2000 Census Current Population Survey (CPS), which contained specific national origin questions, revealed only about 1 million in the “other Hispanic” category, less than 3% of the entire Latino population (Spangler 2001). Confusion seems to be the main reason for the miscalculation and some Census Bureau officials are acknowledging the problem. In reality, there didn’t seem to be much discrepancy in the number of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban origin Latinos in 2000, all groups that had a specific box to check with their national origin identity. Roberto Ramirez, a statistician for the Census Bureau noted, “When we asked, ‘Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino,’ they might have thought, ‘I’m Argentinian, but, yeah, I’m Hispanic.’ Some respondents may not have understood that they were supposed to give us a detailed origin” (Scott 2001).

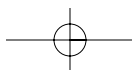
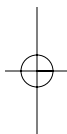
The argument then is that measurement error did occur, and that this is of importance to studies of race and ethnicity. Similarly, Davis (1997b, 183) has argued that ethnic minorities “bring to public opinion surveys their normal everyday level of distrust and cautiousness” of interviewers, particularly, and, I would add, of official government representatives (i.e., the Census representatives). Davis (1997a,b) and others have suggested that measurement error needs to be identified when possible and taken note of in analyses of minority populations, rather than glossed over as the Census Bureau is seemingly doing.

### *Predicting Misidentification on the 2000 Census*



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Nationwide, more than one out of every six Latinos has been classified as “other Hispanic or Latino.” However, there were important regional variations in the percentage that were identified in this category, which call for a more in-depth investigation of the issue. For example in Santa Fe more than 50% of all Latinos fall into the category of “all other Latinos” which excludes any responses of Spaniard, Spanish, or Spanish American. In Albuquerque, 44% of Latinos are “all other.” Pueblo, Colo., finds 42% of its Latino community without national origin while the figures stands at 36% in Lubbock, Tex., and 30% in Arlington, Va. In comparison, in Chicago, Ill., only 7% of Latinos marked “other,” and in Milwaukee, Wis., the figure was 8%.



**Table 1.**  
**Top 100 Counties Ranked by Percent of "Other" Latino Population in Census 2000**  
**(For Counties with More Than 25,000 Latinos)**

<u>Rank</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>All Other Hispanic</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>All Other Hispanic</u>
1	Rio Arriba	NM	67.1%	51	Brazoria	TX	17.6%
2	Santa Fe	NM	54.4%	52	Hudson	NJ	17.5%
3	Sandoval	NM	53.1%	53	Broward	FL	17.2%
4	Valencia	NM	52.2%	54	Westchester	NY	16.9%
5	Bernalillo	NM	44.2%	55	Travis	TX	16.9%
6	Pueblo	CO	42.4%	56	McLennan	TX	16.7%
7	Jim Wells	TX	40.7%	57	Marin	CA	16.6%
8	Lubbock	TX	36.6%	58	Mercer	NJ	16.5%
9	San Patricio	TX	36.0%	59	Salt Lake	UT	16.4%
10	Nueces	TX	32.8%	60	Brazos	TX	16.2%
11	Chaves	NM	31.1%	61	Suffolk	NY	16.1%
12	Montgomery	MD	29.9%	62	Boulder	CO	15.9%
13	Arlington	VA	29.5%	63	Essex	NJ	15.9%
14	Washington	DC	29.5%	64	San Mateo	CA	15.6%
15	Victoria	TX	28.6%	65	Bronx	NY	15.4%
16	Jefferson	LA	27.8%	66	Passaic	NJ	15.2%
17	Jefferson	CO	27.6%	67	Pinal	AZ	15.1%
18	Fairfax	VA	27.4%	68	Harris	TX	15.1%
19	Bexar	TX	26.0%	69	Duval	FL	14.9%
20	Guadalupe	TX	25.9%	70	Bell	TX	14.9%
21	Dona Ana	NM	25.8%	71	Los Angeles	CA	14.7%
22	El Paso	CO	24.7%	72	Maverick	TX	14.5%
23	Prince George's	MD	24.5%	73	Miami-Dade	FL	14.4%
24	Adams	CO	24.3%	74	Galveston	TX	14.3%
25	Hays	TX	22.7%	75	Jefferson	TX	14.2%
26	Potter	TX	22.5%	76	Kings	NY	14.2%
27	Ector	TX	21.9%	77	Denton	TX	14.2%
28	Denver	CO	21.6%	78	Collin	TX	14.2%
29	Prince William	VA	21.5%	79	Rockland	NY	14.2%
30	Midland	TX	21.4%	80	Palm Beach	FL	14.1%
31	Tom Green	TX	21.2%	81	Hillsborough	FL	14.0%
32	Nassau	NY	21.2%	82	Contra Costa	CA	14.0%
33	Weld	CO	20.8%	83	El Paso	TX	14.0%
34	San Francisco	CA	20.2%	84	Fairfield	CT	14.0%
35	Arapahoe	CO	19.8%	85	Cochise	AZ	13.9%
36	Providence	RI	19.7%	86	Middlesex	NJ	13.6%
37	Somerset	NJ	19.6%	87	Val Verde	TX	13.4%
38	Suffolk	MA	19.5%	88	Tarrant	TX	13.3%
39	Union	NJ	19.4%	89	Santa Cruz	AZ	13.2%
40	Queens	NY	19.1%	90	King	WA	13.1%
41	Webb	TX	19.0%	91	Solano	CA	13.1%
42	Fort Benton	TX	18.7%	92	Pinellas	FL	13.1%
43	Honolulu	HI	18.7%	93	Snohomish	WA	13.1%
44	Essex	MA	18.6%	94	Mecklenburg	NC	13.0%
45	Morris	NJ	18.5%	95	Hidalgo	TX	13.0%
46	Cameron	TX	18.5%	96	Utah	UT	12.8%
47	Middlesex	MA	18.5%	97	Montgomery	TX	12.8%
48	Bergen	NJ	18.3%	98	Lehigh	PA	12.7%
49	Williams	TX	18.2%	99	Alameda	CA	12.7%
50	New York	NY	18.1%	100	Atlantic	NJ	12.7%

To examine these differences, I use county-level data from the 2000 census for question 7 regarding Latino national origin identity. All counties in all 50 states and the District of Columbia are examined for a total of 3,141 observations. Variables include the total population, total Latino population, median Latino age, and 20 Latin American nationality populations.

The Census Bureau details two different classifications of “other Latinos.” The broader category includes all respondents who checked the “other” box and did not specify a Latin American national identity. This includes the responses of Spaniard, Spanish, and Spanish American. A more narrow category, “all other” Latinos excludes respondents with possible ties to Spain and counts only those who checked the “other” box and wrote Hispanic, wrote Latino, left it blank, or wrote some other non-national origin identity. In this analysis, I use the “all other” Hispanic or Latino category as a more conservative estimate, and so that persons who indicated a quasi-Spanish identity can be recognized as such. The dependent variable, “all other Latino,” is measured as the raw number of respondents in this category in each county and ranges from zero in 24 counties with only a handful of Latinos to 621,502 in Los Angeles County.

Before moving into the regression analysis, it is possible to get a sense for which groups of Latinos were the most undercounted. Logan’s research at the Mumford Center (2001) uses more accurate estimates of Latino national origin from the March 2000 CPS and applies them to the undercounts on the 2000 census. Table 2 compares the official Census 2000 estimates, the Mumford estimates, and the underestimate difference for each nationality. Most notably, the number of Latinos that actually belong in the “other” category is off by more than 80%. The census counts 6.2 million Latinos in the “other” category; however, the revised estimates put only 1.1 million in this category. This leaves more than 5 million Latinos whose identity has been misrecognized. Looking at the percent difference column, it is clear that the three groups that have their national origin listed on the census form were the least likely to be wrongly identified.

**Table 2.**  
**Census Estimates vs. Mumford Estimates of Latino Groups in the United States**

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Census 2000</b>	<b>Mumford 2000</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>% Difference</b>
Mexican	20,640,711	23,060,224	+ 2,419,513	11.7%
Puerto Rican	3,406,178	3,640,460	+ 234,282	6.9%
Cuban	1,241,685	1,315,346	+ 73,661	5.9%
Dominican	764,945	1,121,257	+ 356,312	46.6%
Costa Rican	68,588	115,672	+ 47,084	68.6%
Guatemalan	372,487	627,329	+ 254,842	68.4%
Honduran	217,569	362,171	+ 144,602	66.5%
Nicaraguan	177,684	294,334	+ 116,650	65.7%
Panamanian	91,723	164,371	+ 72,648	79.2%
Salvadoran	655,165	1,117,959	+ 462,794	70.6%
<b>Total Central Am.</b>	<b>1,686,937</b>	<b>2,863,063</b>	<b>+ 1,176,126</b>	<b>69.7%</b>
Argentinean	100,864	168,991	+ 68,127	67.5%
Bolivian	42,068	70,545	+ 28,477	67.7%
Chilean	68,849	117,698	+ 48,849	71.0%
Colombian	470,684	742,406	+ 271,722	57.7%
Ecuadorian	260,559	396,400	+ 135,841	52.1%
Paraguayan	8,769	14,492	+ 5,723	65.3%
Peruvian	233,926	381,850	+ 147,924	63.2%
Uruguayan	18,804	30,010	+ 11,206	59.6%
Venezuelan	91,507	149,309	+ 57,802	63.2%
<b>Total South Am.</b>	<b>1,353,562</b>	<b>2,169,669</b>	<b>+ 816,107</b>	<b>60.3%</b>
<b>Total Central/South</b>	<b>3,040,499</b>	<b>5,032,732</b>	<b>+ 1,992,233</b>	<b>65.5%</b>
Other Hispanic	6,211,800	1,135,799	- 5,076,001	-81.7%

\* Mumford estimates overlay March 2000 CPS responses with Census 2000 results

According to Logan's estimates, there are nearly two million more Central and South American Latinos living in the United States than the census estimates (See Table 2). Specifically, Salvadorans were underestimated by 460,000, Dominicans by 350,000, Colombians by 270,000, and Guatemalans by 250,000. While Mexicans were also underestimated by 2.4 million, this represented only 12% of their population, and many of these individuals are people in the Southwest who do not trace their identity to Mexico as much as Spanish colonized territories in Mexico or even the United States. In sum, these estimates reveal that many Central and South American Latino nationalities were undercounted in the 2000 census. My research hopes to shed light on the likelihood that any specific national origin group was misidentified.

Table 3 displays the results for the OLS regressions. Using the total number of Latinos counted in the "all other" category as the dependent variable, I measure the influence of each of the non-designated national origins (those without their own check-box, i.e., Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, etc.) on the number in the other category. The county level analysis is conducted for the United States as a whole, regionally for the East Coast and Southwest<sup>5</sup> and for the states of New York and California.

**Table 3.**  
**Nationwide Regression Results**

**Model 1: Nationwide OLS Regression Predicting “Other Hispanic” Category**

	Model 1-A	Model 1-B	Model 1-C	Model 1-D	Model 1-E	Model 1-F
Argentinean	17.993*** (1.919)	20.095*** (1.803)	24.766*** (1.924)		8.072*** (1.639)	
Bolivian	-4.097*** (.762)	-4.246*** (.761)	-2.782*** (.781)	-4.368*** (.776)	-4.382*** (.719)	-3.561*** (.724)
Chilean	-26.478*** (2.632)	-28.304*** (2.572)	-20.177*** (2.683)			-11.991*** (2.184)
Costa Rican	-3.718* (1.507)	-2.729t (1.477)	-5.934*** (1.550)	0.210 (1.493)	-0.995 (1.438)	0.811 (1.399)
Dominican	0.247*** (.034)	0.239*** (.034)	0.101** (.033)	0.275*** (.033)	0.224*** (.034)	0.316*** (.033)
Ecuadorian	-0.424t (.231)	-0.313 (.229)	-1.303*** (.231)	0.360 (.223)	0.073 (.216)	0.507* (.203)
Guatemalan	0.639** (.202)		2.493*** (.162)	1.357*** (.193)	1.089*** (.199)	1.277*** (.192)
Honduran	2.082*** (.441)	1.884*** (.438)	5.902*** (.367)	1.000* (.418)	1.814*** (.443)	0.444 (.413)
Nicaraguan	1.176*** (.256)	1.302*** (.253)	-0.506* (.236)	1.218*** (.210)	0.534* (.251)	1.990*** (.244)
Panamanian	1.462* (.609)	1.187* (.604)	2.326*** (.627)	0.978 (.618)	1.319* (.603)	0.494 (.598)
Paraguayan	18.203* (7.212)	15.156* (7.158)	29.415*** (7.410)	-5.940 (6.993)	-3.654 (6.943)	0.739 (7.039)
Peruvian	0.927* (.422)	0.857* (.422)	1.334** (.435)	0.337 (.408)		
Salvadoran	1.609*** (.110)	1.829*** (.086)		1.633*** (.103)	1.424*** (.110)	1.883*** (.108)
Uruguayan	-4.817 (3.571)	-5.810 (3.562)	-7.580* (3.685)	-11.700** (3.542)	-12.971*** (3.467)	-5.530 (3.587)
Venezuelan	-2.176* (.875)	-2.748** (.857)	-7.347*** (.826)	0.768 (.706)	-1.886* (.882)	2.623*** (.734)
Age	-12.260 (17.679)	-12.740 (17.703)	-13.584 (18.267)	-13.864 (18.023)	-14.476 (17.956)	-12.416 (17.940)
Total Pop	0.014*** (.001)	0.014*** (.001)	0.011*** (.001)	0.013*** (.001)	0.012*** (.001)	0.015*** (.001)
% Latino	15784.240*** (709.791)	15735.790*** (710.646)	15691.200*** (733.373)	15735.610*** (723.668)	15723.680*** (720.483)	15832.170*** (719.905)
Constant	-795.018t (443.247)	-798.033t (443.884)	-692.615 (457.935)	-774.472t (451.706)	-717.270 (450.163)	-849.867t (449.771)
N	3141	3141	3141	3141	3141	3141
F	1428.00	1507.07	1404.52	1537.83	1550.91	1554.17
Adj R <sup>2</sup>	0.8911	0.8908	0.8837	0.8868	0.8876	0.8878

\*\*\* p<.001 \*\* p<.01 \* p<.05 t p<.10 two-tailed test

endent Variable = actual number of respondents (by county) in the “all Other Hispanic or Latino” category  
ntry or Origin Independent Variables = actual number of respondents (by county) identifying with each country of ori



For the entire United States (Model 1-A) many variables are significant predictors of the other Latino population. In order of the magnitude of their coefficients, the variables Paraguayan, Spaniard, Uruguayan, Panamanian, Colombian, Salvadoran, Nicaraguan, and Dominican are positive and significant predictors of the size of the “all other” Latino population. This indicates that, nationwide, counties with large populations with roots from these nations had larger “other” Latino populations. This suggests that many of the Latinos in the other category may in fact identify with this group of national origins. In addition, age and size of the Latino population demonstrated a positive and significant relationship with the dependent variable. The age variable may mean that older Latino communities were more likely to misidentify and not specify a national origin while the Latino population variable simply means that in counties with more Latinos, there are likely to be more that fall into the other grouping. This is counterintuitive because we would expect stronger outreach efforts and higher levels of awareness about the census form in large Latino communities, as opposed to small or geographically isolated communities. Interestingly, Costa Rican, Honduran, Argentinean, Chilean, and Peruvian have negative and significant influences on the size of the other Latino population. This may suggest that these groups are the most likely to correctly specify their national origin group and least likely to have been undercounted.<sup>6</sup> The aim of the model is not explain all the variance of the dependent variable “other Latino,” but rather to determine which independent variables are significant predictors. Thus, while the high adjusted R2 of .89 may seem problematic, it is more a function of collinearity between some of the independent and dependent variables.

