THE ROOTS
of
LATINO URBAN AGENCY

Edited by Sharon A. Navarro and Rodolfo Rosales

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Contents

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Introduction:

Latino Urban Agency

THE DECISION TO COMPILE THIS COLLECTION OF ESSAYS ON THE URBAN political presence of the Latino community was based on a critically important question that is generally taken for granted when analyzing Latino politics. This question has to do with the definition of Latino politics in a changing political landscape in America. Is there, or can there be, a generic, overarching definition/identity of Latinos in the United States? The premise in approaching this question, and our resulting decision to compile these essays, is that the Latino community is one of the most diverse communities that can be defined ethnically.

More importantly, as diversity within the Latino community intensified toward the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the question of how Latino communities would relate to the larger changing political system,[1] in what many political pundits called a post-racial era, became one of the most important questions facing both activists and scholars in the twenty-first century. An important factor to consider in this post-racial era is the emergence of particular political and electoral relationships between Latinos and the larger political community.

We argue that before we can address the future of urban politics and the resulting public policy in a changing twenty-first century, we must begin with an analysis of how Latinos came to terms with the political reality in their communities and how they then addressed the "system" of governance where they found themselves at the close of the twentieth century. As evidenced by the chapters in this volume, which focus on the decade closing the twentieth century, Latinos learned not to depend on the federal,

state, and local governments for needed resources, and they have strongly emphasized their multiple forms and strategies of urban agency in their quest to influence the various public policy outcomes in their communities. In fact, the various forms and strategies of agency are contextual and stem from a historically consistent marginalization. In this context, Latino urban agency has taken many forms and strategies such as mobilization, networks, lobbies, legal challenges, coalitions, appointments, and representation.

These articles take on greater importance if we are correct that to understand where we are, we must start with community politics as it expressed itself before 9/11 and the explosion of politics that intensified an anti-immigrant, anti-Latino discourse that radically changed the context of community empowerment and the promise of political inclusion. This collection of urban essays then represents the diverse ways that urban Latinos sought empowerment in an era that seemed to promise greater inclusion, that is, until 9/11.

In this context, various political scientists have focused on the political struggle of the Latino community for social, economic, and political advancement in their respective urban communities. In their pioneering study *Protest is Not Enough*, Browning et al. attempt to document the resulting urban change through a theory of political incorporation and policy responsiveness. The major premise in their analysis is that the dominant coalitions in these cities have diverse orientations toward minorities and their interests. As a consequence, they attempt a balanced approach using the characteristics of minority coalition to inform their analysis.[2] Their work is especially significant because they attempt to move beyond minority mobilization to develop a theory of incorporation, which for them means achieving something more than getting elected. Minorities must become an integral part of a coalition. That is to say, the coalition must be dominant if the interests of minority groups are to influence policy.

On the Ground and Running

Our approach presents a picture of the community in all its diversity by focusing on the five major cities where the greatest demographic impact has occurred: San Antonio, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, and Miami. In order to make sense of the seemingly chaotic diaspora that Latino growth in the United States represents today, this analysis goes where the Latino community can be seen exercising their political power. While there is a

multitude of community studies focusing on the Latino community across the urban landscape in the United States, this volume presents several studies that assess the diverse ways that these Latinos have exercised urban agency in the major cities that we have selected. The point is not to measure success or failure, but the process itself as these communities first identified the major issues in the context of their on-the-ground reality and second mobilized to address these issues. Hence, this book discusses the efforts of Latinos to address the diverse political realities that faced each of these communities at the approach of the twenty-first century.

These essays will add to an understanding of Latino politics as a complex and diverse force in the broader, national political context. Ultimately, this volume in total adds to the epistemological discourse on how Latinos seek to exercise their agency to transform politics. Each case study offers us a different view of political incorporation. That is to say, what connects Latino communities in their efforts to shape their surroundings to their needs is their politics of inclusion into the local system that determines their lives. Our chapters frame, in their particular studies, that the power of the Latino community lies in its ability to exploit available political opportunity structures. Together these chapters offer us a glimpse of what national politics would reflect.

Thus, a second premise in this volume is that the political future of the Latino community in the United States in the twenty-first century will be largely determined by the various roles they have played in the major urban centers across this nation. How this urban agency unfolded from San Antonio to Los Angeles to San Francisco, and from Chicago to Miami will go a long way to collectively shape the national political presence organizationally, legislatively, and electorally in the United States. Moreover, it will provide for a more nuanced and detailed understanding of Latino political incorporation nationally.

Thus, the collective attempt in this volume is to understand not only how the Latino movement for political power unfolded in some of the largest and most important American cities, but also the possibilities (and limitations) of the present and future—the adequacy of political incorporation of this previously excluded group, the extent to which they pursue the broader goals of the movement, what they might not do in pursuit of those goals, and the obstacles they encounter. Given the diversity between the various "Latino" communities in this era, the shape and content of their urban political presence will be an important factor in their ability to build coalitions within the more populous

urban regions and beyond their urban boundaries into the national arena of politics.

To further bring the regional character of Latinos out in relief, one needs only to contrast it with how black politics gained its greatest momentum in the twentieth century. Through national politics that have covered everything from civil rights to the war on poverty, even their regional and local politics have, to a large extent, thrived from the national image that came from both their national political agenda as well as from the historic experience in a black and white America. While their overall experience is diverse from north to south, urban to rural, even state-to-state, the galvanizing effects of a national civil rights agenda has firmly established African American politics in a national context. And while no one can, by any means, characterize the black community as one monolithic community, they do have a common agenda by which they debate, disagree, and mobilize.

On the other hand, the Latino community's experience has been one of invisibility and/or exclusion from national politics. Hence, historically, the Latino community has had to resort to regional and local politics to address their political realities. Even in national politics, they have been approached regionally. The "Viva Kennedy" clubs in the 1960 presidential election are an early example of this regional approach to their communities.[3] In 1959, the Kennedy campaign approached Juan McCormick, a long-time Latino political activist in Arizona, to organize "Viva Kennedy" political clubs throughout the Southwest to mobilize the Mexican American vote. The approach had to be further broken down into states. In Texas, Albert Peña, Jr. and others successfully worked this strategy beyond anyone's wildest expectations, enabling Kennedy to carry Texas.[4]

Even in the midst of the Latino diaspora that the United States began to experience in the 1990s, Latino politics were still essentially a regional and/or urban phenomenon. The issues that defined Latinos were cast in a regional character; even immigration and bilingual education were cast in a regional context. One very specific issue, for example, that confronted only those who lived in the Los Angeles area, was the almost complete disenfranchisement of an entire community in East Los Angeles from urban governance. This issue, plus the history of rapid and intense capitalist corporate development in Southern California, placed the Latino community in this region in a very different situation than in most other regions or urban areas. Thus, as Latino communities emerged in all of the major urban centers in the United States, with no over-arching historical identity—such

as is found in the black/white experience that produced a national civil rights agenda—they were still anchored in a regional cast.

Arising from this reality is the observation that from region to region, city to city, Latinos exhibit different cultural manifestations that speak to different origins as well as to different social, political, economic, and historical conditions. This leads to a third premise that across the urban political landscape, the Latino community has experienced different political formations, strategies, and ultimately different political outcomes in their different urban settings. If this premise is correct, then we must assess the conditions of Latino urban agency (i.e., the potential or non-potential of that agency) from city to city, in order to be able to gauge the role Latinos will play at the national level.

The Nature of Political Discourse

To move from disenfranchisement to political inclusion, Latinos have used a variety of methods. To explain the process of achieving and retaining political power, political incorporation theory needs to be part of the discourse in this introduction. The theory of political incorporation is a central idea in the study of politics: when a group is politically incorporated, it has opportunities to influence public policy.[5] According to Browning et al., political incorporation explains local "movements demanding the power of political equality and their ability to achieve it."[6] Political incorporation is a widely used term to measure the extent to which group interests are effectively represented in policymaking in government.[7] At the lowest level, a group is not represented at all, that is, there are no elected officials from the group, and the group does not participate in the governing coalition that controls the political decision-making through its use of resources. At the next level, racial minorities have formal representation in a governing body, but the government body is dominated by a coalition resistant to minority group interests. The highest form of incorporation is when racial minorities have an equal or a leading role in a dominant coalition that is strongly committed to minority group interests.

For Latinos, the achievement of political incorporation has been uneven. There is wide divergence in the levels of incorporation at the local, state, and national levels. Because this unevenness has unfolded differently in state and local contexts, the forms and strategies to achieve incorporation have evolved differently. In some contexts, Latinos were, until recently,

completely excluded from access to government. In other situations, they were partially included in a governing coalition as junior partners in political party- or business-centered states. Under certain circumstances, they achieve an equally dominant role without the use of a biracial coalition (e.g., the Cubans in Miami).

Manuel Castells, in his study of cities across the western part of the globe from Europe to Latin America to the United States, gives a more grassroots approach. His basic argument is that cities are in the end a product of conflict between elites who want to shape the city to their economic, social, and political needs, and communities who struggle to shape their urban experience to their particular community reality.[8] This theory is not about incorporation strictly speaking. It is about how communities mobilize to stop the advance of the broader economic and social intrusions that tend to not only disrupt their community but in reality undermine and destroy community. So in that sense, Castells was describing incorporation in his theoretical discussions of communities and how they maintain their identity.