Table 4 shows the correlations values (all at  $p < 0.000$ ) for the dependent variable and country of origin independent variables. Because of the high levels of misidentification by many national origin groups, there is a strong correlation between some nationalities and the “other Latino” category. Not surprisingly, the dependent variable has a positive correlation of higher than .70 for seven of the countries listed (Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Spain), and many of the countries correlate at high levels with each other. For example, South Americans from Chile, Peru, and Argentina all correlate with each other at better than .90 while Central Americans from Guatemala and El Salvador correlate even higher at .95. This is likely the result of similar migration patterns for both cohorts due to strong geographic ties in the countries of origin.<sup>vii</sup> These colinearity issues may be artificially driving the robustness of the adjusted R2, however, it is important to include all countries of origin in the same model to observe how different groups answered the census in the presence of each other group (which is the precise situation in the real world). With these limitations in mind, I am interested only in the significance and direction of each coefficient, rather than trying to account for as much variance as possible in the dependent variable.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 4.  
Correlation Matrix**

**“Other Latino” by Country of Origin**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)
(1) Other Latino	1.000																	
(2) Argentina	0.785	1.000																
(3) Bolivia	0.448	0.550	1.000															
(4) Chile	0.728	0.976	0.583	1.000														
(5) Colombia	0.459	0.813	0.486	0.839	1.000													
(6) Costa Rica	0.801	0.896	0.483	0.865	0.687	1.000												
(7) Dominican	0.274	0.349	0.196	0.351	0.430	0.339	1.000											
(8) Ecuador	0.397	0.515	0.388	0.522	0.741	0.482	0.623	1.000										
(9) Guatemala	0.873	0.712	0.411	0.633	0.313	0.753	0.104	0.302	1.000									
(10) Honduras	0.755	0.900	0.517	0.897	0.735	0.843	0.435	0.470	0.633	1.000								
(11) Nicaragua	0.495	0.839	0.395	0.850	0.720	0.677	0.199	0.236	0.385	0.811	1.000							
(12) Panama	0.532	0.643	0.373	0.636	0.608	0.663	0.504	0.582	0.378	0.685	0.522	1.000						
(13) Paraguay	0.372	0.549	0.503	0.592	0.768	0.512	0.438	0.858	0.279	0.464	0.331	0.460	1.000					
(14) Peru	0.688	0.915	0.625	0.924	0.878	0.850	0.399	0.659	0.602	0.817	0.721	0.616	0.683	1.000				
(15) El Salvador	0.864	0.676	0.457	0.614	0.280	0.717	0.085	0.274	0.956	0.641	0.343	0.355	0.271	0.580	1.000			
(16) Spanish	0.882	0.714	0.453	0.692	0.468	0.741	0.285	0.430	0.729	0.653	0.425	0.527	0.415	0.668	0.720	1.000		
(17) Uruguay	0.496	0.784	0.492	0.815	0.872	0.740	0.394	0.664	0.379	0.718	0.633	0.565	0.681	0.857	0.360	0.511	1.000	
(18) Venezuela	0.384	0.800	0.399	0.828	0.842	0.634	0.297	0.337	0.213	0.768	0.900	0.568	0.424	0.743	0.179	0.361	0.746	1.000

For all variables n=3141; p<.000

To accommodate the potential problems of multicollinearity of the independent variables, I have replicated Model 1-A and dropped out the “worst offender” variables identified above. First, I isolate the Guatemalan and Salvadoran variables in Models 1-B and 1-C. Model 1-B drops out the Guatemalan variable and keeps in the Salvadoran variable, and the results for the Salvadoran variable remain quite similar to the original model in which both are included. In the original model, Salvadoran is positive and significant, and its coefficient measures 1.609; in the second model (1-B), it is also positive and significant and measures 1.829. Likewise, in Model 1-C, when only Guatemalan is included, it is comparable to the original model, again positive and significant although slightly larger in size (0.639 compared to 2.493). The final three models (D,E,F) focus on the highly correlated South American variables Argentinean, Chilean, and Peruvian. In Model 1-D, when only Peruvian is included, it remains positive and significant as in the original model, as is Argentinean in Model 1-E, while Chilean is negative and significant in both Model 1-A and the Chilean-only Model 1-F. Because the variables remain significant and in the same direction in the replicated findings (Models B-F) we can conclude that the multicollinearity might be problematic for the large adjusted R2 but does not greatly affect the performance of the independent variables.

In addition to a nationwide perspective, regional variations account for important differences in some variables and should be considered. Looking only at states in the Northeast (Model 2), the claims of community leaders that Dominicans, Colombians, and Ecuadorians were undercounted appear to be correct. In addition to these variables being positive and significant predictors of the other Latino population, Guatemalan, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Bolivian, Paraguayan, Uruguayan, and Venezuelan national identities appear to have also been underestimated on the East Coast group of states.

Meanwhile, analysis of the Southwest (Model 3) reveals that Central American groups such as Guatemalans, Hondurans, Nicaraguans, and Panamanians bore a positive and significant influence on the size of the other Latino population, as did the South American nationalities of Colombian, Ecuadorian, Paraguayan, and Peruvian. In addition, the Spaniard identity is a significant predictor of the other Latino population in the Southwest. This may be a result of the old colonial Spanish occupation of much of the Southwest (in particular New Mexico, see Table 1) where Latino communities do in fact trace their lineage in the United States back seven or more generations. One should also note that the variable Salvadoran has a negative and significant relationship in the Southwest model. This does not suggest that Salvadorans in Los Angeles County specifically were counted correctly. Surveys of Los Angeles itself and Logan’s CPS findings indicate that Salvadorans were undercounted. This finding simply proposes that in the 423 counties in Southwest states, the size of the Salvadoran community regresses negatively against the size of the other Latino population.

**Table 5.**  
**Regional Regression Results**

**Models 2-5: Regional OLS Regressions Predicting “Other Hispanic” Category**

Variable	Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			Model 5		
	EAST COAST			SOUTHWEST			NEW YORK			CALIFORNIA		
	Coef.	SE	t value	Coef.	SE	t value	Coef.	SE	t value	Coef.	SE	t value
Dominican	0.280	0.01	<b>25.26</b>	-62.954	12.65	<b>-4.98</b>	0.353	0.03	<b>11.66</b>	-15.740	8.43	-1.87
Costa Rican	-0.060	0.17	-0.35	-67.500	12.43	<b>-5.43</b>	0.906	0.66	1.37	42.023	11.40	<b>3.69</b>
Guatemalan	0.254	0.05	<b>5.42</b>	10.627	1.47	<b>7.24</b>	0.031	0.14	0.21	0.974	0.56	1.75
Honduran	0.617	0.12	<b>5.16</b>	16.753	3.76	<b>4.45</b>	2.101	0.31	<b>6.83</b>	15.171	3.74	<b>4.06</b>
Nicaraguan	3.270	0.28	<b>11.80</b>	3.853	1.14	<b>3.38</b>	-2.931	2.91	-1.01	0.390	0.52	0.75
Panamanian	-0.194	0.09	<b>-2.14</b>	26.796	4.21	<b>6.36</b>	0.215	0.37	0.58	0.746	5.32	0.14
Salvadoran	0.387	0.02	<b>18.32</b>	-6.126	0.86	<b>-7.13</b>	0.037	0.04	0.99	-0.718	0.41	-1.74
Argentinean	-2.704	0.73	<b>-3.73</b>	-49.804	14.34	<b>-3.47</b>	-3.927	1.43	<b>-2.75</b>	6.625	7.82	0.85
Bolivian	0.601	0.10	<b>6.07</b>	-8.951	17.83	-0.50	3.449	3.11	1.11	4.184	8.46	0.49
Chilean	0.809	0.48	1.68	-140.722	11.09	<b>-12.68</b>	5.300	0.73	<b>7.24</b>	-22.192	5.90	<b>-3.76</b>
Colombian	0.247	0.04	<b>6.23</b>	31.731	5.45	<b>5.83</b>	0.379	0.23	1.66	-19.099	6.10	<b>-3.13</b>
Ecuadorian	0.216	0.05	<b>4.34</b>	36.316	16.47	<b>2.20</b>	0.560	0.28	<b>1.98</b>	-6.867	9.19	-0.75
Paraguayan	2.570	0.93	<b>2.77</b>	253.961	95.50	<b>2.66</b>	-4.255	7.84	-0.54	58.090	51.04	1.14
Peruvian	-0.009	0.05	-0.19	26.942	4.71	<b>5.45</b>	-1.543	0.87	-1.78	7.017	2.13	<b>3.29</b>
Uruguayan	1.715	0.44	<b>3.92</b>	-397.562	85.22	<b>-4.66</b>	14.425	3.34	<b>4.32</b>	-42.424	28.92	-1.47
Venezuelan	3.420	0.72	<b>4.76</b>	-5.958	15.25	-0.39	0.975	1.59	0.61	-40.417	12.38	<b>-3.27</b>
Spaniard	0.490	0.55	0.89	84.673	5.13	<b>16.49</b>	-0.357	0.71	-0.50	15.100	3.72	<b>4.06</b>
Age	0.750	6.82	0.11	105.065	46.76	<b>2.25</b>	-0.142	3.55	-0.04	-42.928	51.39	-0.84
Total Pop	0.000	0.00	0.43	-0.029	0.00	<b>-7.52</b>	0.001	0.00	<b>5.10</b>	0.001	0.00	0.22
Latino Pop	0.064	0.00	<b>16.18</b>	0.156	0.01	<b>23.65</b>	0.039	0.01	<b>4.19</b>	0.087	0.00	<b>19.59</b>
Constant	23.529	183.1	0.13	-2010.7	1262.3	-1.59	-2.174	94.10	-0.02	468.831	1274.8	0.37
			7									
n		273			423			62			58	
F		11092.5			1702.7			569.3			440.2	
Adj R <sup>2</sup>		0.965			0.972			0.985			0.992	

**Bold t values are significant at p<.05 or greater for two-tailed test**

Dependent Variable = actual number of respondents (by county) in the “all other Hispanic or Latino” category  
Country or Origin Independent Variables = actual number of respondents (by county) identifying with each country of origin

EAST COAST = N.Y., N.J., Mass., Conn., Del., Md., Va., D.C., R.I.  
SOUTHWEST = Tex., N.M., Ariz., Colo., Calif.

### *Discussion*

The 2000 decennial census marked an important, but troubled event in the Latino community. On the one hand, Latinos surpassed African Americans as the largest minority group in the United States. On the other hand, the official Census Bureau estimates failed to provide national origin information for more than six million Latinos, leaving one out of every six Latinos classified as “other” by the government. This research has demonstrated that rather than choosing the “other” category, there was a considerable undercount of Mexicans, Salvadorans, Dominicans, Guatemalans, and Colombians in the recent census, all off by more than 250,000 nationwide.

Further, interesting regional differences exist that bare out the claims made by many community activists. While the Latino population as a whole is growing rapidly and gaining political attention, we must keep in mind that there is no single Hispanic nationality and that the diversity of Latin American nations from which the U.S. Latino population traces its heritage is an integral component of the ethnicity’s identity. As Gordon (1964), Taylor (1994), Kymlicka (1995), and others have noted, the ability to identify with one’s national origin is a fundamental part of the individual’s identity. As I have argued, multiple levels of identification should remain open to all people, and efforts should be made to encourage the most accurate possible enumerations of the diverse nationalities within the Latino population.

To prevent another problem with misrecognition in the 2010 census, the form should be reevaluated to increase the specification rate of national origins. First, instead of just three nationalities containing unique identifier boxes, the list should be expanded (similar to the subgroups for Asian) to include more representation for groups such as Dominicans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Colombians, Ecuadorians, Peruvians, Hondurans, and more on the census questionnaire. Second, the form should once again (as in 1990) include specific instructions for those that check the “other” category and encourage respondents to print their country of the ancestry. In addition to changes on the form, the Census Bureau needs to expand multilingual outreach efforts in the high-propensity under-count communities identified herein. Finally, further collaboration with Latino community-based organizations will help identify additional recommendations as well as increase the level of trust and confidence in the census.

By incorporating these policy recommendations, the federal government should be able to obtain a more accurate count of the Latino population and of national origin populations within the Latino community. As the Latino population grows and becomes more diverse with immigration flows from the Caribbean and Central and South America, it is important that official Census Bureau statistics reflect the diversity of this population. Many (first-time) respondents to the census may be unfamiliar with the procedures and measures used on the form, and steps should be taken to increase ease of use of this technical self-administered survey.

I close simply with a comment by a Dominican respondent who was not counted as Dominican on the census: “It was my first time filling out the census form. I got confused. If they say, ‘Yes, Puerto Rican and Yes, Cuban,’ it should have said, ‘Yes, Dominican,’ too” (Cheng and Janison 2001).

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### *Appendix A*

#### **Selected Questions from Census 2000 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Web site Found at <http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/genfaq.htm>, DD MONTH.**

#### **I. Census 2000 Data**

##### Z. How should Hispanics have answered the race question?

People of Hispanic origin may be of any race and should have answered the question on race by marking one or more race categories shown on the questionnaire, including White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other Race. Hispanics should have indicated their origin in the Hispanic origin question, not in the race question because in federal statistical systems ethnic origin was considered to be a separate concept from race.

#### **IV. The Census Questionnaire**

##### D. Why does the Census need to know about race?

Race is key to implementing any number of federal programs and it is critical for the basic research behind numerous policy decisions. States require these data to meet legislative redistricting requirements. Also, they are needed to monitor compliance with the Voting Rights Act by local jurisdictions. Race data are required by federal programs that promote equal employment opportunity and to assess racial disparities in health and environmental risks. The Census Bureau has included a question on race since the first census in 1790.

##### E. Why does the Census Bureau collect information on Hispanic origin?

The 1970 decennial census was the first to have a question on Hispanic origin on the sample or "long" census form. Since 1980, this question has appeared on the 100% or "short" form. Hispanic origin data are needed for the implementation of a number of federal statutes such as the enforcement of bilingual election

rules under the Voting Rights Act and the monitoring and enforcement of equal employment opportunities under the Civil Rights Act. Additionally, information on people of Hispanic origin is needed by local governments to run programs and meet legislative requirements at the community level. For example, these data are used to help identify segments of the population who may not be receiving medical services under the Public Health Act or to evaluate whether financial institutions are meeting credit needs of minority populations under the Community Reinvestment Act.

I. Why do you have one question on race and another question on Hispanic origin?

On October 30, 1997, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued “Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity.” All federal agencies, including the Census Bureau, who collect and report data on race and ethnicity must follow these standards. Race and ethnicity are considered to be two separate and distinct concepts in this standard, and OMB accepted the Interagency Committee for the Review of the Racial and Ethnic Standards recommendation that two separate questions — one for race and one for ethnicity or Hispanic origin — be used whenever feasible to provide flexibility and ensure data quality.

J. Does the Census Bureau collect data on Hispanic subgroups other than Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban?

Yes. In Census 2000, like in the 1990 census, the Hispanic origin question has a write-in line which is used to obtain write-in responses of Hispanic subgroups other than the major groups of Mexican, Cuban, and Puerto Ricans. Persons with other Hispanic origins such as Salvadoran, Nicaraguan, Argentinean, and so on, were able to write in their specific origin group. In fact, the Census Bureau’s code list contains over 30 Hispanic or Latino subgroups. For Census 2000, maximum detail on Hispanic subgroups will be made available in micro data files while data products containing tabulations will report less detail information.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau  
For website information, contact Decennial Management Division  
Created:18-May-99 / Last Revised:18-July-01



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### *Endnotes*

\* The author would like to thank John Bretting, Claudine Gay, Darren Davis, José Muñoz, Claire Kim, Guillermo Barreto-Vega and the editors of this journal for their comments and suggestions in refining this research and to Nathan Woods and Gary Segura for their advice in estimating the models. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2002 Midwest Political Science Association annual conference. Data were obtained from the Census website at [factfinder.census.gov](http://factfinder.census.gov) using the Summary File 1 (SF-1) dataset from the 2000 Census. For comments: [MBarreto@uci.edu](mailto:MBarreto@uci.edu).

<sup>1</sup> The first census taken in 1790 differentiated people based on two racial categories: free “White” persons and “colored” slaves. This categorization continued from 1790 through 1860. In 1870 the classifications changed to White, Colored, Chinese, and Indian. In 1890 the terminology for Blacks was changed to Negro. For a complete history of the U.S. Census, see *200 Years of Census Taking: Population and Housing Questions, 1790-1990*. 1989. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of the Census.

<sup>2</sup> This passage from Herberg has been gender-paraphrased.

<sup>3</sup> According to reports from the INS, 4,294,819 legal immigrants from Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America relocated to the United States between 1991 and 2000.

<sup>4</sup> In comparison, 15.9% of non-Latinos had less than a high school diploma according to the 2000 CPS estimates.

<sup>5</sup> States in the East Coast group include New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia; states in the Southwest group include Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and California.

<sup>6</sup> While these countries of origin display a negative relationship in the multivariate analysis, they are positively correlated with the dependent variable in the bivariate analysis (see Table 4).

<sup>7</sup> Thus, when a hurricane hits Central America, it may impact Guatemalans and Salvadorans alike, and increased immigration would be expected from both groups, most likely to the similar counties within the United States.

<sup>8</sup> In addition, other key demographic variables are missing from the model, such as mean education and income of the Latino community within each county, leaving the overall model underspecified. These variables from the 2000 census were not yet available by race and ethnicity at the county level at the time of this research.



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# ***Transforming the Bureaucracy: Using the Lessons of Community Organizing to Transform Education Services in Latino Communities***

*Nancy Taylor*

*Nancy Taylor served as a social studies teacher through Teach for America in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, located on the U.S.-Mexico border. In her three years of service, her students excelled on the state's difficult social studies exam, surpassing all state and district results for Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students. The outstanding achievements of her students coupled with her commitment and advocacy led the district to implement changes. In addition, she worked with district leaders to distribute her curriculum, *Make the Connection Con Ganas! A Guide to Social Studies Literacy*, to classroom teachers throughout the school district. Nancy is currently in her first year of study as a Master in Public Policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.*

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## ***Abstract***

In order for fundamental change to occur in education, it is necessary to engage all community stakeholders. Numerous education and policy research supports the concept of community empowerment and mobilization. This article seeks to expand on social science theory's application through community-organizing and successes in Latino communities for fundamental school reform. Community-based organizations have successfully developed local leadership in Latino communities across the country to work toward sustained school improvement. This new perspective of reform is crucial to fundamental change in education for Latino students. This article seeks to provide a new model for educational leadership.

## ***Introduction***

Culminating in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, education reform has focused on raising standards and holding schools accountable for meeting those standards while arguments over curriculum, instruction, assessment, and funding continue. "Reforming education" has become a popular political agenda item in the past decade with minimal changes from the status quo for many of our

nation's at-risk students. Educational researchers, particularly those emphasizing school choice, point to the dilapidating culture of schools, restrained by excessive bureaucracy that inadequately serve many low-income and minority communities. With low political participation, mobile and volatile households, high crime rates, and poor school options, it is at-risk youth and their communities that are being left behind as continued efforts to reform the current bureaucracy from within are attempted. As Frederick Hess points out in *Spinning Wheels: The Politics of Urban School Reform* (1999), "the state of constant reform is the status quo in urban school systems." These perpetual trial and error reform efforts largely impact Latino students, as an increasing and disproportionate number of public school students are and are predicted to be increasingly Hispanic.

The 1999 Statistical Abstract of the United States Bureau of the Census offers a grim demonstration of the inequity that currently exists. The 1998 high school completion rate for Hispanics aged 25 and over was 55.5 percent versus a rate of 83.7 percent for Whites. The competency levels in high school for all subjects are lower for Hispanics than for Whites. Based on proficiency scores in 1996, Hispanic 17-year-olds scored lower than their 13-year-old White counterparts in reading, writing, and science and only slightly higher in math than 13-year-old White students. Only 27.5 percent of Latino high school graduates ages 18-21 were enrolled in college in 1997 (versus the rate of 46.1 percent for Whites). Most telling is the fact that nearly 40 percent of Hispanic students who drop out do so before the eighth grade according to the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education in 1995 (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities 2003). Clearly, fundamental change in the education bureaucracy and its services to Latino students is needed.

Mobilization is the element missed in these debates that will sustain long-term efforts to improve education and maintain a democratic commitment that all children can learn. In order for reform to be fundamental, "mobilization has to be sustained and has to institutionalize new practices and relationships" (Stone et al. 2001, 8). *Communities and the political institutions that provide and support education must be invested in any change in order for true improvement to occur.* This will require a change in the institutions of education themselves, for as it stands the bureaucracies of education cannot alone transform with single reforms or without sustained engagement of parents and families.<sup>1</sup>

This paper will examine the growing influence of Latino citizens on school reform debates and policy decisions through political participation utilizing community organizing strategies. My hypothesis is that the paradigm of effective educational leadership needs to be transformed or adapted from the static administration of bureaucratic and state-mandated reforms to community-based efforts in order to truly effect and sustain improvements in low-income communities and schools that service an increasing number of Latino students. This paper will explore major theories supporting a convergence in political and sociological thought and the efforts to apply the tools of community organizing to empower Latino communities to transform education politics in school districts. I will conclude with a discussion of the potential implications of these efforts on educational leadership and organization and the possibilities to empower Latino communities across the country to improve the educational outcomes of their children.

### *Social Capital and Civic Capacity*

Social capital theory espouses the intrinsic value of social networks or social contacts in positively affecting individuals and groups (Putnam 2000, 19). Proponents of social capital theory such as Glenn Loury, James Coleman, and, most recently, Robert D. Putnam of Harvard University present social capital as distinct from other types of capital, such as physical, financial, and human, which produce outcomes and improve individual productivity. This 20th century concept involves networks' reliance on "norms of reciprocity" that lead to trustworthiness, fostered in voluntary associations and through civic engagement. Social capital "allows citizens to resolve collective problems easily" as social norms and networks enforce this mutual compliance and engagement (Putnam 2000, 288). Putnam argues in *Bowling Alone* (2000) that social capital improves our individual conditions by enhancing our awareness to our interconnectedness, leading to more tolerance, less cynicism, and more empathy for one another, and, ultimately, help in reaching our individual and collective goals as social transactions become "less costly." There are two distinct types of social capital—bonding (intergroup, institutional, and exclusive) and bridging (inclusive and across boundaries)—that can be utilized for positive (or negative) outcomes. Each type will be integrated and its potential in community schools will be discussed in a later section.

Major researchers in the field such as Clarence N. Stone, Jeffrey R. Henig, Bryan D. Jones, and Carol Pierannunzi have proposed the effectiveness of a similar element found in the political realm called "civic capacity." Stone et. al. (2001, 5) distinguish between the two: social capital contains a more negative portrayal of the government and focuses more on *interpersonal and private relationships* whereas civic capacity occurs in the "public arena and involve governance institutions and major group representatives." Stone (2001, 7) refers to Norton Long's "ecology of games" in which public policy is determined through "semiautonomous subsystems" (including education as a subsystem with all other public services) responsive to the needs of the subsystem which may not be in the best interest of the larger community.<sup>2</sup> Civic capacity requires the mobilization of broad interests to remove a subsystem's policy-making power—an institutional, fundamental change.<sup>3</sup> Civic capacity in this sense is different from social capital built on daily interactions and trust versus the additional requirement by civic capacity to mobilize divergent interests and transform institutional relationships and expectations.

What role do social capital and civic capacity play in education? Each of these theories offers researchers a new approach to empower marginalized communities in the social and political realm and have been used in various forms across the country, particularly in Latino communities. What does it mean to engage a marginalized community in school improvement? The following sections examine current efforts to build on these two social science theories using community-organizing practices to empower citizens seeking to improve their schools and initiate reforms and will later be applied to reframe our understanding of how to organize and structure schools by engaging the parents of Latino students.

***Applying the Theory to Education Reform: Community  
Organizing and Texas IAF***

*“Social capital theory suggests that if reformers seek to improve urban schools, they need to cultivate generalized reciprocity and social trust in such a manner that virtuous circles replace vicious ones.”*

—Dennis Shirley, *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform* (1997, 27)

In *Valley Interfaith and School Reform: Organizing for Power in South Texas* (2002) and *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform* (1997), Dennis Shirley presents the *Industrial Areas Foundation* (IAF) and their efforts to utilize social capital and community organizing techniques to push for school reform in impoverished cities and regions. Shirley observes that by combining the work of community organizers (focused on numerous injustices in low-income neighborhoods) with the efforts of education reformers (focused on internal changes to the institution while ignoring the impact of significant external factors), boundaries are dissolved, allowing collaboration on the issue of education to spark civic engagement and collaboration in low-income communities. Evidenced throughout his research, this collaboration initiated by IAF has led to an increase in social capital and civic capacity.

Shirley conceives of schools as “laboratories of democracy” and as the “center of the community.” Stone et al. (2001, 49) support this conception of education “as the most important tool available to families to obtain upward economic mobility for their children,” encompassing a dual set of beliefs that schools serve to improve an individual’s well-being and the public good. Shirley supports the development of schools as arenas for civic engagement. IAF and its affiliates across the country work toward this end utilizing a seldom-tapped and potentially controversial resource: religious institutions of the community. Just as the researchers of *Building Civic Capacity* contend that politics cannot be removed from education, IAF and Shirley argue that religious institutions—at the core of many low-income and minority communities—must be utilized as well in order to realize reforms.

In the Latino communities of San Antonio, Tex., IAF organizers began their involvement as part of the congregations of a community, seeking to identify community concerns and “those individuals with leadership potential who can help to articulate the needs of their communities” (Shirley 1997, 60).<sup>4</sup> Utilizing the strong ties of Latinos in the community to the Catholic church, organizers sought to connect otherwise disconnected bodies (church and school, as well as families) with a common mission of empowerment. Although research has begun to confront the advantages and disadvantages of this tactic, the church has served as a major base for community organizing that only recently began expanding to school reforms. It is a partnership that should be encouraged but, like any other stakeholder, balanced.