However stated, the four distinct pathways to political incorporation do not negate Castells theory of the city. One incorporation theory is political, and the other is sociological and historical. These pathways include 1) demand/protest,[9] 2) non-confrontational political evolution, 3) legal challenges to structural barriers,[10] and 4) coalition politics.[11] The first pathway,[12] demand/protest, includes violent and nonviolent protest (e.g., sit-ins, demonstrations, boycotts) and also includes more traditional tactics such as mass mobilization at city meetings and exchanges with city officials. Michelson's chapter on Chicago addresses this angle of political incorporation. The second pathway is more gradual political evolution, without demand and protest. Instead, individuals in the Latino community are cultivated by political elites to run for office, usually as pro-business candidates and alternatives to more grassroots candidates. The chapters by DeLeon, Monforti et al., and Manzano and Vega exemplify this perspective of political incorporation. A third pathway is the use of legal challenges (i.e., voting-rights lawsuits that challenge redistricting and reapportionment plans) that lead to restructuring the electoral system. The fourth pathway is the use of coalition politics. Ambruster-Sandoval's chapter on Latinos in Los Angeles speaks to this aspect of incorporation. Insights derived from these case studies might then serve as harbingers for other large metropolitan areas affected by the "internationalization" of their populations, economies, and politics through the incorporation of new immigrant populations.

Methodology

Around the turn of the twenty-first century, the racial and ethnic composition of the US population has changed markedly. Minorities are increasing their presence in the United States and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The Latino population is driving these transformations. While currently one of every six residents of the United States is Latino, it is projected that Latinos could account for one of every five residents by 2035, one of every four by 2055, and one of every three by 2100.[13] We begin the twenty-first century with the Latino population concentrated in five of the most populated states of the United States. According to the 2010 US Census, states with the largest share of Latino population are California (37.6%), Texas (37.6%), Florida (22.4%), New York (17.6%), and Illinois (15.8%). From these states, we picked the cities with the largest population of Latinos as indicated by the 2010 US Census: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami, San Antonio, and Chicago.[14] We included San Francisco because of its recent political battles and its comparable size in the Latino population.[15] The authors employ both qualitative and quantitative analysis in their approach to studying Latino agency. The authors discuss the different ways such progress can manifest itself in disparate cities.

Chapter Organization

We begin with Ralph Armbruster-Sandoval's chapter "Latino Political Agency in Los Angeles Past & Present." The author carefully examines Latino political agency in Los Angeles, notably in relation to a past history of multi-racial coalitions of the left—a tradition that has continued into the '90s and beyond against a brutal context of inter-racial (i.e., black-brown) gang violence. They point out that Latino political agency can be both constrained and facilitated by where Latinos stand in reference to others. The authors add the helpful suggestion that pop culture, and music especially, has helped both to express and to accelerate multi-racial politics in the city.

"The Rebirth of Latino Urban Agency in San Francisco: From the MCO to the MAC, 1967–2002," written by Richard Edward DeLeon links specific place-based political, economic, and cultural features of San Francisco to the dynamics of insurgent Latino politics as well as to wider circles of progressive politics in the city. With battles over land used as his dynamic

context, DeLeon analyzes the changing tides of urban resistance, the ebb and flow of victory, defeat, and re-emergence, including the importance of the introduction of district elections as a main institutional change. This reform favored a politics in which Latino working-class interests exploited electoral strategies that emphasized communal, place, and ideological considerations above identity politics. The chapter allows us to see how the Latino community really does construct their "political agency" in the process of engaging a city with a specific history of progressive politics and a changing political design.

Melissa R. Michelson's "The Fight for School Equity in Chicago's Latino Neighborhoods" focuses on the long and embattled minority in Chicago, causing a historic alliance between Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans. She details the emerging patterns of Latino political action. Michelson points to a grassroots level of Latino political agency and organization that drew inspiration from, but was not reliant on, the growth in the Latino population in the United States as well as the growth in the number of elected political representation by Latinos.

Monforti, Flores, and Moreno's chapter on Miami is about how one leader, in this case the mayor, became the agent of change. Similar to Stone's analysis of Atlanta's black leadership,[16] Diaz's populist persona and minority developers transformed the city's image from one of corruption to one of renaissance. Monforti et al. detail the ascension of Diaz as mayor and the way in which his leadership (and growth machine strategies) led to unprecedented growth in the city's real estate market, changing its skyline and creating a population shift.

Manzano and Vega's "'I Don't See Color, I Just Vote For the Best Candidate': The Persistence of Ethnic Polarized Voting" examines ethnic polarization in urban elections. Using the 1991 and 2005 San Antonio mayoral races, the authors consider the role of ethnicity from the perspective of both the voters and candidates. They provide a statistically sophisticated analysis of the most orthodox form of American political agency: voting. The authors find that ethnic voting is a fact of political life in San Antonio.

The last chapter, titled "Latino Urban Agency in the twenty-first Century," highlights the growing political power of Latinos in cities, or more specifically, their political agency. This volume encompasses everything from a diversity of cities, to the heterogeneity of the Latino population in the United States, to the conventional and unconventional forms of political agency. The political incorporation of Latinos in these five major urban

areas suggest that Latinos are in fact gaining access to the same political institutions that worked so hard to marginalize them. These case studies will allow us to project what national politics look like when Latinos exercise their agency.

Endnotes

1. In this edited volume, the term Latino is used to refer to people of Spanish speaking descent. The term is used inclusively to mean people from Latin America and the Caribbean.
2. Rufus Browning, Dale R. Marshall, and David H. Tabb. 1984. *Protest is Not Enough: The Struggle of Blacks and Hispanics for Equality in Urban Politics.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
3. Rodolfo Rosales. 2000. *Illusion of Inclusion.* Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press.
4. Ibid.
5. Clarence N. Stone. 1989. *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946–1989.* Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas.
6. Browning, et al., 1984.
7. Dennis R. Judd. 2011. *The City, Revisited: Urban Theory from Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
8. Manuel Castells. 1983. *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. For a more nuanced discussion of this process described by Castells see Rosales, 2000.
9. Aldon Morris. 1984. *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement.* New York: Free Press.
10. Rodolfo O. de la Garza and Louis DeSipio. 1997. "Save the Baby, Change the Bathwater, and Scrub the Tub: Latino Electoral Participation after Twenty Years of Voting Rights Act Coverage." In *Pursuing Power: Latinos and the Political System*, edited by F. Chris Garcia, 72–126. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame**.**
11. Chandler Davidson. 1972. *Biracial Politics: Conflict and Coalition in the Metropolitan South.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
12. Browning, et al., 1984.
13. See US Census 2010. www.census.gov
14. Sharon R. Ennis, Merarys Rios-Vargas, Nora G. Albert. *The Hispanic Population 2010.* U.S. Census, Issue May 2011, p. 6
15. Latino Populations in Select in U.S. Metropolitan Areas, 2009. Pew Hispanic Research Center, June 1, 2011 at http://www.pewhispanic.org/2011/06/-1/latino-populations-in-select-u-s-metropolitan-areas/
16. Stone. 1989.

1

Latino Political Agency in Los Angeles Past & Present: Diverse Conflicts, Diverse Coalitions, and Fates that Intertwine

Ralph Armbruster-Sandoval

Introduction

AT THE TIME OF CALIFORNIA STATEHOOD IN 1850, THE FIRST LOS ANGELES City Council included eight members: seven were of Mexican origin and only one was Anglo American. In the decades that followed, however, the political power and influence of the old Mexican Californio elite—who became downwardly mobile Mexican Americans after 1848—began to wane.[1] So dramatic was the ensuing loss of political representation that followed, that after 1881 no Latino sat on the Los Angeles City Council for sixty-nine years, until 1949 when Edward R. Roybal won the Ninth District Council seat by a two-thirds margin. Roybal's victory came after two years of organizing in the Mexican American community by the Community Service Organization (CSO), a civil rights organization that Roybal founded in 1947 with the support of Saul Alinsky's Industrial Areas Foundation. The aim of CSO was to address the many problems suffered by Latinos in Los Angeles and to provide those Latinos with the meaningful political representation that they had lacked since the late nineteenth century. In 1948 alone, the multi-racial, but Latino-led CSO registered over fifteen thousand new voters in Los Angeles, with the help of unions, Catholic parishes, and "members of other ethnic groups throughout the city."[2]

Roybal's grassroots activism and his eventual election to the Los Angeles City Council in the context of systematic marginalization of Latinos can be

seen as emblematic of the shape of Latino political agency in Los Angeles. Specifically Roybal's political actions exemplify the long-term significance of four elements that continue to characterize Latino political agency in the city to this day. These four dimensions are 1) the intermittent emergence of community leaders and new community organizations in response to systematic forms of Latino subordination; 2) a praxis in Los Angeles Latino politics that defines Latino politics broadly to include not only electoral politics, but also grassroots politics/social movement organizing and cultural production; 3) the intersection of labor organizing (and sometimes religious networks) with Latino politics; and 4) the significance in Latino politics in Los Angeles of building coalitions with members of other racial and ethnic groups.