To begin work with a school, organizers search for a “dedicated faculty, corporate partnerships, a supportive school board, and latent parental support which can be made manifest through effective organizing” (Shirley 1997, 60). Texas IAF works to transform common perceptions of parental involvement—supported throughout education research as a major factor in student achievement—from parent volunteer or passive participant in school functions to *parental engagement*, where parents are actively involved at *initiating* reform efforts at a school.

In order to ignite *parental engagement*, social capital, and civic capacity across sectors, IAF applies community-organizing tools tried and tested the last century in mobilization efforts for traditional causes (employee rights, housing, etc.). Shirley (1997) explains how this mobilization is accomplished using the following methods:

1. *One-on-one meetings* in the homes of parents most active in the church/targeted school, which offers parents an opportunity to express feelings about their child’s school.
2. *House meetings* to identify potential leaders in a given community and begin parent training to effectively mobilize and organize meetings and address concerns. Shirley found that in such familiar settings “citizens rarely needed much encouragement to express themselves” and begin a “culture of conversation” (versus blame and withdrawal). Organizers utilize the Socratic method to promote critical thinking about grievances and avoid offering solutions—something that has offered voice to many disenfranchised Latino parents.
3. IAF community leaders and *organizers collaborate to promote strategies* to remedy concerns—to resolve the issue and to develop community leadership to address other issues.
4. *Neighborhood walks or Walks for Success* involving home visits that incorporate students, parents, organizers, clergy, and educators offering a “public demonstration of support for the targeted school.”
5. *Large public assemblies* are organized, with invitations made to school district and city officials called “accountability sessions” allowing “communities to begin the process of assertive self-governance.”
6. *Consistent evaluations by organizers* occur as IAF seeks to “self-consciously promote social capitalization” using grassroots strategies. IAF continues to help those involved “develop more creative ways of sustaining dialogue, transmitting information, implementing social change, and evaluating their results.”<sup>5</sup>

These methods have sought to reach out and engage many Latino parents, intimidated by the institutional nature of schools and language barriers, or by their own negative experiences in schools. In cities such as San Antonio, these efforts increased civic capacity as educators, clergy, business leaders, and community leaders in low-income Latino communities cooperated to support the effective implementation of school reforms.<sup>6</sup> By engaging and investing parents and families—a crucial influence on student achievement—and other organizations in

Latino communities across Texas, bridging cultural and social barriers, politics began to change as well.

The IAF was so well mobilized across the state of Texas that in the late 1980s and 1990s, they were able to offer support to the governors' efforts to restructure Texas education. The Texas Education Agency, the state agency responsible for education in Texas, created the Alliance Schools, providing extra funding to K-12 schools that utilized the parental engagement and community organizing strategies of the IAF and its affiliates. Alliance Schools sought to "develop new forms of horizontal ties that [linked] teachers with parents, religious institutions, and community-based organizations in a rich web of relationships" and to move away from the hierarchical, professional distance educators maintained in many low-income Texas communities (Shirley 2002, 79). Not surprisingly, some schools were resistant to, perplexed about, and inflexible regarding transforming their roles as professionals and increasing parental involvement—emphasizing the difficulty in top-down, state-mandated reforms to become institutionalized without efforts made first within the community to push for such changes politically and socially. However, it offered an opportunity to many Latino parents to expand their involvement in public school reform.

Shirley's research of three Alliance Schools and their collaboration with Valley Interfaith (an IAF affiliate) in the Mexican-American community of the Rio Grande Valley provided evidence that community-organizing efforts that sought improvements in education were more successful in schools that (a) utilized religious organizations and (b) served elementary students.<sup>7</sup> Closer relations — shared space — in a predominantly Catholic community in south Texas enhanced the cultural ties of the school to the families. Children's use of both the school and church space were a natural, acceptable incorporation to parents. It integrated social, cultural lives with academics, tying together the two separate worlds. These efforts at community mobilization, parental engagement, and school reform were more effective at the elementary school level because there were less teachers to interact and engage in the process.<sup>8</sup> This is especially true of families where English is a second language. In secondary school, there are more and more teachers for separate and specialized subject areas, making parents' attempts at informing the process more difficult. This would lead one to conclude that beginning community organizing in elementary schools, working to empower parents and influence school change, would provide a strong basis for continuous efforts as a child ages and parents become more familiar with the system that services their child and how to change it.

Resistant administrators and faculty, interpreting parental engagement as a threat to professional autonomy (which caused reservation with city officials as well), and the mobility of families are potential challenges to IAF's organizing efforts. As Shirley suggested, however, once mobilization was enacted there was great potential in these communities to expand the organizing base from the church to the school and establish it as the "center of the community" serving a universal purpose.<sup>9</sup> Latino families would benefit greatly from this reinvention of the school as a true center of the community, a space for the children as well as families and for educators to truly serve the needs of their community. The following



section will explore the work of organizations with similar principles bringing a new perspective to education reform and services, particularly impacting Latino youth.

### *Principles in Practice*

*“ . . . the effective implementation of court orders and legislation can occur only when the community is informed, holds policy makers accountable for their implementation, and monitors their enforcement.”*

—Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund  
(Stone et al. 2001, 49)

The principles of community organizing, social capital, and civic capacity are being utilized in various manners across the United States, representing a new wave in education reform and community revitalization efforts, but also in political action. In the spirit of these theories, a new (or renewed) vision of thought about schools and their purpose is developing. In *Building Civic Capacity*, Stone et al. (2001, 26) present the reality many education bureaucracies are facing:

School boards and school administrators in the normal course of events tend to focus on the immediate responsibilities of running a system and, because they are an integral part of that system, their reflexes are to defend it. They do not ask fundamental questions about how effectively the community is being served. For those questions to be raised and pursued, people need to embrace a special kind of civic-mindedness. They do that by being brought together on a community-serving basis to confront a common need.

In a study of eleven cities, Stone and his colleagues (2001, 149) found “multiple but undigested” school reforms and acknowledged that beyond simple information deficits or bureaucratic resistance, the broader community had competing demands that drained energy from education reform efforts. The conclusion reached by the researchers was that an “inside-out” perspective of reform, focusing on improving school performance without addressing the numerous constraints, is being replaced by this new perspective which calls for building “lasting linkages with other important stakeholders in the broader community” (Stone et al. 2001, 149). This offers Latino communities the opportunity to begin the movement for fundamental change for our children.

Beyond asserting additional pressure, organizations across the country are seeking to empower the communities most harmed by the protectionist policies of a bureaucracy while still including public officials in their efforts. As Michael Lipsky wrote in “Street-Level Bureaucrats” (1994, 357), “Most citizens encounter government (if they encounter it at all) not through letters to congressmen or by attendance at school board meetings, but through their teachers and their children’s teachers...each encounter of this kind represents an instance of policy

delivery.”<sup>10</sup> These experiences of “policy delivery” have been overwhelmingly negative for Latinos in the public school system. The following organizations offer various applications of community organizing principles based in social capital theory and ultimately building civic capacity to transform the weak policy delivery our communities receive.

The Oakland Community Organization (OCO)<sup>11</sup> has arguably done more to revolutionize education in Oakland in recent years while still working with major political actors. Like the IAF, OCO has also used faith-based organizing to engage more than 40,000 Latino and other families in East, West, and North Oakland. Due to population growth and the negative effects of Proposition 13’s limitations on raising revenue for districts, the Oakland Unified School District had extremely overcrowded schools. Year-long instruction and constant addition of portable classrooms, coupled with moving teachers, did nothing to alleviate the problem. Emma Paulino, mother of an elementary student in a school of more than 1,400 students but built to hold 700 students, became an OCO leader when an organizer approached her in the late 1990s at her church to ask for her thoughts on her children’s education. OCO organizers helped parents in Oakland develop their leadership skills and pursue a powerful change to Oakland schools: transforming overcrowded schools, overwhelmingly located in Latino and African American low-income communities, into a system of small schools.<sup>12</sup>

Parents began visiting homes and schools, then attended small meetings, and later attended large meetings involving the city and school leadership to present their concerns. Families working with the Oakland Unified School District, OCO, educators, the teachers’ union, and Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools (BAYCES)<sup>13</sup> were able to agree eventually to the creation of the Small Schools Initiative. Since 2001, this initiative has allowed small autonomous schools in East Oakland—serving a large Hispanic community—to be created and has sponsored small schools incubators, which offer the services of BAYCES to create small, equitable schools. In 2000, this community mobilization led to the first new school in thirty years, an end to year-round multi-track schooling. Furthermore, 85 percent of Oakland voters voted for a \$300 million school bond for new schools that would rectify overcrowding at existing schools (Davidson 2002). The Bill Gates Foundation has also donated \$15 million to the Oakland community’s efforts to create small schools. Emma Paulino now serves as the family coordinator at one of the new schools, and many parents organized through OCO have risen to other leadership positions within the community and its schools.

Back in Texas, Austin Interfaith, an IAF affiliate, has organized over the issue of consistent and effective bilingual policies for the school district, since Hispanic students represent 47 percent of the students it serves. Schools servicing these students lacked materials in Spanish and had insufficient numbers of bilingual teachers (Simon et al. 2002).<sup>14</sup> With the involvement of parents and educators, the community prepared a set of demands and through their research defined “their vision for bilingual education at their school.” Open forums were held with other Alliance Schools (mentioned above) to direct public attention to the issue and transform district policy. This mobilization successfully secured materials and

pushed public officials in Austin for a commitment to the developed bilingual policy and resources.

These community-based organizations are beginning to offer the opportunity for parental engagement in education, mobilizing those that are most influential to the achievement of our students. Simultaneously, low-income Latino communities across the United States are organizing for political action—to be political actors in the process versus passive, silent players not represented or represented through interest groups in which they do not take leadership and direct the agenda. Over the past 14 years, local school councils (unique political bodies) created in Chicago have offered “an avenue for thousands of Latinos to improve their children’s education and get involved in civic life,” which community leaders hope will transform into interest by Latinos to run for higher office and attain greater political influence (Cholo 2003).<sup>15</sup>

The work of the Texas IAF, OCO, and other community-based organizations such as ACORN, the Comer School Development Program, DART, and the Coalition of Essential Schools<sup>16</sup> have incorporated social science prescriptions of social capital and civic capacity to community organizing and empowerment initiatives to ensure citizen participation and decision making in the education reform process. These actions are key to fundamental reform, which in California alone will disproportionately impact the future of Latinos who represent 42 percent of the student population. Oakland’s small autonomous schools will be worthy of following during this time of fiscal crisis and severe budget cuts to public education. The state is threatening to remove Superintendent Dennis Chacones, who has supported dramatic and positive changes for the district, due to Oakland Unified’s \$100 million budget deficit (May 2003, A19). While this section provided examples of these principles in practice, the following section will address the potential implications of these efforts.

### ***Implications and Recommendations to Change the Paradigm***

*“Civic mobilization is, of course, a political action. It is not a magical kind of consensus that simply emerges on occasion: it has to be created politically.”*

*—Clarence Stone et al., Building Civic Capacity (2001, 8)*

As demonstrated in the cases profiled, social capital can be built primarily within a school organization (bonding) and with the community it serves (bridging). Civic capacity can enhance social capital in a community but most importantly, transform the politics of education and empower silent stakeholders (chiefly poor and minority parents) to improve the educational opportunities of their children. This is not a call for a parent teachers association with more Latino representation—it is a proposal for something larger. This evolved from political science research on civic innovation and extends these principles to marginalized communities seeking public school improvement and ways to reinvent how schools serve

our students. How can community mobilization work to transform the bureaucracy and attain fundamental education reform?

There are several implications for community-based organizing and its potential to instigate or sustain education reforms and consistently engage Latino families, and I will refer to two types here. Organizing that is trying to change the internal operations of schools from the outside will be referred to as the *current exercise* of community mobilization. The second type of community mobilization discussed will be referred to as the *potential realization* of these organizing efforts and addresses the lessons they offer education leaders, reformers, and organizational theorists. The latter is crucial for those interested in promoting the education and opportunities available to Latino students.

### **Current Exercise**

Community mobilization exemplified by organizations described earlier has a strong potential to expand its base and empower Latino communities to develop their social capital and/or civic capacity for political action. The increasing movement towards testing to measure student and school success, susceptible to political dilution to avoid true accountability, is an incomplete answer to educational equity. This or any other top-down reforms within educational institutions cannot alone create long-term change in the culture of education in America. These reforms do not change the realities of challenges facing low-income, Latino, and other minority communities, which many community-based organizers are seeking to overcome.

Carmen Sirianni and Lewis Friedland explain in *Civic Innovation in America: Community Empowerment, Public Policy, and the Movement for Civic Renewal* (2001) the distrust that emerges from top-down reforms both in the general community and among political actors. They argue that community organizing occurring in America has “helped to establish significant policy supports” and generate civic renewal (Sirianni and Friedland 2001, 80). While community organizing itself may lead to conflict as we confront the disservice of public institutions to Latinos and work to rebuild trust, the efforts of organizers and parent leaders to bridge relationships and inform the education services offered to Latino students has proven crucial to empowerment. While President Bush has pushed for transparency in recent reform legislation, community empowered schools go one step further, evolving the concepts of parental involvement and school reform to parental engagement and the transformation of how public schools operate—seeking to truly integrate our Latino families and children in the process.

While such grassroots strategies can work to assure policy implementation and fundamental change within schools, there are “hidden costs of social capital” to educators and administrators (Shirley 2002, 95). The parental engagement as espoused by many organizations is a threat to already beleaguered public schools. Shirley details these struggles in his research. Based on his observations in Texas, with a high-stakes accountability system, he recommends a political strategy to deal with the “polarized political climate” and reduce resistance by public officials (Shirley 1997, 291). He lists several recommendations that I believe should guide further efforts:

1. Defend the simple notion that the public sector has to have strong public schools. He asserts that to create this common civic culture a commitment to this idea is crucial. Neighborhood Walks work to accomplish this.
2. Build strong community-based organizations to effectively advocate for programs that will benefit poor and working class children.
3. Promote community engagement in schools by contacting local clergy to begin to develop sponsoring committees for these organizations. This method has been extremely successful in mobilizing Latinos across the country around numerous community and political issues, including education.
4. Maintain a strict sense of boundaries about what these organizations can and cannot do in these communities and develop collaboratives with those that can assist in school reform (Shirley 1997, 291-294). Organizers are there to help promote the space and connections, not determine the policy answers, but respect and support community empowerment. This is especially important with immigrant and Latino families to develop trust in their potential and right to influence and change the system.

These strategies emphasize a need to develop civic capacity as well as social capital. As recommended by researchers, incorporating the institutions in change efforts while still working from the outside-in greatly empowers Latino communities.<sup>17</sup>

For the current exercise of community organizing to advance education reform, it is essential that their efforts remain nonpartisan (Sirianni and Friedland 2001, 234). By incorporating and recognizing a vast number of interests in the public sector and community, organization efforts may have greater political strength and enhance the relationships among students, families, different racial and ethnic groups, schools, business, and public officials. Congregation-based organizing represents a substantial untapped base that may help reform-minded citizens implement school changes and transform the school into the eventual “center of the community” although, as Shirley suggests, this potential may require a shift in our understanding of the role of religious institutions. There are numerous implications and considerations on the expansion of community-based organizing around education reform that remain to be explored. For the purposes of this article, however, the role of these organizations—to help empower our neediest communities to take leadership roles and participate in efforts to improve the educational services they receive—is a notable change impacting the current reform movement.

## Potential Realization

The inspiration to explore the role of social capital, civic capacity, and community organizing to improve and transform schools came from experiences with a developing autonomous school, Think College Now! (TCN). David Silver and community members—parents, students, educators, etc.—in the Fruitvale community of Oakland, Calif., initiated TCN because of the lack of educational opportunities in the Oakland Unified School District. Through attendance at various conferences sponsored by OCO as well as relations with parents from his teaching and work in the bay area, Silver came in contact with families that were seeking change. Over the past four years, a school design team was created incorporating numerous stakeholders in the largely Hispanic community to build an elementary school with an early college focus that will open in fall 2003. Silver has incorporated community-building/-organizing strategies to create and organize this community school—including community potlucks, monthly organizational meetings with specific teams, and quarterly retreats with all stakeholders. I was inspired by the collaboration of all parties to recruit, plan, and develop this school to explore how and why community building techniques may apply to a more effective school organization.

Alternatives to the traditional model of schools have been rising to the forefront in recent years, some resembling the traditional school and some transforming the governance and decision-making functions of schools. Various school models are utilized to create new charter or autonomous schools, many serving large amounts of Latino students across the country. Through observations of these models and research, I have developed a theory for the potential realization of community mobilization in low-income and Latino neighborhoods to create/reorganize educational bureaucracies.<sup>18</sup> I propose that education leaders seek to incorporate various members of the general and education community to work toward changes within a school (or in a system that constrains improvements in a school) using community mobilization practices. This model would allow real parental engagement to occur. Numerous researchers have validated that this engagement is key to student achievement. Communities will experience the increased investment (bridging social capital) by all stakeholders, which may positively inform the culture and progress of a school. Latino families—often disconnected to schools due to their bureaucratic structures and language barriers—would be provided opportunities and expectations of engagement in the school process. Educators would begin to traverse cultural and social barriers that currently prevent children from reaching the opportunities they deserve. Organizations such as the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) offers development assistance to those starting charters that service large populations of Hispanic students to engage and truly serve their community. This theory would allow for the expansion of the narrow interpretation of roles in the community to reach new heights, as is done in other sectors when the roles and expectations of stakeholders are transformed.<sup>19</sup>

Such a model is most applicable to developing successful charters or reconstituted schools (which also serve many Latino students). Putnam (2000) argues that the two most controversial reforms—charter schools and vouchers, both seeking

to empower parents and parental decision making—may succeed in demonstrating the true effectiveness of social capital (versus market forces) in student achievement. Utilizing such community-building methods may create the “infrastructure of support” charters need, according to the research on charter school challenges by Bryan C. Hassel (1999, 2003). Charters, with a “new beginning” that invests and empowers the community, will be able to sustain the longevity of efforts to push for student achievement, not the institution for its own sake. This is in sharp contrast to the consumer or traditional models, focused on the institution’s survival (or protection) while employing methods that do not ensure community engagement or civic capacity that can sustain fundamental changes necessary for progress. It is in sharp contrast to current policies that do not empower our community.

The window of opportunity for new schools in failing districts is the momentum and mounting political support needed for these changes. As the accountability movement expands, and districts and states worry about the consequences of test results, the Latino community has tremendous untapped leverage to push for change. At a minimum, the potential realization and current exercise of community mobilization to transform the education bureaucracy force administrators and educators to reexamine their roles in the communities they serve. A sample of schools serving at-risk youth demonstrated the “infrequency” with which the key builders of civic capacity, school principals, worked with community agencies and businesses and the “lack of importance attributed to this role”(Goldring and Hausman 2001, 205).

Leadership experts Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky (2002) distinguish between technical problems and adaptive challenges. Technical problems require expertise, while adaptive challenges—such as transforming the education bureaucracy—require a change in values, attitudes, and behaviors in order for an organization to sustain change.<sup>20</sup> Education reform is an adaptive challenge. While the long-term effects of community mobilization strategies in schools must still be researched, those interested in educational leadership and impacting long-term improvements in their schools and neighborhoods would be wise to examine the potential of a new organizational theory and perspective of education reform.<sup>21</sup>

### ***Conclusions***

*“Public confidence is a precious treasure, elusive at times, difficult to secure and maintain, but absolutely essential for good schools.”*

—Building Public Confidence in the Schools 1949

There are two directions public school reform in the United States is being driven toward: centralization and decentralization. Centralization would involve central examinations and more standardization that are currently inadequate to meet our students’ needs, whereas decentralization returns us to a community focus that

may perpetuate segregation and inadequate resource distribution or may allow communities to build the schools they need. Informed by our history of education policy, are we heading back toward the community, perhaps even decentralized to a large degree? While current political momentum suggests that centralization may be the case, research is demonstrating that “parental and community engagement are at the center of current efforts to improve schooling” (Putnam 2000, 305). Harvard researcher Archon Fung’s (2001) work on movements toward empowerment deliberation in policing and schools in Chicago suggest that neither will occur, as local units are held accountable and centralized interventions further enhance the “deliberative, participatory, and empowered character of otherwise isolated local actors.”<sup>22</sup>

This paper has sought to present a new perspective that is emerging in education reform and that incorporates social capital theory and research on civic capacity, their development by community-based organizations, and successes in largely Latino communities. Although more research is needed to determine a relationship with student performance and academic outcomes (as well as civic participation changes in marginalized communities), the movement toward increased mobilization efforts to improve education in Latino communities is one worth examining for its possible political and social implications. The potential realization theory of community mobilization to create new schools or reorganize educational bureaucracies is one that I will continue to explore and develop as I follow two contrasting school models.<sup>23</sup> I believe the potential of this theory to truly engage ever-growing Latino populations in the education of our children is great.

In *Building Civic Capacity: The Politics of Reforming Urban Schools* (Stone et al. 2001), researchers ask “What about the social reconstruction of the city?”<sup>24</sup> Through their work on civic innovation, community empowerment, and its effects on public policy, Sirianni and Friedland (2001, 234) have found that movements for civic renewal are “reconstructing identities and reframing the scope and meaning of civic action.” After numerous “symbolic reforms” and the realization by political figures that our country is truly a mix of diverse peoples and needs, this reconstruction and reframing of civic action to include Latinos and other underserved populations may be precisely what public schools need.

### *Endnotes*

<sup>1</sup> “Parental engagement” is a term from Dennis Shirley’s *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform* (1997) and the Texas Industrial Areas Foundation, which seeks to actively engage parents versus mere parental involvement. The distinction will be explained in a later section.

<sup>2</sup> The authors of *Building Civic Capacity* (Stone et al. 2001, 50-51) claim that education exists as a “high-reverberation” policy subsystem due to their “frequent reshuffling of mobilized stakeholders, multiple and strongly-felt competing value and belief systems, deeply held stakes by both educators (the professional providers of education) and parents (the consumers), and ambiguous boundaries,” making equilibrium extremely problematic. Due to its large size and budget within a community, education represents a “formidable political, social, and economic force” in the local community.



<sup>3</sup> Refers to Baumgartner and Jones (1993) term of an “institutional legacy.” The authors contend that relationships must be altered and in education, represent a political challenge.

<sup>4</sup> This article deals primarily with efforts in states with large Hispanic populations. According to the 1998 Digest of Education Statistics, 73 percent of the nation’s Hispanics reside in five states: California has the highest number (40 percent), with Texas ranked second (19 percent), followed by New York (9 percent), Florida (8 percent), and Illinois (4 percent).

<sup>5</sup> Paraphrased from selections in Shirley 1997, 61, 69, 75.

<sup>6</sup> Shirley offered numerous examples of support and effectiveness from educators to community leaders and clergy for community mobilization efforts to support school reforms and prompt institutional changes.

<sup>7</sup> This paper will not offer ample space to explore the involvement of religious institutions, which Shirley covers extensively in *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform* (1997). For the purposes of this paper, a tie with religious institutions involves cooperation and support in providing services or reform efforts in order for a school to be successful. The use of a church as a forum for change is expanded, but separation of church and state—the church not influencing educational initiatives but offering support and an initial base for organizing—is maintained. IAF’s strategy on this will be explained in a later section.

<sup>8</sup> As Shirley mentions, elementary school teachers were more focused on the whole development of a student versus secondary school teachers who focused on improving knowledge of subject matter and were more concerned with state exams. Larson and Murtadha (2002) found that research has also suggested that education leaders must be concerned with issues of social justice in order to create meaningful educational reform—impacting social capitalization possibilities in these communities.

<sup>9</sup> Similar to recent efforts by the IAF, the Direct Action for Research Training Network (DART), seeks to organize congregations in six states around “core values like justice, fairness, love, and respect.” In 2000, affiliated organizations working throughout the state of Florida to acquire funding for a reading program called Direct Instruction decided to mount a statewide campaign in which community leaders met with state legislators (Center for Community Change 2000, 14). (The Center for Community Change has worked to support local initiatives and create community organizations to improve public policy)

<sup>10</sup> Smylie, Conley, and Marks (2002, 185) argue that the development of school leadership should go beyond individual leaders but to developing leaders collectively and that any new approaches to teacher leadership will not be effective unless supported by “broader organizational and institutional contexts in which they develop and function.” This supports the conclusions by Stone et al. (2001) to engage a broader community in reform efforts.

<sup>11</sup> OCO is an affiliate of the Pacific Institute for Community Organizations (PICO) that, like the IAF, is a nationwide effort of faith-based community organizations.

<sup>12</sup> Parents at OCO compared test scores and performance of small schools in the highlands of Oakland to the overcrowded schools’ performance in the “flatlands” and were motivated to fight for this change. Substantial amounts of education research support that, for at-risk, low-income, and minority student groups, small classes dramatically reduce dropout rates, raise teacher expectations, reduce expectations based on race and class, and increase student performance and outcomes.

<sup>13</sup> The Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) has a national network of 800 schools (mostly public and independently affiliated) and regional centers. CES has developed 10 common principles based in

research and practice that transform the organization and conception of a school. These principles include an emphasis on depth of knowledge and mastery (versus covering content); individualized instruction; small schools; student-as-worker and teacher-as-coach (versus deliverer of services); multiple assessments; parents as “key collaborators and vital members of the community;” teachers and administrators as generalists (general education) first and specialists (in a subject area) second, with multiple obligations and commitment to entire school effort; administrative and budget targets to maintain smaller student loads (which may include reduction/elimination of services in traditional schools); and model democratic and inclusive practices toward all affected by the school. Initiated in the late 1980s in several states, CES has expanded and offers services to schools including school design, coaching, and implementation assessment workshops guided by the idea that learning should be connected to the community and the world outside of the school. These include “accountability dialogues” and other organizing methods similar to the work of the IAF. CES has demonstrated successes in low-income and minority communities. A 2001 survey of 41 CES schools demonstrated higher college attendance rates than the national average for all racial and ethnic groups, higher participation rates in algebra at the eighth-grade level, smaller classes, and significantly lower crime rates in coalition schools. Eighty-seven percent of Latino graduates of CES schools enter college versus just 42 percent of Latino graduates nationwide entering college. A more comprehensive examination may be needed to fully interpret the effectiveness of these principles, but CES demonstrates the transformation of a paradigm of how to deliver educational services that incorporates a model of community organizing principles (creating more institutionalized or bonding social capital in this case). Robert Putnam (2000, 304) argues that studies demonstrate that “smaller schools tend to outperform large schools in large part because smaller schools afford more opportunities and encouragement for students to engage with one another in face-to-face extracurricular activities and to take responsibility for school clubs,” etc.

<sup>14</sup> Elaine Simon and Eva Gold of Research for Action performed this research with Chris Brown of Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform.

<sup>15</sup> More than 1,000 Latinos, according to the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials serve on the school councils, in a district with 40 percent Latino students.

<sup>16</sup> DART and ACORN are other community-based organizations that have worked in diverse neighborhoods across the country on a variety of issues, including education reform.

<sup>17</sup> In their eleven-city study, the authors of *Building Civic Capacity* (2001) also found failed attempts toward decentralization that must be noted—mainly due to political barriers and failed implementation.

<sup>18</sup> Models for schools to serve at-risk populations I have observed in the past year have included: the development of entrepreneurial schools, operating as a business with a board of trustees in Roxbury, Mass., opening next fall, as well as a school in south Texas in its fourth year following the KIPP model and opening as a typical charter school with stricter academic and behavioral expectations, and TCN. The Tripod Project, under the direction of Dr. Ronald Ferguson seeks to build social capital within suburban schools.