This fourth dimension is sometimes overlooked, or denied, as part of Latino politics.[3] Yet in California, the interconnection between the political voices of Latinos and other minority groups began even before California was a state. At the 1848 California Constitutional Convention, some white delegates sought to exclude non-whites from the franchise. It fell to the eight Mexican-origin delegates present to object. They argued that Mexican citizenship—while undeniably practiced through a social class system that had subordinated indigenous peoples—had abolished slavery in the Mexican Republic and extended voting rights regardless of race. The Mexican delegates contended therefore that under the conditions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on territorial sale and transfer, former Mexican citizens including non-whites (i.e. mestizos, Native Americans, and blacks)—thus could not be legally denied the franchise as new American citizens.[4] The implications of the debate were clear however: Mexican Americans were not considered white, and their voting rights and political influence were conferred by revocable exception. The eventual demise of Latino representation on the Los Angeles City Council demonstrates that disenfranchisement of Latinos did take place. Yet these historical events indicate that from the outset, Latino political agency in California and Los Angeles has traditionally been bound up with the political voices of other marginalized groups.

Speaking philosophically, if agency is the capacity to make choices, then the exercise of political agency by Latinos in urban settings is conditioned by the circumstances under which political choices are made and acted upon.[5] As the historical examples just described indicate, political agency for Latinos in Los Angeles historically has been both constrained *and* facilitated by the relationships in which Latinos have stood with reference to

other racial and ethnic groups in the city and in the region. As those relations have shifted over time, so too has the latitude open to Latinos for specific acts of political agency in Los Angeles. In this chapter, I present and analyze various examples that illustrate all four of the characteristics I consider to be defining of Latino political agency in Los Angeles. I also situate the description of these four dimensions in the context of contemporary Latino politics in Los Angeles including important demographic shifts, economic relations, and interracial conflict and cooperation, focusing in particular on the perceptible rise in interracial violence between blacks and Latinos that occurred in the middle and late 2000s. This growth in violent interracial conflict is considered by some to be reshaping the political landscape upon which Latinos are able to act politically in Los Angeles. Many see it as a major stumbling block to political progress for both blacks and Latinos in the city. In addition to considering the characteristic dimensions of Latino politics in Los Angeles, I also broadly consider, therefore, whether the history of Latino coalition politics in Los Angeles offers useful resources with which to understand and address current conflicts between blacks and Latinos in the city.

Political, Economic, and Social Context of Contemporary Latino Politics in Los Angeles.

The Spanish-speaking population had become a minority in California—roughly 13% of the population—by 1848, but the proportion of Latinos in California and in Los Angeles have rebounded over time.[6] In 2005, the US Census Bureau estimated that Latinos constituted 35.2% of California's 36 million residents. In Los Angeles County however, Latinos represented a full 46.8% of the population, thereby exceeding the number of non-Latino whites (who are 29.5% of the population) by 17%. Latinos also exceed in large numbers other "minority" groups in Los Angeles County, which include, by percentage, Asians (13.1%), African Americans (9.7%) and Native Americans (1.1%).[7] In addition, recent immigrants continue to comprise large proportions of Latinos in Los Angeles even as immigrant destinations in the United States continue to diversify. In 2000, for example, California had become home to 35.4% of all recent Mexican immigrants.[8] Moreover in recent decades, Latino immigrant streams have come to Los Angeles not only from Mexico, but also from countries throughout Central and South America, particularly Guatemala and El Salvador.[9] Given Los

Angeles' current racial/ethnic profile, its history, and its continuing status as a destination for immigrants from Mexico, Central and Latin America, South Asia, and the Pacific Rim, the demographic trends that have made Los Angeles a "minority-majority" city are likely to continue. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the number of foreign-born residents in Los Angeles was 36.2%, and over half (54.1%) of the children in Los Angeles over age five spoke a language other than English at home.[10]

As the Latino population in Los Angeles has expanded and civil rights activity continued, electoral representation of Latinos in the city has also continued to grow albeit somewhat unevenly. Following Edward Roybal's election to the District 9 City Council seat in 1949, he served on the council until 1962. Afterward, however, no Latino served on the City Council until Richard Alatorre won the District 14 seat in 1985. Since that year, at least one, and recently up to four, Latinos have served on the council each term. Richard Alatorre held the District 14 seat until 1998 and was followed in it by three other Latinos, Nick Pacheco (1999–2002), Antonio Villaraigosa (2003–2004), and most recently by José Huizar (2005–present). Likewise, the District 1 council seat has been held by Latinos since Gloria Molina assumed the seat between 1987 and 1991. Mike Hernández won the District 1 seat after Molina (1992–2000) and he, in turn, has been followed in it by Ed Reyes who currently remains on the council (2001–present). More recently Latinos have gained new council representation in District 7 (Richard Alarcon 1994–1998 and Alex Padilla 2001–2005), and in 2003, Tony Cardenas became the first Latino to be elected in District 3.[11] In addition to representation on the Los Angeles City Council, Latinos have been represented on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Los Angeles School Board.[12] Most importantly, Antonio Villaraigosa was elected as the first Latino mayor of Los Angeles in 2005. Villaraigosa took office with broad electoral support not only from Latinos, but also from blacks and whites in the city.[13]

In terms of social economic stratification, Latinos and blacks in Los Angeles—consistent with conditions nationwide—are over-represented among the city's poor. Yet studies show that despite their relative poverty, Latinos in California as a whole, including Los Angeles, have consistently had the highest rates of labor market participation of any ethnic or racial group in the state including non-Latino whites, Asian/Pacific Islanders and African Americans. Since 1940, of all these groups, California Latinos—including immigrant and native-born Latinos—have had "the longest work week, the greatest involvement in the wealth-generating private sector, the

lowest use of public assistances, and the greatest propensity to form intact families."[14] In recent years, some segments of the Los Angeles economy in which occupation segmentation has been racialized have shifted: segments that were once dominated by blacks (such as janitorial services in the 1980s) have slowly become dominated by Latinos, including many unauthorized Latino residents.[15] Such patterns of economic succession have potentially fed perceptions that there is strong competition for jobs between blacks and Latinos in Los Angeles—and that Latinos are prevailing in this competition on the basis of immigration.

Some political analysts contend that labor competition—or at least the perception of competition—is the primary source of increasing conflict between blacks and Latinos, and as such as a key context for Latino politics. At the same time, however, some studies have shown that Latino immigrants have not significantly displaced African Americans in the Los Angeles economy.[16] Nevertheless, perceptions—even ill-founded ones—can spur conflict under conditions of general duress. Without doubt, among the increasing numbers of Latinos in Los Angeles, there is both visible upward mobility *and* continued poverty to be seen. In 2002, for example, Latinos owned 20.9% of businesses in Los Angeles County, while blacks owned only 5.8%. While this percentage of black business ownership is significant given that blacks represent less than 10% of the population (compared to Latinos as nearly 47%), the fact that blacks are proportionately *more* likely to own businesses than Latinos is unlikely to be perceived against the sheer numbers of Latinos and the visible economic success of some upwardly mobile Latinos vis-à-vis poor blacks in the city.

Racial tensions around employment and immigration are thus an important current context of contemporary Latino political agency in Los Angeles. Those tensions may be one reason why relatively few African Americans participated in the immigrant rights rallies held across the country in 2006.[17] At the same time, low participation among African Americans in the immigrant rights movement may not be indicative of widespread anti-immigrant sentiment among blacks in Los Angeles. Despite their concentrated efforts vigilante groups such as the Minutemen (who have ties with white supremacist groups) have been largely unsuccessful in their efforts to recruit African Americans to nativist efforts in Los Angeles.[18]

What is undeniable, however, is that cultural and historical factors such as white supremacy, slavery, and colorism in the Americas, especially in Mexico, have carved the divides that clearly do exist between blacks and Latinos in contemporary Los Angeles.[19] There can be no doubt, for

example, that anti-black racism persists in Mexico, and among many US-born Latinos, and that anti-black racism is sometimes articulated in transnational as well as domestic political discourse. Former President Vicente Fox illustrated this brand of persistent racism when he defended a Mexican government-backed postage stamp that reinforced stereotypes of blacks.[20] Fox further mimicked racial stereotypes and potentially inflamed brown-Latino tensions in Los Angeles when he stated that Mexican immigrants "filled with dignity, willingness, and ability to work, are doing jobs that not even blacks want to do there in the United States."[21] Moreover, race riots in public high schools in Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties in the middle and late 2000s demonstrate that racial and ethnic group conflicts between blacks and Latinos do persist and fall across numerous generational lines.[22]

It is against this backdrop of Latino immigration, shifting ethnic/racial labor patterns, persistent poverty among many blacks and Latinos, and increased political influence among Latinos, that an increase in violence between black and Latino Angelinos took place in middle and late 2007. Some called the conflict between the two groups a "race war" or "ethnic cleansing," terms that sparked controversy and opposition.[23] In particular, the tragic and senseless killing of Cheryl Green in the Harbor Gateway region of Los Angeles sparked renewed interest in the troubled and sometimes toxic relationship between Latinos ("browns") and African Americans ("blacks"). Green, a fourteen-year-old African American young woman, was standing on a sidewalk in the middle of the day with friends when two men walked up and shot her, apparently for no other reason than the color of her skin.[24] The assailants were members of the 204th Street gang, a Latino organization that has been involved with numerous crimes and murders that have targeted African Americans in the racially mixed area known as the "Strip" that connects South-Central Los Angeles to the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles.[25]

Green's death generated widespread attention across the city. The *Los Angeles Times* covered the story almost daily for over a month, and its coverage gave the impression that a sectarian civil war, not unlike the one being fought between Iraqi Sunnis and Shiites, had broken out between brown and black Angelinos. Harbor Gateway residents responded to this divisive rhetoric with a series of interracial peace rallies.[26] Unfortunately tensions persisted. The Green case, along with mounting concern about rising gang violence throughout the city, prompted Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, LAPD Chief William Bratton, and FBI Director Robert