<sup>19</sup> Stone et al. (2001, 160, 167) discusses companies such as GE and Boeing that transformed their institutions by emphasizing the “social architecture” and “cultural transformation” of the companies to be inclusive of all parties and stakeholders.

<sup>20</sup> Heifetz and Linsky (2002) argue that the reaction of those facing an adaptive process is to avoid the painful adjustments and potential loss. In the case of community mobilization that threatens the expertise of the education establishment, there will be resistance to a reevaluation of the role of the school in the community and wider expectation for outside factors such as the parent, the community, and the superintendent (the other versus us) to change. This is supported by Hess’s (1999) finding of “symbolic reforms” that consistently occur in weak school districts and are praised but rarely merit any long-term change.

<sup>21</sup> Joseph Murphy (2002) refers to school administrators as “community builders.” As supported by Furman and Starratt (2002), such a concept of a democratic community “recultures the profession” because it focuses on serving the common good in a multicultural society. The authors also note the difficulties educators and parents have encountered in trying to move away from the traditional model. Goldring and Hausman (2001) in their research on civic capacity and principals as builders of civic capacity recommend that administrative preparation programs be modified.

<sup>22</sup> The topic of community participation and deliberation are explored more fully in Fung 2001.

<sup>23</sup> A school initiated by the community utilizing community-building techniques that transforms the traditional model school organization with increased parental engagement, as well as a middle school in Boston with a board of trustees and more top-down administration are both opening in fall 2003.

<sup>24</sup> Numerous observations and recommendations by several researchers were not able to be fully explored in this piece. However, it is important to note that Stone and colleagues (2001, 1998) offered slight support for mayoral accountability of schools as a potential response to the political challenge of developing civic capacity (noting that school boards, meant to be apolitical, have become “stepping stones” to future political office).

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## ***Political Landscape for Latinos Remains Fertile, but Community Still Learning to Crawl***

***Larry Gonzalez***

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The public attention paid over the last few years to the growing political influence of Latinos has been difficult to miss. In fact, as far back as the late 1980s, some national commentators dubbed the 1990s “the Decade of the Hispanic.” Then, Latinos were viewed as a potential political force, with an emphasis on potential. Today, the potential of the Latino electorate continues to be extolled while Latinos are crawling toward the realization of that potential.

While the size and scope of the Latino vote and the number of Latino elected and appointed officials is undoubtedly increasing, many national Latino advocacy groups say that this expansion has yet to fully translate into a focus by either party on policy issues of concern to Latinos. Furthermore, in spite of the good news about the political growth and maturity of Latinos, there remains a significant gap between the size of the potential Latino electorate and the number of Latinos who actually vote. This suggests that there is a great deal more that policymakers and

the Latino community itself can do to maximize the contributions that Hispanic voters make to the electoral process.

The November 2000 presidential elections can serve as a starting point to assess political trends and the role Latinos played this past election cycle. Policymakers, political observers, and the public paid close attention to Latino voters in the 2000 presidential election to see if the momentum toward Latino political empowerment established in the 1990s would be sustained. The presidential candidates seemed to have no doubts about the key role of Latino voters—both parties engaged in unprecedented outreach efforts to the Latino community during their campaigns. In some respects, Latino participation in November 2000 showed a dramatic increase. A record number of Latinos were registered to vote (7.5 million) and cast ballots (5.9 million) on election day. The number of Latino voters increased by 20 percent since the 1996 presidential election, while the number of non-Latino voters increased by only 5 percent. Thus, the Latino share of the electorate continued to grow, increasing from 4.69 percent in 1996, to 4.9 percent in 1998, to 5.35 percent in 2000.

However, the participation rates of Latinos in November 2000 (2002 Latino voter turnout numbers are not yet available) reveal the political empowerment challenges that still face the Latino community. The percentage of Latino U.S. citizens who voted (45.1 percent) continued to lag behind the rate for non-Latinos (60.6 percent) with the gap between the two rates remaining virtually unchanged since 1996. Consequently, the dramatic growth in the number of Latino voters is not being accompanied by equal growth in the turnout rates of Latino voters. Between 1996 and 2000, the number of Latino voting age citizens increased by 17.4 percent from 11.2 million to 13.2 million. In comparison, the number of Latino voters increased by 20 percent. Thus, to continue the momentum toward full Latino political empowerment, our community will need to step up efforts to naturalize those seeking citizenship, register them to vote, and ensure their participation. The trends in Latino participation rates suggests the continuing challenge of educating Latinos about the importance of making their voices heard on the entire spectrum of issues that face voters in every election.

The 2001 municipal elections in New York, Los Angeles, and Houston, America's first, second, and fourth largest cities respectively, offer additional evidence of a growing Latino voice. While some observers concluded that losses by Latino candidates for mayor in each of these cities represented electoral failure for the Latino community, arguably the real winners in those elections were Latino voters who performed in historic voting patterns and demonstrated they can control the future of their cities.

In New York City and Houston particularly, Latino voters reinforced the notion that their vote is "up for grabs." In New York, after the primary run-off campaign between public advocate Mark Green and Bronx borough president Fernando Ferrer alienated Latino political and community leaders, Latino voters expressed their dissatisfaction with the outcome by providing the Republican candidate in the general election with 43 percent of their vote. In addition, while Latinos had voted in historic numbers in the first two elections in which Ferrer was a candidate, his absence in the general also cooled Latino performance. This led many

political observers to surmise that the Latino electoral performance in the New York general election was tantamount to a Latino castigation of the Democratic Party's standard-bearer for his perceived slights to Latinos.

In Los Angeles, a city with a near-majority Latino population, the candidacy of Antonio Villaraigosa was perhaps the most celebrated Latino candidacy. While Mr. Villaraigosa managed to receive the most votes in the primary election, he fell short in the run-off with fellow Democrat Jim Hahn. Latino voters represented 22 percent of the citywide electorate in the run-off on election day, for the first time surpassing the share of African American and Jewish voters. While Latinos overwhelmingly voted for Villaraigosa, their turnout was not enough to give him the victory and overcome an African American and conservative White voter bloc that gave Hahn his margin of victory. Notably, however, this election did result in the election of the first Latino to citywide office in more than a century, with the victory of Rocky Delgadillo as city attorney.

In the Houston election, Latino voter support for Orlando Sanchez, a conservative Cuban American in a majority Democratic Mexican American Latino community, placed him in a run-off with a two-term incumbent mayor. In the run-off, Latino voters made up 19 percent of the city electorate, the highest proportion yet in any election. More significantly, 70 percent of Latino voters gave their support to the Republican Latino candidate, bringing him within only a few hundred votes of upsetting the incumbent. Post-election surveys indicated that Latinos in Houston were aware of Mr. Sanchez's political and national origin and that their vote revealed a willingness by Latinos to cross party lines to support a Latino candidate, even one whom other Latino elected officials actively opposed.

The 2002 elections marked the first election cycle for Latinos after a generally disappointing 2001 redistricting process. Unlike the 1991 redistricting that led to a near doubling in the number of Latinos in the U.S. House after the 1992 elections, the 2001 redistricting process could be described as the "incumbent protection plan." The new congressional district lines presented few new districts where Latino voters could elect the candidates of their choice. This happened despite a 53 percent increase in the Latino population recorded during the 2000 census. In general, the incumbent-protection-driven maps solidified the current hold on the majority of congressional districts and created relatively few new swing districts.

However, there were still a number of political gains that reflect the growing Latino participation in our nation's political process. In the 2002 elections, three additional Latinos were elected to Congress. The new Latino members of Congress represent new districts created after reapportionment determined that California, Florida, and Arizona would gain seats.

The new California congressional seat created with heavy concentrations of Latino voters elected Congresswoman Linda Sanchez (D). In Florida, Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart (R) won a newly created Miami-Dade seat rich in Latino voters. And Congressman Raul Grijalva won the new seat carved out of Arizona's Latino-heavy southern region.

Congresswoman Sanchez joins her sister, Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (D-Calif.), and Congressman Diaz-Balart joins his brother, Congressman Lincoln

Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.), in the House of Representatives. It is the first time a pair of sisters and a pair of brothers will serve in Congress at the same time.

In the state houses, Latinos made significant strides in states such as Georgia, Maryland, and Massachusetts, where Latinos are seen as an emerging population and do not have long histories of civic participation. One Latino state senator and two Latino state representatives were elected to the Georgia State House, becoming the first Latinos to serve in the Georgia legislative body. In Maryland, two Latinos were elected to districts that are not designed for Latino representation.

Latino political progress in state houses is particularly important because state legislators have the power to address the issues that Latinos and all Americans care about the most—education, health care, good jobs, and better housing. Many political observers believe that to cross over and make gains in areas that do not traditionally see Latinos hold elected office is a sign of political maturity. There is hope that it is a trend we will continue to see nationwide. Still, there were only moderate gains in states with a greater tradition of Latino voter participation. Consequently, the election was a mixed bag for Latino representation, but the positive gains shine very brightly.

On the state level, nine Latinos are serving in statewide office as of the beginning of this year, including Bill Richardson (D), who was elected New Mexico's first Latino governor in nearly two decades. In addition to Governor Richardson, eight other Latinos hold elected statewide positions. Some highlights for Latinos in the 2002 elections include:

- Republican Brian Sandoval, first Latino Nevada attorney general.
- Three new Latino members of Congress: Mario Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.), Raul Grijalva (D-Ariz.), Linda Sanchez (D-Calif.).
- Christine Baca, first Latina elected to Colorado State Board of Education.
- Sylvia Garcia, first Latina to serve on commissioner's court in Harris County, Tex.
- Latino voters helped defeat the Colorado initiative to limit bilingual education.
- Latinos helped win the Florida initiative to limit public school class size.
- New Latino legislators in Georgia, Maryland, Illinois, Arizona, Florida, California, and New York, among others.

An additional Latino milestone was achieved when U.S. Representative Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) was elected by his congressional colleagues as Democratic caucus chair, the third highest-ranking position among House Democrats. Rep. Menendez, as the number three-ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives, participates in policy meetings among the Democratic leadership. With no Latino leadership in the White House or the Senate, Menendez becomes the voice the nation will most often hear articulating policy positions and the face Latinos may likely come to associate most with national issues. Some have already suggested that Rep. Menendez is now positioned for the next step as pos-



sible speaker of the House, a job no Latino has ever been in line for, which is third in the line of succession, after the president and vice president.

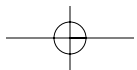
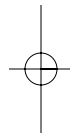
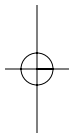
More evidence surfaced in 2002 in regards to the importance of Latino voters as political candidates did more than ever to reach out to Latinos, running a record number of Spanish-language television ads. Republicans in particular claimed solid successes from the efforts.

According to a Hispanic voter project study by Johns Hopkins University, at least 20 gubernatorial candidates, six U.S. Senate candidates, more than a dozen U.S. House candidates, and many more down-ballot candidates ran Spanish-language ads during the 2002 election cycle, spending more than \$16 million. In addition, the Republican National Committee carried out its commitment to recruit more Latino candidates by fielding a record 93 candidates at all levels of office. According to RNC estimates, at least 22 of the 93 non-incumbent Latino Republicans running for office were elected across the country. In turn, Democrats stepped up their efforts both with money and manpower to ensure that their Latino candidates were positioned for victory. All of these factors combined suggest that both parties have finally gotten the message: If you want to run a winning campaign, you must have a strategy to reach and engage Latino voters.

As the Latino community moves toward the 2004 presidential election, its substantial growth masks a more complicated set of dynamics; that is, the number of potential voters is substantially larger than the number who actually vote. Indeed, a large portion of Latino adults are not voters because they lack citizenship status. Combine the youthfulness of the Latino population—nearly a third of the 36 million Latinos in the United States are under 18—with the substantial numbers of immigrants who have not yet naturalized and we can begin to understand the factors limiting the potential of the Latino electorate.

On the positive side, a recent Pew Hispanic Center study showed that nearly one-third of Latino immigrants intend to seek citizenship or are in the process of applying for citizenship. Data compiled by NALEO suggest, however, that once Latino immigrants become U.S. citizens, they are more likely than native-born Latinos to vote. Both nationally and in California, Florida, New York and Texas, the percentage of Latino naturalized citizens who cast ballots in 2000 was greater than the comparable percentage for the Latino native-born. In contrast, in all of these states, the non-Latino naturalized turnout rate in 2000 was lower than that of the native born, although in Florida, the rates of the two groups were extremely close (59.2 percent of the non-Latino naturalized compared to 60.5 percent of the non-Latino native born). Nationally, and in California, Florida, and New York, Latino naturalized voter turnout rates exceeded those of the native born for both 1996 and 1998. In Texas, 2000 was the first biennial November election since 1996 where a greater percentage of Latino naturalized citizens cast ballots than native-born Latinos.

Whatever the outcome of future elections, there is one certainty: Every election cycle breaks new ground and moves the Latino community a step closer to political maturity and full participation in our nation's democracy.



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## ***Bilingual Bashing Makes Good Politics: The Case of Massachusetts***

***State Senator Jarrett Barrios***

*Jarrett Barrios (D-Mass.) entered public office when he was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1998. As a state representative, he led successful efforts to create a state low income tax credit, to institute Massachusetts's first new affordable housing production program in over a decade, as well as to create a state affordable housing trust. He passed legislation to require interpreter services in hospital emergency rooms and to improve benefits to widows of disabled veterans.*

*In 2002, Barrios was elected to the state Senate. Now Sen. Barrios is currently sponsoring legislation to protect consumers from unfair bank fees and lending practices, to raise the wages of human service workers, and to decrease the disparities in disease outcomes for uninsured Massachusetts residents. He is chair of the Committee on Public Safety and vice-chair on the Committee of Health Care. Sen. Barrios also holds positions on the Committees of Human Services and Third Reading and is a founding member of the Latino American Caucus.*

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Running for governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Mitt Romney promised to put children first. Foremost among his ideas for education reform, the governor pledged to teach all Massachusetts children English. The voters approved a similar "promise" as a ballot question, the so-called "Unz initiative." Were Romney's motives as pure as our children's best interests? The answer reveals more than a little bit about the man whom a slim majority elected last November and about his vision for governing the most disenfranchised among us.