Mueller to announce that they would "strategically dismantle" the 204th Street gang through legal measures and expanded patrols.[27] Several days after the crackdown or "surge" went into effect however, a Latino shot a thirty-four-year-old African American man as he picked up his daughters from a sleepover at a friend's house.[28] This second shooting, combined with the killing of a Latino male shot by an African American male two weeks before Green was killed, left many people in the affected neighborhoods shaken and afraid to leave their homes.[29] The 204th Street gang called for a truce, but local and federal agents have not relented and so the "war" or "counter-insurgency" against violent street gangs continues.[30]

Unfortunately, Cheryl Green's death can and should be seen as one of the most recent killings in a history of similar inter-racial violence. In 1996 for example, Mark Hammonds, a black high school star football player, was shot and killed by a Latino gang member in Hawaiian Gardens, a tiny community located near Cerritos and Long Beach.[31] In the mid-1990s, the Avenue 43s, a Latino gang started targeting African Americans in Highland Park, located in downtown Los Angeles.[32] Avenue 43 members shot and killed Anthony Prudhomme, Christopher Bowser, and Kenneth Wilson in 1999 and 2000. Before shooting Wilson, one gang member reportedly stated, "Hey, wanna kill a nigger?"[33] In 2006, African American gang members killed three Latinos (Larry Marcial, David Marcial, and Luis Cervantes) in South Los Angeles.[34] That same year, a three-year-old Latina girl named Kaitlyn Avila was murdered by an African American affiliated with the Black P-Stones, a gang that is active in the Baldwin Village neighborhood known as the "jungle."[35]

As mentioned earlier, these deaths were framed by a variety of sources (including mainstream newspapers like the *Los Angeles Times* and *LA Opinion*, along with internet bloggers, social advocacy organizations, and flat-out racist groups) as "ethnic cleansing," sometimes drawing on sensationalist claims that brown-on-black violence is the secret work of the Mexican Mafia.[36] Conflict between the Mexican Mafia and the Black Guerrilla Army (two prison gangs) purportedly spilled into Los Angeles streets because La Eme's leaders supposedly "green-lighted" all African Americans for attack.[37] It is as yet unclear whether this so-called "fatwa" explains why brown-on-black violence has increased over the past fifteen years, or why black-on-brown violence continues. Whether or not orders to kill are being issued by the Black Guerrilla Army or some other shadowy force, however, prison gang and street gang rivalries, are unlikely to fully explain rising conflict between Los Angeles' brown and black communities

and/or associated reluctance to resist violent outcomes collectively. In any case, the current opportunities and future prospects for Latino political agency in Los Angeles are very much shaped by how black vs. brown violence is interpreted and addressed not only by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, but also by community organizations and those who might build coalitions to respond to this and related problems affecting Latinos in the city.

While tensions between black and Latino communities are still undeniable, "brown-on-black" violence has waned over the past few years. This does not mean that conflicts that once existed have since mysteriously vanished because they most certainly have not, and yet the near-hysteria around the so-called "race war" has quieted down, making it possible to recognize there has been a long and largely-overlooked history of brown-black cooperation and coalition building in Los Angeles that forms a significant part of Latino agency. It is this history, as well as present, that some analysts, who seem quick to reject what has been called a mystical or politically naïve "presumed alliance" between blacks and browns, seemingly and stunningly ignore or dismiss as irrelevant.[38]

It may be that such an erasure of black-Latino cooperation in Los Angeles' political history is itself an aspect of Los Angeles political culture. In his book, *The History of Forgetting,* Norman Klein argues that Los Angeles is generally constructed and understood as a city without a past.[39] Thus while Native peoples, Chicanos, Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, women, workers, and queer people have always been in Los Angeles, their histories have not often appeared in scholarly literature until quite recently. New works by scholars and writers are correcting this chronic forgetfulness and are bringing back to academic and mainstream urban political memory the kinds of political histories that have remained obscured to many Angelinos as well as to those interested in understanding Latino political agency in Los Angeles' past, present, and future.[40]

As a contribution to this recovery, I hope not only to identify and describe main characteristics of Latino political agency in Los Angeles, but to do so in a way that casts light on how that political agency has included significant cases in which Latinos came together with blacks and others to respond to various forms of crisis and/or to systematic forms of subordination in Los Angeles. I contend that historical and contemporary organizations such as the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee and the Bus Riders Union demonstrate that black and brown coalitions are significant part of Los Angeles political history for Latinos.[41] That history in turn links

Latino political practice to the histories and practices of other groups in Los Angeles in ways that can bring about—and in some instances already has brought about—meaningful change. I also argue that brown and black coalitions can be seen in the broader popular culture—in the production of musical groups such as Ozomatli and Rage Against the Machine and in comic strips like La Cucaracha. By describing Latino political agency in Los Angeles in terms of these examples it is possible not only to see the primary characteristics of Latino politics in the city (that is new community organizations and leaders, broadly conceived political forms, labor and religious elements in political efforts, multiracial/multiethnic coalitions) but also to counter the apocalyptic "racial war" narrative that currently threatens to narrow or complicate the political agency of Latinos by constructing more rigid racial divides in the city.

From Resistance to Subordination to New Grassroots Leaders and Community Organizations: The Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee

The literature on the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee (SLDC) and the Zoot Suit Riots is relatively extensive.[42] The SLDC was a small and short-lived, multiracial committee that included Euro Americans, Mexican Americans, African Americans, and Japanese Americans.[43] Carey McWilliams, the well-known writer, attorney, and human and labor rights activist, was its chairperson.[44] He nominated a politically inexperienced Jewish woman named Alice Greenfield McGrath to be the SLDC's executive secretary after four Chicano men were wrongly convicted of killing José Diaz on August 1, 1942 at a location called the Sleepy Lagoon. Greenfield McGrath had previously organized for the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and had done some political work around the Spanish Civil War. Most crucially, she joined the Communist Party in the late 1930s. While recovering from an illness, one of the defendants' attorneys, George Shibley, visited her, asking that she read the court transcript, identify contradictions and inconsistencies, and prepare notes for a possible appeal. Greenfield McGrath later visited the defendants (male as well as female) in prison and wrote and edited a newsletter that kept them, their families, and supporters apprised of the appeal and contemporary political events. Seeing her hard work and commitment, McWilliams asked her to be SLDC executive secretary, to which she replied, "I have

never done that before," to which he politely, but firmly said, "And now you will."[45]

Greenfield McGrath took the position and played a central role in the committee. Yet she did not win the defendants' release single-handedly as is sometimes suggested in retellings of the story.[46] Moreover, while many Chicano authors and activists have rightly argued that the role of Chicanos in the committee has been overlooked, that outlook has also tended to ignore how involved African Americans and Japanese Americans were with the committee.[47] Euro American men and women were also deeply involved with the SLDC, a fact that some Chicanos may have downplayed given the generally nationalist orientation of the Chicano Movement and the racial myopia of the white feminist movement.[48]

The committee's main functions were to spread publicity about the case and to raise funds for the appeal.[49] Alice Greenfield McGrath recalls that the "Jewish, labor, communist, left, Spanish-language, and black press" all covered and wrote about the case. In the case of the "black press," the *California Eagle* ran numerous articles about the Sleepy Lagoon case and later, the so-called "zoot suit" riots that took place in Los Angeles in June 1943.[50] The Eagle's publisher was Charlotta Bass who ran the paper for nearly forty years between the 1910s and 1950s. During that time period, she was a tireless advocate for racial equality and worked on many social justice campaigns, including the one that eventually helped abolish racial covenants and residential segregation.[51] Bass' positions often mirrored those of the Communist Party and she was regularly branded a "red" for her politics. Despite those attacks, she remained one of the SLDC's key supporters and she stayed very active in leftist circles, running as the Progressive Party's vice-presidential candidate in 1952.

We should mention here too that outside the Black Press, some black writers like Chester Himes also explored the Zoot Suit Riots. While Himes has been rightly critiqued for partially defining the riots in sexual terms, he wrote articles in the *California Eagle* clearly stating, "The zoot suit riots are race riots."[52] It should be remembered that the Zoot Suit Riots took place the same year that race riots involving mostly African Americans took place in Detroit and Harlem.[53] Himes' classic Los Angeles-based novel, *If He Hollers Let Him Go*, concludes with an intriguing passage about brown/black solidarity in which two zoot-suiters who "wore bagged drapes" and "talked in melodious Mexican lilt" are conscripted into the Army, along with a black man who had been falsely accused of rape, during World War II.[54] Himes therefore positions brown and black men on the frontlines, fighting for

"freedom" overseas, while they (along with women of color, whom he overlooks) were still not free back home.