In Romney's campaign advertisements and in his debates, he embraced the Unz initiative and pounded home the importance of English language immersion as the means of teaching immigrant children English. As governor, Romney has stood by the Unz initiative, a far more radical restructuring of the education system for immigrant children than proposals passed at the ballot box in California and Arizona in recent years.

The "education" proposal bankrolled by California millionaire and conservative crusader Ron Unz in 2002 has turned upside-down the established system of English language acquisition for immigrant children in Massachusetts. It creates a one-year segregated immersion program for all English language learners. After one year, children are placed in standard classrooms with no further language support from the schools. The law mandates that the state provide the same

immersion curriculum for all children, regardless of their age, educational background, special needs, or circumstances. It is one-size-fits-all.

Until this initiative passed last year, the law on bilingual education was codified in Chapter 71A of the Massachusetts General Laws and restricted educators to the Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) model of language acquisition. Since 1972, it has been the only legal form of bilingual education. It explicitly prohibited variance from its curriculum guidelines. And since 1972, numerous school districts resisted full implementation of this law, some because they refused to even offer TBE and others because they sought to offer programs that they viewed as more effective for some.

Despite the facial requirements of Chapter 71A, curricular alternatives to TBE made great strides in the 1990s. While not explicitly legal, these TBE alternatives flourished in the shadow of the law. One example is found in the two-way immersion programs in Framingham, Salem, Cambridge, and Boston that integrate English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students into classes where all children are immersed in both languages. MCAS scores for these children far surpass students in other forms of bilingual education. In Cambridge, the median fourth-grade MCAS score in English for native Spanish speakers in two-way immersion surpassed the median city-wide score for native English speakers—an extraordinary achievement.

Another example is the structured immersion programs that allow for 80 percent English immersion and retain 20 percent native language instruction for the child. Such a model recognizes the child's native language not as a deficit, but as strength. It helps to develop bilingualism as part of a world language curriculum for English-speaking children. All children can and, under Education Reform Act of 1993, must learn proficiency in a second language by the time they graduate from high school. Structured immersion has become a means to seamlessly transition all children into a supportive and successful world language curriculum.

Indeed, these are just two of several brands of bilingual education that remained technically illegal in Massachusetts since 1972 despite their proliferation and comparative success. Their success points out a path through the ideological morass surrounding the commonwealth's past and current systems toward a thoughtful program that is focused on the educational needs of children and not the political needs of public officials.

Despite the proliferation of successful programs, Governor Romney chose to support a one-size-fits-all Unz immersion model. His support means these successful alternatives will be dismantled. How can a governor who has studiously sought an image of policy reformer be so uninterested in proven policy successes? The answer is simple: it is not the policy, but the politics.

In his campaign, he succeeded politically with this immersion campaign theme. In part, he exploited baseline differences in the political demographics of Massachusetts that distinguish it from other states (like California and Texas) in which bilingual education persists as an issue. Although election-day exit polls show Latinos voted for Democratic candidate Shannon O'Brien over Romney by huge margins (10 to 1 statewide), there were simply not enough Latinos to form a bulwark for O'Brien across the state.

But who votes in Massachusetts is just the beginning of the differences. Romney's willingness to use strategies of political dissociation, and a Clintonesque brand of malleability and poll-tested messages, brand the governor as capable of more than your average Massachusetts Republican. And despite his public musings of high-minded reform, these decisions appear to be made solely for their political consequence, not their policy content.

Mitt Romney articulated the core principles of the anti-bilingual proponents over the course of his gubernatorial campaign. His core message was and has remained to be his support of English-immersion. He avoided specifics in his debates. He resorted to the trite and disingenuous aphorisms: "Our children must learn English."

Romney's stated reason for supporting this initiative was the importance of correcting the failed programs then in place. Yet, his "argument" lacked internal coherence. Support for the Unz initiative means, in no uncertain terms, only one official bilingual curriculum. He replicates the same structural flaw which he and other "reformers" criticized about TBE: a system which mandates one form of English language acquisition for all children—regardless of age, educational preparedness, or English-language ability upon entering the schools.

The Romney-Unz one-size-fits-all reform initiative, like the TBE law it replaced, turns its back on the past 29 years of academic research on children's language acquisition and practical classroom experience. Sure, the kindergarten child who soaks up new language like a sponge will derive great benefit from immersion. But what will happen to the 14-year-old coming to the United States from a war-torn country with only basic literacy in her own language, after immersion into a one-year, sink-or-swim English program? Under this plan, she must become fluent in English in one year—and fluent enough to be in standard classrooms to succeed with no additional language or learning support. Can this be the governor whose campaign talked about the paramount importance of learning English?

Of course, Romney supports the initiative's "opt-out" as a check against those "exceptional" cases where a child does not thrive in her one year of shock therapy. But the governor refused to support any amendments to the law to obligate a school district to provide alternatives for these kids. You can opt out of immersion, but have nothing to opt into—a real choice! If "English for immigrants" was so central to his campaign, where is the thoughtful approach to guarantee positive outcomes for the newcomer communities?

Moreover, remembering Romney's campaign pledge to support English language acquisition, a reasonable voter might ask why he would support banning successful programs like two-way immersion and structured immersion programs, which are national models in teaching English. Indeed, as the policy helmsman of the commonwealth, he misses the extraordinary opportunity to harness public frustration with a failing system into the energy to open up the law to diverse forms of bilingual education. These alternatives to the status quo owe their evolution and current existence to a simple fact ignored by Governor Romney. Good policy dictates that one size rarely fits all.

Romney continues to try to fashion himself the reformist gentleman motivated by reform. What lies beneath the cloud of rhetoric, however, seems to have little to do with good policy and everything to do with old-style politics.

During the campaign against Shannon O'Brien, Romney repeated his theme that children should learn English. He refused to acknowledge basic policy deficiencies in the Unz initiative. Instead, he and his lieutenant, Kerry Healey, manufactured memories of immigrants past. In one notable debate, Healey described her own immigrant mother telling her that "speaking English was the key to success."

Their appeals were not to the immigrants of today, nor to the Mayflower blue-bloods. Instead, this strategy aimed squarely at those who remember accented grandparents with unending stories of the Old Country. "Remember our parents and grandparents; they learned English without bilingual programs," was a familiar refrain by Romney surrogates on the campaign trail. Romney ignored the higher dropout rates and lower educational expectations of previous generations of immigrant children destined for factories and other blue-collar jobs, and applied yesterday's logic to today's newcomers.

While far from sound policy, these arguments make good politics. The politics of dissociation were played expertly, if not cynically, by Romney. By the tens of thousands, Italian Americans in Revere, Polish Americans in Springfield, and Jewish Americans in Stoughton nodded back at Romney's commercials: If my parents could learn English, these new people can, too. These children and grandchildren of immigrants were shown the means of dissociating themselves from the more recent immigrant experience of Latinos, Haitians, and Asians.

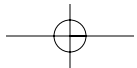
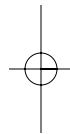
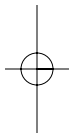
Romney calls himself pro-immigrant and pro-minority. He fashioned many a photo opportunity at religious services with minority leaders, services which explained implicitly why he was there and required little of him in the way of substance. In the same moment, he proffered an immersion program that eliminates the few legal protections those immigrant parents have to make sure reluctant, under-resourced, or unfriendly school districts provide their children with a quality education. It is a policy that turns a blind eye to nearly three decades of study and practice. It nostalgically—and politically—recalls a better age where it all just somehow worked.

By necessity, Romney's triangulation of the bilingual education issue leaves open the possibility of change in "views" as governor. We saw this Clintonesque sleight of hand during the campaign and since its completion. During his campaign, after much criticism he backed off one aspect of the Unz initiative, a section that gives parents standing to sue teachers in any part of the instruction of the child beyond the first year if performed in a language other than English. Under this part of the law, if a Spanish-speaking student who did not fare well in his immersion year now finds himself in an English-only classroom, and he asks in Spanish for permission to go to the bathroom, the teacher could be sued by his parents if she answered in Spanish. It was quite reasonable for Romney to back off publicly from this principle.

Since the campaign, he has reneged on his pledge to support reforming this portion of the bilingual education initiative, and those who relied on his pledge are

left to wonder if any policy conviction ever backed up his promise. Or was it just old-school politics?

With a few months distance and a big new office, his campaign cries of concern for immigrant children learning English now seem to ring hollow. This strategy has manifested itself in other venues, most notably in the budget debate and in his double takes on homeland security and higher education. All these policy compromises should be profoundly disturbing to the Massachusetts voter that cast a vote for Romney as a vote for reform. Good policy will be the last reason Romney changes course on bilingual education. How many other reforms will yield themselves up as merely political jabs at an imagined establishment? How many good policies will find their way to the dustbins labeled, simply, bad politics?





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## ***Gaining Strength through Breadth: Lessons from the Matrícula Consular Initiative***

***Michael D. Kerlin***

*Michael D. Kerlin is a joint masters student at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and Harvard Business School. Previously, he was a consultant with McKinsey & Company and an economic development project manager at Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation.*

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### ***Introduction***

The Latino community's geographic dispersion throughout the United States may seem to threaten the unity of its advocacy efforts. The 2000 census showed that Latino populations were growing most quickly in Southern and Midwestern states, far from their political hubs in Texas, California, and New York. But this very dispersion of immigrants and U.S.-born Latinos may actually further their influence and unify their message throughout the country. This process of extended influence through dispersion has been most recently demonstrated through the efforts of Mexican consulates in the United States to persuade businesses and government agencies to accept the *matrícula consular*, or Mexican national identification card, as a valid form of identification. As of November 2002, the Mexican consular effort had persuaded government authorities in twenty states and banks with operations in twenty-eight states to accept the *matrícula consular* (*matrícula*).

The success of the *matrícula consular* initiative can spark a new nationalization of local activism. Though the Mexican migrant community has long been collaborating across states, never before has an initiative swept the country so quickly and effectively. Grassroots Latino groups, the consulates themselves, and U.S. government and businesses should continue to heed, and capitalize on, the forces that shaped the *matrícula consular* phenomenon.

### ***How the Matrícula Consular Caught On***

Since September 11, when bilateral talks ceased on regularization of U.S.-based undocumented Mexicans, the *matrícula consular* has offered the only hope of mimicking some of the stabilizing benefits of regularization. Broad acceptance of the *matrícula* by banks would allow undocumented Mexican immigrants to open bank accounts, develop the early building blocks of a credit history, and remit money back to relatives at home. At the same time, state and local government acceptance of the *matrícula* would enable Mexican immigrants to obtain drivers

licenses, pay their utilities directly, enter public buildings, register their children in school, obtain library cards, and interact in dignified ways with law enforcement officials (Guyton 2002).

After identifying these needs, the Mexican consular system in the United States sought strength in its own growing scale. Pushed by the rapid geographic dispersion the Mexican immigrant population, the number of Mexican consulates in the United States increased from 39 to 42 from 1994 to 2000, and from 42 to 47 between 2000 and 2002 (González Félix and Fernández 2000). This broader presence provided the Mexican Foreign Ministry with a much broader platform from which to push its agenda.

The Mexican consular system won its first big victory with the banking system in November 2001, when Wells Fargo Bank announced that it would accept the matrícula for new accounts and counter transactions. The new business opportunities were clear. According to Senior Communications Vice President Mary Trigg, “We could have gone with Los Angeles only, but when you look at the growth of Hispanics nationwide, it just made sense to roll out throughout the country” (Trigg 2002). With Wells Fargo as a model, other consulates successfully persuaded national banks such as Bank of America, FleetBoston Financial, and First Union/Wachovia to begin accepting the matrícula as well. Dozens of small local banks and credit unions also signed on.

Some banks’ decisions to accept the matrícula consular grew out of the powerful intersection between Mexican geographic dispersion and banking consolidation. For example, the merger between First Union and Wachovia in 2001 exposed traditionally Southern Wachovia to influences from bank employees in the increasingly Mexican Mid-Atlantic region and the Mexican consulate in Philadelphia (Prado 2002). This northern push met a complementary southern front as the swift growth of the Mexican population in Georgia and the Carolinas made a powerful impact on bank executives in the bank’s corporate offices in Raleigh, North Carolina (Dixon 2002).

California also led the consular system’s efforts to persuade government agencies to accept the matrícula when they passed a 2001 statewide resolution (Resolution No. 229) to urge cities, counties, and state agencies throughout California to accept the matrícula (California State Assembly 2001). Now Mexican consulates in smaller cities and non-traditional immigrant states are approaching their municipal and state governments with a list of participating states as wide-ranging as North Dakota, Iowa, and New Hampshire and a list of participating municipalities like Salt Lake City and Pontiac, Mich. (Prado 2002).

### **Opportunities for Advocacy**

The matrícula consular initiative leaves the Mexican consulates themselves with a proven model that they can replicate. It also calls out to the broader Mexican and Latino advocacy communities to begin working across states for their local initiatives. The matrícula success shows U.S. government agencies and businesses that Mexican immigrants, and Latinos as a whole, can gain national influence through their growing network. More important, it proves that U.S. businesses are begin-

ning to recognize the importance of the Latino customer.

Historically, consulates, including those from Mexico, have focused on bureaucratic and emergency services and left the proactive advocacy to the embassies. But the matrícula initiative should inspire the consular system to take on other advocacy projects. Often, an embassy gets nowhere as it tries to convince a whole nation to change its policy. Consulates, on the other hand, can work on local laws, lawmakers, and businesses. Their small victories provide the examples needed to make victories in other states much easier. The Mexican consular system must keep generating initiatives rather than ease up in satisfaction with its matrícula success. They must recognize their leadership role in immigrant advocacy as well. Consulates from other Latin American countries have developed their own national ID card initiatives and will be able to replicate other Mexican initiatives or start some of their own.