Thus contrary to some scholarly interpretation, and in contrast to the idea of an inevitable racial divide between Latinos and blacks, the SLDC is an example of cooperation not only among Latinos and Anglos (Bert Corona and Josefina Fierro de Bright were the most active from the Latino community, aside from the defendants and their families), but also some African Americans. All three communities—whites, browns, and blacks—all helped raise funds, most of which came from CIO-affiliated labor unions (the Communist Party also provided resources).[55] In addition—and quite strikingly—some Japanese American internees in Manzanar internment camp located in the Owens Valley, 250 miles north of Los Angeles, raised funds for the Sleepy Lagoon defendants. Internees did this by walking the grounds of the internment camp that they had been relocated to during World War II. Many internees had actually lived in Boyle Heights, a multiracial community that included African Americans, Mexicans, Eastern Europeans, Russians, and Jews until the late 1940s, before being shipped to Manzanar.[56] These shared experiences created a bond between the Japanese American internees and the Mexican American defendants. The fundraising effort in Manzanar, given the harsh conditions that existed there, was admittedly quite small, but the *War Worker*, a progressive World War II-era paper, reported several teenagers gathered ten dollars picking up coins around the internment campgrounds. Those funds were eventually delivered to the SLDC.[57]

Evidence of interethnic connection are not restricted to Japanese American interest in the plight of Mexican Americans. In one case, a biracial (Mexican/Irish) teenager named Ralph Loza also extended himself in a quite selfless way on behalf of the Japanese Americans who had become important friends to him. Loza also lived in Boyle Heights and when the internment order came down, he said, "If they (his Japanese American friends) go, I will go too." Consequently, Loza came to be held in the Manzanar internment camp, ironically without his neighborhood friends who were sent to Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Until fairly recently Loza's name was relatively unknown; however, a documentary film released in 2004 made his story more recognizable.[58]

The SLDC is one of the better-known cases that illustrates how effective multi-racial coalitions can be. Alice Greenfield McGrath made this point clear when she held up, during a class presentation, a picture of a group of workers who were holding signs and demanding an eight-hour day in

the early 1900s. The signs were in the workers' native languages (English, Spanish, Yiddish, Russian, German, etc.), but despite this fact, they all worked together and succeeded. They bridged their multiple identities and passed the bill, showing the power of "coalition, coalition, coalition," as McGrath memorably put it. It is true that the SLDC didn't last very long after the defendants were released.[59] The committee was established for one clear purpose—to win the release of the defendants. This goal was achieved through a unique coalition that included white, brown, black, and yellow peoples, as well as women, workers, prisoners, and internees. Seen from the perspective of Latino political agency, the "least of these,"—that is, a variety of marginalized and powerless people—made history.

Social Movement Politics and Interracial Coalitions: The Bus Riders Union

The racial composition of the Bus Riders Union (BRU) mirrors the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee. The BRU is a multiracial organization that includes Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Euro Americans. The BRU emerged from the Labor Community Strategy Center, a self-defined "act tank" that was established on the heels of the campaign to stop General Motors from shutting down its Van Nuys-based plant in the late 1980s.[60] That was a time period when Los Angeles, like other urban centers across the United States, experienced "deindustrialization" that devastated unionized workers, especially black workers in South-Central Los Angeles who lost thousands of jobs. The Strategy Center fought those plant shut-downs and it battled environmental racism along the Harbor Gateway strip—the same area that was plagued with gang violence in the mid-2000s.

The BRU was established in the early 1990s to "confront and defeat transit racism"—meaning the organization emphasized the fact that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) was spending tremendous resources on a rail system that very few middle- and upper-class white riders were using and hardly any on an overcrowded, pollution-spewing bus system that mostly lower-income, working-class people of color were riding. The BRU filed a lawsuit against the MTA to create a transportation system that would serve all its riders in a fair, just, and environmentally sustainable manner. These issues, along with its very name (which symbolized its roots in the labor and civil rights movements and implied that it might sign a collective bargaining agreement), allowed the BRU to create a

unique local "movement of movements" that focused on labor, anti-racist, feminist, environmental, and global issues.[61]

The BRU's lawsuit against the MTA was not the only "weapon of the weak" that the organization relied on.[62] During the lengthy, four-year campaign (1992–1996), BRU activists held boisterous rallies and demonstrations, testified before public hearings, and organized "guerrilla" (improvisational) street theater actions. The organization also conducted its meetings in three different languages (Spanish, English, and Chinese), published trilingual flyers, and a bilingual newsletter. The BRU also linked up with the NAACP's Constance ("Connie") Rice to claim that the MTA had violated the civil rights of its riders of color through spending disproportionate resources on a rail system that mostly benefited white riders.[63] This innovative legal strategy enabled the BRU to tie itself to the historic Montgomery bus boycott that helped launch the Civil Rights movement in the mid-1950s.[64]

The creative, militant, and multiracial social movement that the BRU helped create eventually succeeded in a variety of ways. In 1996, the MTA signed a $1 billion consent decree with the BRU to improve the city's bus service. The ten-year decree obligated the MTA to purchase over three hundred new "green" (environmentally-friendly) buses and to cut spending on the rail system. This outcome was a significant victory that gave the BRU "collective bargaining rights" for over four hundred thousand bus riders in Los Angeles County. The MTA slowly bought more buses and conditions improved, but it continued to challenge the consent decree, appealing it all the way to the US Supreme Court in 2002. The court refused to hear the case, but a federal judge ruled that the MTA "substantially complied" with the decree, lifting and thereby ending federal oversight of the agency.[65] The BRU immediately denounced this decision, emphasizing significant problems still exist for bus riders—including low-wage workers, students, poor people, and the homeless—throughout the county. That movement campaign for transportation, environmental, and racial justice in Los Angeles thus continues.

Latina/o Political Participation & Latina Labor Leadership: Justice for Janitors, HERE Local 11, and the 1933 Dressmaker's Strike

In Los Angeles, labor organizing has also become an important locus for political agency among Latinos. One widely recognized and important

example is known as "Justice for Janitors"—a labor organizing effort that took place in the 1990s organizing janitors, many Latino and many unauthorized, for better working conditions.[66] It was among the first labor organizing efforts to focus on organizing unauthorized Latino workers in Los Angeles. The significance of this movement lies not only in its emphasis on unauthorized immigrants but also its diversity of membership under circumstances of racial and ethnic tension. English filmmaker Ken Loach captures the dynamics of these tensions in his 2001 film *Bread and Roses*, a fictionalized account of the Justice for Janitors campaign. The film's two main characters are Maya, a recent immigrant woman from Mexico, and Sam, a white male, Jewish, college-educated union organizer. Maya is a tough and self-sufficient, as well as sometimes impulsive character who is willing to fight those who would subordinate her. In the film's initial scenes Maya extricates herself from nearly being raped by a coyote who brought her over the border. She later challenges several men who verbally insult and grab her in a bar.

Despite being an unauthorized resident, Maya eventually helps lead the campaign for better working conditions for janitors in Los Angeles. Before she takes that position, the viewer first sees her wildly pushing around a vacuum cleaner until Ella, a black co-worker, comes to her assistance. Ella, a seasoned worker, calmly shows Maya how to properly use it. This scene illustrates two things—first before the 1980s, most janitors in Los Angeles were African American.[67] The rise in immigration in the 1980s and 1990s from Mexico and Central America changed the industry's racial and ethnic composition and generated tensions between blacks and Latinos, especially in South-Central Los Angeles where concentrations of Latinos made them a numerical majority by the end of the 1990s. Despite these changes and resulting tensions however, black, brown, and white janitors worked—and this is my second point—together and successfully challenged some of the most powerful economic interests in the city. These workers negotiated contracts that improved wages and working conditions and gave them a sense of dignity and respect. Here again Justice for Janitors, like SLDC and the Bus Riders Union, serves to bring together browns, blacks, whites and others in a multiracial coalition working for social justice.

Currently, Latino labor organizing in Los Angeles can be seen as an avenue of political agency for Latinos for several reasons. First, the effort to secure the rights and dignity of working unauthorized Latino residents is politically important in that Latinos are politically marginalized in part as a function of how unauthorized Latino immigrants are sought as exploitable

labor on one hand and used as scapegoats for the economic practices that impoverish Latinos and other minority groups on the other. This political double bind, and its dire social and economic effects on Latinos, is one of the most difficult problems now facing Latino communities. Thus, for some Latinos that wish to work to increase political voice for Latinos, gaining recognition, fair compensation and treatment, and dignity for working, poor Latinos who labor in this country is a crucial step is to securing that voice. In turn, labor organizing is regarded as an important means by which to achieve that recognition, and in turn, to improve the circumstances in Latino communities and the prospects for Latino political empowerment and effective voice.

Second, Los Angeles labor movements, including the Justice for Janitors movement, have become a place for significant participation by *Latinas,* who in some cases have assumed highly visible leadership roles. In Los Angeles, Maria Elena Durazo, who is currently the Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor and served as President of HERE (Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union) Local 11, has been a particularly visible and influential labor leader who has spearheaded efforts to shift Los Angeles union activity toward organizing unauthorized immigrants. The participation of Latinas in labor leadership is particularly important because it can significantly affect the kind of labor (or political) organizing that is prioritized and accomplished. Studies in Latina political participation show that in exercising political agency Latinas frequently prioritize cultivating networks of people who can effectively communicate and cooperate and then tapping those networks to work toward specific collective goals. In other words, Latinas in leadership roles thus often (though not always) approach leadership in a gendered manner, using empathic sensibilities and other common female social skills to cultivate working relationships that can sustain collective mobilization. The result is non-traditional forms of leadership that prioritize group cohesion formation and intra-group communication over the creation of hierarchically ordered kinds of leadership.[68]

In a labor organizing context, such gendered variation in leadership styles can, and in Los Angeles commonly has, facilitated modes of organizing that enhance the civic knowledge and inclination to participate in electoral and other politics among Latinos, independent of their citizenship status. In her leadership of HERE Local 11 for example, Maria Elena Durazo sought to increase the low levels of participation by rank and file Latinos in the working efforts of the union by producing union

materials in Spanish and holding bilingual meetings. While union membership had been 75% Spanish-speakers, its previous male union leaders had not taken these simple measures to facilitate communication among members and between members and union staff and "leaders." As Durazo cultivated effective group communication, she observed that Latino union members significantly increased their levels of participation and felt less trepidation in participation in collective action initiatives, and in confrontational encounters with employers.[69] She also witnessed improved leadership skills both among union representatives and among union members in general.

These new skills and levels of comfort with participatory and dissenting activities had direct applicability and relevance to fostering political participation. In the case of HERE Local 11, Durazo's fostering of *direct participation* among immigrant Latinos has led to greater political awareness among immigrant Latinos of importance to electoral politics to their needs. This awareness, in combination with increased confidence in participation, has led to increasing numbers of Latinos participating in electoral campaigns and get-out-the-vote efforts *regardless of their legal status*. During Antonio Villaraigosa's 2005 campaign for Mayor of Los Angeles, for example, Durazo noted that roughly one hundred members of her local, many of whom were not citizens, took leaves of absence from their jobs in order to engage full-time in efforts to get out the Latino vote for Villaraigosa.

In Los Angeles, however, the circumstance of having female-led labor organizing becoming a vehicle for the politicization of Mexicanas and Mexican Americans is not entirely new. In October 1933, for example, Local 96 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) engaged in a major union building effort and registered one thousand new members in just three weeks in preparation for a strike of garment workers in Los Angeles sweatshops. Local 96, which was comprised overwhelmingly of Mexican American women with some Anglo, Italian, and Jewish workers, was eventually snubbed by the white male garment workers union which secretly negotiated its own contract. The women's local however proceeded with the planned strike, and were led by Rose Pesotta, a Russian-Jewish dressmaker, immigrant, and anarchist who rejected the prevailing view among white male labor leaders that Mexican American women workers could not be organized. Not unlike Durazo, some fifty plus years later, Pesotta used bilingual appeals in both in print and on the radio to register hundreds of Chicana laborers. Soon those Chicanas were contributing to union strategy; for example, union members suggested turning to radio

stations in Tijuana when the option to use radio stations in Los Angeles was compromised.[70]

As the bilingual abilities of union members became an asset for the union, Pesotta herself had already begun to learn Mexican American culture. She recognized and integrated the family lives of the union's Chicanas into the union's activities in ways that male leaders had not done. She engaged Mexican American women as equals and connected with them through her multiple identifications with them as a fellow dress-maker, an immigrant, and woman.[71] In that connection some members of the union confided to Pesotta that they wished to participate more in American culture, including political life. As George Sánchez has put it, union activity in IGLWU Local 96 became a means for political incorpora-tion and provided "an outlet for Mexican women to lean English, regularly interact with non-Mexicans, and voice political protest" all in connection with family life.[72] As such, Sánchez contends "these new Chicana workers were among the first members of their communities to express a civil rights agenda as American citizens, largely through their participation in the labor movement of the 1930s and 1940s."[73] The work of Durazo and other Latino labor leaders in Los Angeles can thus be seen as part of the fabric of Latino political agency in the city and an important tradition by which Latinos have come to greater political participation.

Popular Culture and Interethnic/Interracial Relations: Calling Coalition

Given the violent conflict between blacks and Latinos in Los Angeles in the mid-2000s and the historical and contemporary examples of multiethnic, multiracial political (or politically-relevant) activism in Los Angeles, there is clearly a balance to be struck in describing the current character and prospects of Latino political agency in Los Angeles. Stark racial and class divisions are hallmarks of the city. But at the same time Latino politics in Los Angeles is replete with examples of multiracial and multiethnic coop-eration—cooperation that has been a key ingredient in some of the most important successes in Latino politics in Los Angeles.

From a theoretical perspective, Chicana feminist thinkers such as Gloria Anzaldúa and Elizabeth Martínez have argued for several decades of the need to shift our understanding of Chicano/Latino politics from one based on a presumed need for *unity* based on ethnic and/or racial homogeneity,

to one built on the ongoing construction of *solidarity* among diverse peoples in common causes that resist all forms of subordination.[74] Such an approach to Latino political agency, however, would require privileging modes of interracial and interethnic cooperation in Latino politics without losing sight of the genuine conflicts that also exist and can become manifest. Bringing a solidarity-based vision of Chicano/Latino politics to fruition, however, requires socially constructing a widely held view that diverse peoples *can* work together for political ends that benefit Latinos and others.

To this end, cultural products such as films, popular literature, music, and even academic literature such as this chapter, can serve to keep Latino Angelinos aware of group conflict and *at the same time* continually familiar with the idea that diverse coalitions have produced effective results in the past and may do so again at any time Latinos choose to work with others toward common cause. Cultural production may thus serve as important political intervention in that it can acclimatize Latinos and others to the ambivalence and ambiguities of political action in diverse contexts. For example, from one perspective, *Bread and Roses* might look like a contemporary version of *Salt of the Earth* (1954), the classic blacklisted McCarthy-era film, complete with a Mexican American woman activist (Esperanza Quintero) and a white male union organizer (Frank Barnes). Some Chicana activists and scholars have criticized the prominent portrayal of white men in both films, implying that the films would better serve Latino cultural, political, and aesthetic interests had they focused solely on Latina efforts.

Yet, such criticism is factually unjustified to the extent that white men and women actually were present and had influential roles in these struggles. The portrayal of white allies in these cases then is not mere fiction. Moreover, the impulse to erase white and/or black support in largely Latino political/economic struggles is arguably counterproductive, in that it at once obscures the historical success of diverse coalitions in Latino causes, and it fails to build confidence in the ever-present possibility of building new diverse coalitions that can take up the needs of Latinos as part of common political cause. In this sense it is a potentially important contribution for filmmakers such as Herbert Biberman (*Salt of the Earth*), Ken Loach, and Luis Valdez to portray white men and women as active in labor and political struggles that benefit people of color. At the same time, there is always a risk of portraying Anglo contributors such as Barnes, Sam, and Alice Greenfield McGrath as "white knights in shining armor" if it is not specified that while

white activists were crucial, they were not the only ones who contributed to political success. Each of the examples of Latino political agency in Los Angeles discussed so far can claim successes in part because they included participants from various racial and ethnic backgrounds.

If forms of cultural production that depend on narrative run the risk obscuring the co-presence of racial/ethnic conflict *and* racial/ethnic cooperation, then cultural forms that evoke feelings and imagery may better perform such a balance. Poetry and song are effective modes for holding contradictory ideas or tendencies together in brevity of expression—contradictions can mar cultural forms that conventionally require narrative cohesion. Consequently, popular music may be considered an important potential and de facto contributor to the political landscape in Los Angeles to the extent that particular musicians have effectively portrayed "Los Angeles" as a place of both interracial conflict and interracial hope. Ozomatli, Rage Against the Machine, the Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy, and Tupac Shakur for example have all sung about the reality of racial conflict and class divides in the "City of Angels."

Tupac Shakur's 1996 song "To Live and Die in L.A.," for example, contains one of the most memorable lines about coalition politics and the common condition of people of color in Los Angeles. He wrote, "Cause what would L.A. be without Mexicans, black love, brown pride and the sets again. Pete Wilson trying to see us all broke."[75] Former California Governor and nativist Pete Wilson was also mentioned in the Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy's classic remake of the Dead Kennedys' iconic song, "California Uber Alles."[76] The Disposable Heroes were a short-lived, multi-racial rock band that included African Americans and Asian Americans. In the original version of the punk anthem, Dead Kennedys' lead singer Jello Biafra lambasts then and current (remarkably enough) California Governor Jerry Brown.[77] In the cover, Disposable's front man, Michael Franti (who now leads Spearhead, a politically conscious hip-hop band) criticized Wilson for cutting social programs for poor people and attacking immigrants. In this and other pieces, the band blended hip-hop and punk and discussed as well as embodied interracial unity. The band's lyrics, its multiracial membership, and its hybridization of musical genres therefore suggested that people of color were allies, not enemies, and that the "real" adversaries they faced were political and economic leaders who perpetuated racial and class system that sought to "divide and conquer" diverse racial and ethnic groups.

The Los Angeles-based hip-hop, metal, funk, and punk rock band Rage Against the Machine (whom the Disposable Heroes of Hiphoprisy

sometimes toured with in the early 1990s) also released a well-known song about the same racially divisive and racially subordinating "enemy." On the band's self-titled debut album, Rage's Chicano lead singer Zack de la Rocha defiantly proclaims, "Yes, I know my enemies. They're the teachers who taught me to fight me. Compromise, conformity, assimilation, submission, ignorance, hypocrisy, brutality, the elite, all of which are American dreams."[78] Rage Against the Machine is an extremely popular, politicized, and controversial band that made headlines throughout the 1990s. Band members like multiracial (black/white) lead guitarist Tom Morello and de la Rocha were deeply involved in the anti-sweatshop, indigenous, prisoners' rights, and global justice movements. The band's "preferential option for poor" led it to support Leonard Peltier, Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Zapatistas, and garment workers toiling in downtown Los Angeles sweatshops. Rage's name and political activities implied that people of color, as well as sympathetic white people, should unite and "rage against the machine," rather than each other. The word "machine" harkens back Mario Savio's famous speech during the UC Berkeley Free Speech Movement where he urged those assembled to "lay your bodies upon the wheels and levers of the machine."[79]

At times, Rage has chosen performance venues that also express its political agency, and its choices have sometimes placed it in the middle of dissenting protest and ground level political conflict in Los Angeles. In 2000, Rage Against the Machine played outside the Democratic National Convention at the Staples Center. Their performance at a protest rally served as the endpoint of a protest march and daylong "counter-Convention" that was heavily monitored by police. Rage played the counter-Convention with another ethnically and racially mixed progressive band called Ozomatli—an equally politicized hip-hop cumbia, ranchera-oriented band. Rage's four-song set ended without incident, but when Ozomatli took the stage, alleged crowd disturbances caused the LAPD to move in with force, cutting short their appearance.