Mexican immigrant communities cannot let their consulates do all of the work, either. Though some nonprofit organizations and grassroots groups joined the matrícula consular initiative, most remained uninvolved. Mexican-immigrant-oriented nonprofits should share their networks and influence with consular initiatives, and the consulates should, in turn, involve a broad diversity of organizations in their efforts. Mexican and other Latino organizations should approach their own agendas using the matrícula lessons: Build local success stories, make local links with nationwide businesses and other organizations, and carry the momentum from state to state. Organic advocacy starting in an unlikely state like Minnesota can be far more powerful than a national lobbying effort on Capitol Hill.

Wise state and local government authorities will prepare for a growing number of local initiatives to gain national momentum. Politicians, regardless of their views, must monitor local immigrant and Latino developments in other states or risk missing opportunities or being blindsided. Regulatory bureaucracies should monitor the same developments so they can prepare their management systems to accommodate new changes like the matrícula.

The matrícula initiative may teach its greatest lessons, however, through the dynamics it harnessed and extended in the private sector. First, the bankers showed their recognition of the importance of the Latino customer and their susceptibility to the bandwagon effect. All it took was a few big players to sign on, and others raced to accept the matrícula and grab their share of Mexican banking business. Through the “social proof” it created for states and municipalities, the private sector showed its ability to lead the public sector. Businesses must continue to lead their less nimble public counterparts in the adoption of progressive policies. Second, the Mexican consulates understood the effect that a few small local victories could have on the national phenomenon. Latino activists, likewise, must continue building relationships with locally based leaders of national corporations. They must recognize the national impacts that can be had by North Carolina-based Latinos on banking, San Francisco-based Latinos on electronics, Los Angeles-based Latinos on media, or Midwestern Latinos on agriculture.

### *Conclusion*

The matrícula consular initiative is far from over. Banks continue to sign on, but the national momentum has yet to sweep up some states and municipalities. For example, the small city of Kennett Square, Penn., home of a large mushroom industry and Mexican community, is currently deadlocked on the issue. The mayor supports Mexican issues in principal, but his city council is divided on the matrícula question. They simply do not feel comfortable granting legal identification to illegal immigrants. At the same time, banks in Kennett Square—some local, some national outlets of North Carolina banks—have begun accepting the matrícula. Latino advocates in the area have expressed their support. As local support builds, and as the list of banks, states and municipalities around the country builds, Kennett Square's councilors may come around. If they do, they will add ammunition to the movement. If they don't, the next national Latino movement will come knocking soon, and probably even harder.

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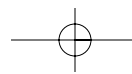
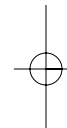
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***Focusing on the Future:  
Carola and Marcelo Suárez-Orozco's  
Children of Immigration  
(Harvard University Press 2001)***

*Reviewed by Felicia Escobar*

*Felicia Escobar is executive editor with the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy. She graduated from Yale University. While at Yale, Ms. Escobar majored in sociology and ethnicity, race, and migration. She will receive her Masters in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2003.*

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While first and second generation immigration children are the most rapidly growing segment of the U.S. population, much of the immigration policy debate has focused on immigrant adults. In *Children of Immigration*, Carola and Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco shift the discussion by addressing the question of how the children of immigrants are faring in American society. Using the Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation (LISA) study, the Suárez-Orozco research team collected information from more than 400 recently arrived children of immigrants enrolled in over fifty schools in the Boston and San Francisco areas.<sup>1</sup> The result is one of the most comprehensive studies of immigrant children whose destinies are intimately tied to the future social and economic well-being of the United States. Indeed, this book is a must read for every policy maker implementing social and educational policy.

*Children of Immigration* is roughly divided into three sections. In the first section, the authors highlight the various "immigrant experiences" and the affect they have on children. They conclude that the social and educational outcomes of immigrant children are a function of three factors: family motives for immigrating; resources, such as educational background and income, that families bring with them to their new country; and social networks families can access when they arrive. For example, a child who arrives with his or her family as a transnational "target earner" immigrant is more likely to concentrate energy on obtaining the skills to earn enough wages to accomplish economic security and return home. An immigrant child fleeing persecution in his home country cannot aspire to the same goals and has major traumas to overcome.

In addition, the Suárez-Orozcos explore the attitudes of current and past generations of Americans toward immigrants and add another layer to the factors impacting immigrant children's experiences. The "ethos of reception" faced by

immigrant children—that is, the social and cultural climate they encounter—significantly shapes their experiences. The so-called “new immigration” wave of the last few decades has ushered in an era in which most immigrants are arriving from Latin America and Asia, rather than traditional European countries. This, along with the fact that suspicion and resentment toward immigrants has always been prevalent, creates an unfriendly “ethos of reception.”

In section two, the authors delve deeper into the personal and psychological affects of immigration on children. They explore the stresses of immigration, including long periods of separation from parents and eventual reunification of parents and children, the reversal of family and gender roles, and new societal rules and cultural norms. All of these issues affect successful long-term adaptation. Over time the majority of immigrants successfully adjust to American life, yet, while the gains outweigh the losses, the experience is traumatic.

The identities of immigrant children are constructed at the margins of the two cultures that comprise their life experience: the “old country” and the newly adopted United States. Many of the children in the LISA study seemed to be keenly aware of the negative light in which they, as immigrants, are held by mainstream American society. When asked to fill-in the sentence, “Most Americans think people from my country of origin are...,” fully 65 percent used negative adjectives such as bad, lazy, useless, etc.( 97). Given these perceptions, children of immigrants react in a variety of ways that affect the construction of their identity. Some are resigned to these views; others become resistant. Still, another group remains sheltered and oblivious. These reactions can cause several different types of identities to form: ethnic flight, adversarial identities, and transcendental identities.

Perhaps the most important section of the book, chapter 5 explores the educational experiences of immigrant children. Using the LISA study, the Suárez-Orozcos answer several questions with possible policy implications. The information gathered provides a glimpse into immigrant children’s attitudes toward education and schooling when they arrive in the United States and documents whether views change over time. In addition, they measure students’ previous experiences in schools with their experiences in the American public school system. Finally, they look at the role that parents and schools play in children’s educational achievement.

What the Suárez-Orozcos find confirms what advocates and anecdotal evidence have suggested for several years. Parents care deeply about education and often sacrifice much to come to the United States to offer their children educational opportunities. However, their “love is often not enough,” given the need for parents to serve as advocates in the elaborate American education system.

Children’s prior educational experience and economic standing play into their educational experience in the United States. For instance, if children have not mastered important basic educational concepts, then the transition from their country of origin to American schooling will be that much harder. These children tend to settle in poorer, urban school districts, where their already deficient education is not served. Furthermore, the problems children face in these new



neighborhoods, where crime and drug use is widespread, often influence children as they craft their personal identity, frequently for the worse.

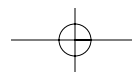
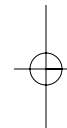
Finally, the conditions of the schools that many immigrant children attend also present a challenge. There is widespread segregation between schools and school districts, problems with the quality of bilingual education programs, and pressure to satisfactorily perform on high-stakes testing. The authors describe these factors affecting immigrant children's educational experience. Other issues discussed include school and parental relations and the importance of classroom engagement.

### **Conclusion**

With a significantly large number of today's students and future workforce represented in the immigrant children population, it is critical that policy makers craft policies that take the experience of these children into account. The book falls short of providing concrete policy recommendations, allowing readers to interpret their findings and shape policies as they see fit. In addition, the authors do not provide information about how the education systems have proactively responded to the challenges faced by immigrant children, pointing only to negative examples like anti-bilingual education initiatives and Proposition 187.

*Children of Immigration* is a book that all policy makers working on education and social policy should read. It provides information from a one-of-a-kind social science study (LISA study) that has followed children. Since the LISA study continues to follow children from their arrival in the United States and onward, more groundbreaking research should follow this first book from LISA study research.

<sup>1</sup> Initiated in 1997, the LISA study is a one-of-a-kind, longitudinal study that follows its participants, aged 9 to 14, and equated by gender. Children are observed and interviewed in their schools, their communities, and their homes. The LISA Study is an initiative of the Harvard Immigration Project and is online at <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~hip/TheLisaStudy.html>.



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***Assisting America's Most Impoverished  
Communities: Peter M. Ward's Colonias  
and Public Policy in Texas and Mexico:  
Urbanization by Stealth  
(University of Texas Press 1999)***

*Reviewed by Adán D. Briones*

*Adán D. Briones is senior editor of interviews with the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy. A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, he will receive his Masters in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2004.*

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In his book *Colonias and Public Policy in Texas and Mexico: Urbanization by Stealth*, Peter M. Ward describes what may be “the single most pressing problem facing the State of Texas at this time” (6).<sup>2</sup> When considering public policy proposals intended to reduce and eliminate Texas colonias, Ward argues that there is a clear and distinct parallel between the Texas colonias problem and the Mexican government’s efforts to curb illegal urban growth and settlements.<sup>3</sup> Texas can thus “learn from some of the tried and tested policy approaches in Mexico” (5). Instead, the state is “reinventing the wheel” in its response to colonias and would therefore benefit from a comparative analysis that looks at both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. The author concludes that “there is an urgent need to give greater consideration to the way in which we, in Texas, approach the colonias phenomenon” (8).

During the 1950s through 1970s, Mexico’s major cities experienced unprecedented population growth as a result of high birth rates and an influx of migrants. Rapid urbanization, combined with economic development projects, created a housing shortage as private markets and the public sector were unable to provide housing for the expanding workforce. Consequently, illegal “shantytowns and squatter settlements” sprang up around these cities from the 1960s onward (65-66).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Mexico began to view these settlements not as illegal communities that needed to be eradicated, but rather as a self-help solution to the low-income housing crisis. Efforts were then made to support the “self-build housing process” through projects that make the “market work more smoothly by providing infrastructure, removing bottlenecks on land markets, improving regularization programs, and creating regulatory frameworks that enhance self-help rather than hinder it” (67).

Today, through a system of urban management, Mexico is working toward integrating irregular settlements into the property and tax register in order to recover the costs associated with providing services. While support for such policies is not universal, self-help housing has become the most common means of obtaining shelter throughout Latin America. Ward then declares, "Within Texas, both the phenomenon of self-help housing and the expansion of colonias may also be accommodated within a similar scenario" (69). Along with migration and high rates of urbanization on the Texas border, widespread poverty and low-income housing shortages have led to the development of settlements similar to those in Mexico and other developing countries. But unlike in Mexico, says Ward, "[I]n Texas and in the United States there has not been the same parallel shift in the nature of public policy toward colonias" (69-70).

In Texas, Ward states, "[A]ll levels of the state apparatus have tended to be negligent, ignoring the problem" (117). The state failed to take an interventionist approach and failed to take action that would facilitate policy design and implementation, shying away from regularizing irregular settlements and seeking to criminalize them instead (111). There has been an occasional task force and basic infrastructural initiatives, but "the rationale was to restrict colonias development" instead of guiding it as a "form of housing policy for the working poor" (119).

One of Ward's main criticisms of Texas's policies is that they do not directly address the structural causes of colonias development. The root causes of colonias, according to Ward, are "the structural characteristics that cause poverty (such as low levels of educational attainment and low-wage employment) and a shortage of decent, safe, and affordable housing options for the poor" (113). Texas is merely addressing symptoms and not the causes, thereby failing to prevent colonias growth.

The final sections of the book are dedicated to offering "some pointers about how state and local government in Texas might move forward in developing a more coherent and effective policy response to colonias" (120). Recommendations are offered in five general areas: (1) politics, intergovernmental coordination, and regulations; (2) land and housing access; (3) land and housing finance; (4) support for self-builders/individual consumers; and (5) structural problems. While Ward acknowledges that there is no single solution or silver bullet to resolve the colonias problem in Texas, he does guarantee "that if the next two legislative sessions [in Texas] do not undertake significant policy shifts along the lines that I have proposed, the colonia 'problem' will never be satisfactorily or substantively resolved" (261).

### *Conclusion*

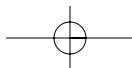
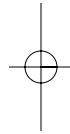
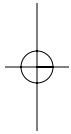
*Colonias and Public Policy in Texas and Mexico* is one of the few studies that systematically assesses the interconnections between cities on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border.<sup>6</sup> Ward does an excellent job describing the colonias problem, including its root causes and its various implications. The demographic information provided on income, education, employment rates, health disparities,



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population growth, and other economic indicators is an outstanding compilation of Texas-Mexico border region statistics. Furthermore, Ward's synthesis of the history of the Mexican effort in dealing with land and low-income housing production is exceptional. He explains particularly well how Texas colonias are fundamentally different from those on the Mexican side, as well as the policy implications of such differences.

It would have been beneficial if Ward had concentrated more on how Texas could address the root causes of colonias. He offers a good example of how the state could contract to local labor on construction projects within colonias (instead of employing high-dollar urban firms), thereby injecting job training and grant money to the communities in need. More specific examples of the sort would have been valuable. Overall, however, this is a meticulously detailed, tightly constructed, and truly important cross-border analysis of colonias that will undoubtedly improve the policy responsiveness in Texas.





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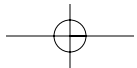
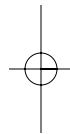
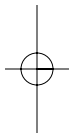
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HJHP is interested in manuscripts that emphasize the relationship between policymaking and the political, social, and economic environments affecting Latinos in the United States. Topics that will remain important for some time are:

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To be eligible for the editorial review, an article must satisfy the following requirements:

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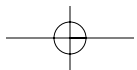
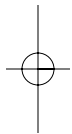
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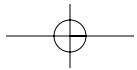
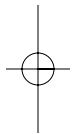
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**Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy**

**John F. Kennedy School of Government • Volume 15 • 2002–2003**