While these musical groups have worked to emphasize the commonality of racial and ethnic subordination and potential for common cause, their musical production—if seen as political intervention—must still confront misinterpretation though the lens of prevailing racial stereotypes. For example, Ozomatli—a group that formed in 1995, taking its name from the Aztec god of dance—received its major commercial breakthrough when it appeared in the film *Never Been Kissed*, a Hollywood production that starred Drew Barrymore.[80] That film stereotypically

portrayed black musicians from another band eating marijuana-laced brownies with Barrymore. The next scene shows her "high" and dancing energetically on stage with Ozomatli. This unfortunate sequence in the film rearticulates the essentialist notion that white people are sober, strait-laced rhythm-impaired individuals who gain from interaction with Blacks and Latinos only to the extent that these "others" are their polar opposites.

By playing upon discredited, but still present stereotypical images, *Never Been Kissed* depoliticizes Ozomatli. This may be interpreted as unconscious stereotyping, or as the conscious rearticulation of colonial discourses which—as Arturo Aldama and others have argued—have historically portrayed Native Americans, Chicanos, and Mexican immigrants as "savage."[81] As Aldama contends, however, hybrid cultural forms can still present receptive audiences with the politics and complex identifications of subordinated groups even if those cultural products are misinterpreted in the cultural mainstream. In any case, Ozomatli's multiracial members have been heavily involved in local, state, national, and global social movements for numerous years. Bassist Wil-Dog Abers, for example, was active in the failed battle to save the Peace and Justice Center in downtown Los Angeles, an alternative, political "free safe space" for artists, activists, and musicians in the mid-1990s.[82] The band's website lists links to organizations that oppose police brutality, the Iraq war, and the School of the Americas. The band's lyrics routinely explore political issues. Its 2007 album, *Don't Mess with the Dragon*, included a song called "City of Angels" that some predicted would replace Randy Newman's well-known, but possibly outdated anthem, "I Love L.A." as the city's signature jam.[83]

Finally, while cartoonists are not usually seen as activists, there are some like Paul Conrad, formerly with the *Los Angeles Times*, and Gary Trudeau (*Doonesbury*) whose work has focused on socio-political issues and raising political consciousness. Aaron McGruder and Lalo Alcaraz also belong to this list and their work underscores the possibility for racial and ethnic cooperation in the context of ongoing conflict. McGruder's *Boondocks* gained tremendous publicity shortly after it first appeared in 1996 because it included African-American characters (Huey, Riley, and their grandfather) who candidly discussed controversial issues like racism and the war on terrorism from a progressive perspective. The *Boondocks* eventually became the nation's first nationally syndicated black comic strip. McGruder eventually sold the television rights to the strip to the Cartoon Network, and it has been on the air since 2006.

During this time period, Lalo Alcaraz—whose comic strip *La Cucaracha* is the first Latino-written strip ever to be nationally syndicated—began a comic series sardonically titled, the *Beandocks*. Characters from *La Cucaracha* and the *Boondocks* appeared in these "bi-racial" stories, discussing brown and black issues and stressing the need for solidarity and coalition. Alcaraz ran these pieces as an homage to McGruder and to extend some of his earlier work that called for brown and black coalitions. The *Beandocks* is one more example from the wider popular culture that shows how the similar socio-economic circumstances of blacks and Latinos can engender multiracial alliances.

Conclusion

Fifteen years ago, Derrick Bell wrote that black faces were the ones at the "bottom of the well."[84] A 2007 report titled, "The State of Black California" shows that this is still the case, but that in nearly ever category (e.g. income and home ownership rates) Latinos share the "bottom of the well" with their black counterparts.[85] These socioeconomic facts are not surprising. Even a casual look at the composition of urban life in nearly every major US city indicates that black and Latino faces are to be found in disproportionate numbers at the lowest levels of socioeconomic advantage and at the highest levels of suffering. While Latino and African American middle and upper-middle classes do exist in American cities, the overall statistics indicating growing poverty and related deprivations suggest that the futures are not promising for poor members of black and Latino communities.[86]

To remedy the systematic and persistent subordination of African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans, many people have called for a politics (as stated by Alice Greenfield McGrath) rooted in "coalition, coalition, coalition." Yet despite the emphasis in this chapter, relatively few efforts to generate racially and ethnically diverse coalitions have been established in recent times. Activists can cite the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee, the Civil Rights Congress in the 1950s, the Bus Riders Union, AGENDA (Action for Grassroots Empowerment and Neighborhood Alternatives), the Watts Century/Latino Organization, and spaces such as the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research as efforts that intentionally sought to include black and Latino Angelinos. Diverse electoral coalitions such as that which helped Antonio Villaraigosa win election as

Los Angeles mayor have emerged, but by their nature, such coalitions are temporary.

Nonetheless, the larger point here is that the history of Latino political agency in Los Angeles provides some powerful examples which illustrate in the famous words of the United Farm Workers', *sí se puede*—it can be done. Diverse coalitions have worked in the past as acts of Latino political agency and they could do so again. The question that remains, however, is that given the history of coalition-based politics in Los Angeles, is whether or not Latino activists, academics, and concerned citizens will employ their political agency to join with others to work politically across various racial, ethnic, gender and sexual lines to create lasting change in Los Angeles.

This question is not merely academic, of course. In contemporary Los Angeles, it is quite literally a life-and-death question as the deaths of Cheryl Green, Kaitlyn Avila, and sadly too many others remind us. For more than a decade, the motto "another world is possible" has inspired activists all over the world. Given the problems of intergroup violence involving Blacks and Latinos that currently exist in Los Angeles, it might seem idealistic to claim that "another" Los Angeles—one relatively free of violence, poverty, racism, inequality, and violence—is possible. There is strength in numbers (remember Shelley's aphorism here "we are many and they are few"); the "faces at the bottom of the well" far out-number those looking down from the rim at the top. If Latinos seeking to exercise their agency took responsibility for stopping violence and attempted to work together with a diversity of others in solidarity to transform the City of Angels there is no telling what might happen at the powerful hands of diverse well-formed, sustainable, and progressive coalitions.

If Latinos chose in future to initiate projects of solidarity and coalition building as acts of political agency, Latino elected officials could facilitate that process "from above," yet substantive change would also need to come "from below" from the networks built—often by Latinas and other women—within current labor movements, community organizations, and/or progressive faith communities. Producers of popular culture and music might contribute by creating hybridized cultural forms that help draw together black and Latino cultures and communities. As the zoot suit, swing, and jitterbug scenes of the 1930s and 1940s were to ethnic and racially divided communities at that time, so are hip-hop, reggae, rock en español, and other musical genres of the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s to Los Angeles black and Latino communities today.

While musicians, writers, and filmmakers cannot set labor laws or immigration policy, much less bring back those who have lost their lives, they can plant seeds that educate Latino and black youth about their shared histories in the city. Latino academics might collaborate with black academics to write and introduce a "people's history" of Los Angeles into the curriculum in the city's public school system. In short, in addition to understanding the past and present of Latino political agency in Los Angeles, one can reasonably hope that many different potential acts of Latino political agency could help reverse the existing currents of conflict, prevent other tragic deaths, and give energy to the creative forces that may indeed help build "another" Los Angeles in which Angelinos of all kinds may feel in their city a sense of home.

Endnotes

1. Leonard Pitt. 1966. *The Decline of the Californios: The Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846-1890*. Berkeley: University of California Press. By 1848 and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, however, California demographics had already shifted enough to make the Spanish-speaking population of California (which numbered roughly 13,000 of the total 100,000 in California) a minority in Los Angeles and in the region that had so recently been Mexico.
2. Juan Gomez-Quinones. 1990. *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940–1990*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 54. For more on the CSO, see Bernstein, 2011.
3. Nicholas C. Vaca. 2004. *The Presumed Alliance: The Unspoken Conflict between Latinos and Blacks and What it Means for America*. New York: Harper Collins. Vaca explores "the presumed alliance" between Latinos and African-Americans, making it seem as if establishing coalitions between both groups are nearly impossible.
4. The position of the Californio elite on racial tolerance in the 1840s and through to the US Civil War was complex (Pitt 1966, 204–206). Consequently while racial tolerance was reasonably high among them, not all Mexican delegates at the 1848 state constitutional convention voted to welcome free blacks into the state. For a description of the Mexican voting record at the conventions, see Pitt, 1966, 44–46. The white delegates who aimed to limit the franchise did succeed in barring Blacks and Indians who had not been Mexican citizens from voting rights. The Mexican origin delegates, however, did achieve other gains, including provisions for the property rights of women and bilingual codification of the law. Neither of these provisions would ultimately be enforced, however. The bilingual printing of California law was suspended in 1879 at a second constitutional convention at which Latinos had no representation.

Notably, this shift in the language of the law came as part of efforts to constrain the rights of Asian immigrants in California. This outcome only reinforces the notion that the political fates of non-white Californians have long been intertwined. For more on these issues, see Gómez-Quiñones, 1994.

5. S.I. Benn. 1976. "Freedom, Autonomy, and the Concept of a Person," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 12: 9–130; 1982. "Individuality, Autonomy, and Community," In *Community as Social Ideal,* edited by Eugene Kamenka. London: Edward Arnold, 42–62. Philosopher S.I. Benn distinguishes between agency and autonomy in which agency is the capacity to make choices, while autonomy is the act of making choices for oneself independent of external influence. While feminists and others are currently rethinking autonomy in terms of relationships, agency as the exercise of capacity for choice in complex contexts is generally relational. Agency also admits of degrees and may be exercised in some times and places while not in others. In this way the concept of agency aptly accommodates the ebb and flow of Latino political engagement in Los Angeles and elsewhere. For further discussion, see MacKenzie and Stoljar, 2000.

6. This reversal took place unevenly, as other drops in the Los Angeles Latino population took place at various times as during the repatriations of the 1930s and 1940s. Repatriation not only reduced the numbers of Mexicans in Los Angeles, but also reduced the visibility and integration of those who remained. See George Sánchez, 1993.

7. US Census Bureau: State and County Quickfacts, derived from Population Estimates, Census of Population and Housing, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patters, Non-employer Statistics.

8. This is down from 62.9% in 1990, but still 19% higher than Texas, the state with the next largest inflow of new Mexican immigrants. See Jorge Durand, Douglas S. Massey, and Chiara Capoferro, 2005.

9. Norma Chinchilla and Norma Hamilton. 2000. *Seeking Community in a Global City: Guatemalans and Salvadorans in Los Angeles.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

10. US Census Bureau: State and County Quickfacts.

11. Cardenas is currently running for the 29th Congressional Representative seat (San Fernando Valley). He won handily in November 2012.

12. Gloria Molina was first elected as First District Supervisor to the Los Angeles County Board in 1991, a position which she still currently holds. Dr. Julian Nava was the first Mexican-American elected to the Los Angeles County School Board, gaining office in 1967. Nava, incidentally, worked with the CSO in the 1940s. See Nava, 2002.

13. Raphael Sonenshein and Mark Drayse. 2006. "Urban Election Coalitions in an Age of Immigration: Time and Place in the 2001 and 2005 Los Angeles Mayoral Primaries," *Political Geography* 25: 570–595.

14. David Hayes-Bautista. 2004. *La Nueva California.* CA: University of California Press, 77.

15. David M. Grant, Melvin Oliver, and Angela James. 1996. "African Americans:

Social and Economic Bifurcation." In *Ethnic Los Angeles*, edited by Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 390.

16. David Bacon. 2004. "The Political Economy and Immigration Reform," *Multinational Monitor* (Nov) vol. 25, issue 11: 9–13. For a discussion of job competition and rivalry between Los Angeles' African-American and Latino residents, see Teresa Watanabe, 2006a; 2006b. For a contrarian viewpoint on this issue, on a more national level, see Vernon Briggs, 2004.

17. Erin Aubry Kaplan. 2006a. "What Was Lost in the Crowd," *Los Angeles Times,* May 3: B13; Erin Aubry Kaplan. 2006b. "The Black-Brown Divide: An Alliance That Seems Natural, but what Separates Latinos and African-Americans has to be Examined First," *Los Angeles Times,* May 24: B13; Teresa Watanabe. 2006a. "L.A. Workers Join Fierce Debate Over Immigration," *Los Angeles Times* February 20: A1; Teresa Watanabe. 2006b. "Immigrant Crusade Enlists Few Blacks," *Los Angeles Times* April 10: A1.

18. Hemmy So. 2006. "Minutemen Caravan Gets Testy Send-Off," *Los Angeles Times,* May 4: B1; Teresa Watanabe. 2007. "Activist Gaining Little Ground Among Blacks," *Los Angeles Times,* December 31: B1.

19. Tanya K. Hernández. 2007. "Roots of Anger: Longtime Prejudices, not Economic Rivalry, Fuel Latino-black Tensions," *Los Angeles Times,* January 7: M1.

20. Darryl Fears. 2005. "White House Denounces Art on Mexican Stamps," *Washington Post,* July 1: A18; Richard Matosi. 2005. "Purchase Would Be No Stamp of Approval," *Los Angeles Times,* July 13.

21. Laurence Iliff and Lennox Samuels. 2005. "President Vicente Fox's Comment Reflects Mexican Attitude on Race," Seattle Times, May 18 (http://seattletimes. com/html/nationworld/2002278764_mexrace18.html). Fox apologized, after receiving widespread criticism, shortly after making this statement.

22. Located in South Los Angeles, Jefferson High School, for example, received widespread notoriety for conflicts between African-American and Latino students in 2005. For more on what took place at Jefferson, see Banks and Shields, 2005.

23. Megan Garvey and Patrick McGreevy. 2007. "Racial Attacks by Gangs Rising, L.A. Officials Fear," *Los Angeles Times,* January 21: A1; Brentin Mock. 2007. "Ethnic Cleansing in L.A.," January 19 (http://www.alternet.org/story/46855/ ethnic_cleansing_in_L.A./); Jill Leovy. 2007a. "Study Finds No Racial Crime Wave," *Los Angeles Times,* September 22; Jill Leovy. 2007b. "Homicides Don't Add up to a Race War," *Los Angeles Times,* November 25: M6; Sam Quiñones. 2007e. "Gang Rivalry Grows into Race War," *Los Angeles Times,* October 18; Dennis Romero. 2005. "The Rainbow Collision," *Tu Ciudad Los Angeles,* October/November: 62–73.

24. Sam Quiñones. 2006. "Flight from Gang Violence Proved to be Futile," *Los Angeles Times,* December 30: B1.

25. Patrick McGreevy and Richard Winton. 2007a. "FBI Joins L.A. Policing Effort in War on Street Gang Crime," *Los Angeles Times,* January 19: B1; Patrick McGreevy and Richard Winton. 2007b. "City Plan Targets 11 Worst Gangs," *Los Angeles Times,* February 8: B1; Amanda Covarrubias and Sam Quiñones. 2007. "Gang Members Accused of Killing Witness," *Los Angeles Times,* February

14: A1; Sam Quiñones. 2007c. "How a Community Imploded," *Los Angeles Times,* March 4: A1; Sam Quiñones. 2007d. "Girl's Accused Killer Straddles a Racial Divide," *Los Angeles Times,* March 10: B1; Sam Quiñones. 2012. "Last Suspect in Cheryl Green Hate-Crime Murder gets 238 Years," *Los Angeles Times,* June 20. Five 204th Street Gang members were later accused of stabbing Christopher Ash, a twenty-five-year-old witness to Green's murder, more than eighty times, killing him and dumping his body in Carson. He was murdered approximately two weeks after Green was killed in a hate crime in broad daylight. Green's assailant—a then eighteen-year-old multi-racial male named Jonathan Fajardo—was given the death penalty in 2010 for killing Green and Ash. Ernesto Alcarez, who served as Fajardo's look-out, was given a 238-year sentence in June 2012 for his role in Green's murder. Robert Gonzáles, Daniel Aguilar, and Raul Silva were also convicted in Ash's murder. A youth center named for Green opened in Harbor Gateway in June 2009 (Bloomekatz 2009).

26. Jean Merl. 2006. "Harbor Gateway Group Makes Call for Unity," *Los Angeles Times,* December 31: B3; Sam Quiñones. 2007a. "Rally Shines Spotlight on Racial Tensions," *Los Angeles Times,* January 14: B3.
27. McGreevy and Winton. 2007a, B1; 2007b, A1.
28. Jessica Garrison. 2007. "Activists Walk Area Beset by Violence," *Los Angeles Times,* January 22, 1.
29. Ibid.
30. Quiñones. 2007b, B1.
31. Peter Y. Hong. 2000. "Many Roots of Hate," *Los Angeles Times,* May 7: B1.
32. Joe Mozingo. 2006. "4 Los Angeles Latino Gang Members Convicted of Anti-Black Conspiracy," *Los Angeles Times,* August 2: A1.
33. Brentin Mock. 2007. "Ethnic Cleansing in L.A.," (www.alternet.org/story/46855), January 20.
34. Ashley Surdin. 2006. "Residents Urged to Help Find Killers," *Los Angeles Times,* July 8: B3.
35. Erika Hayaski. 2006. "Gang Violence Fuels Racial Tensions," *Los Angeles Times,* September 30: B3. The "jungle" was immortalized in the film, *Training Day*. The neighborhood is located near the Los Angeles Coliseum.
36. Ibid; Mock. 2007; Jorge Almada. 2007. "Advierten que 'La Eme' da órdenes de Atacar," *La Opinión,* January 20.
37. La Eme is the popular name for the Mexican Mafia.
38. Vaca. 2004.
39. Norman Klein. 1997. *The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory.* London: Verso.
40. For more on the recent historiography of Los Angeles, see Avila, 2001. "Little Village protesters shift tactics over school." *Chicago Tribune,* June 3, 2003; William Deverell, 2004. *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past.* Berkeley: University of California Press; Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons. 2006. *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians.* New York: Basic Books; Douglas Flamming. 2004. *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America*. Berkeley: University of California Press; Natalia Molina. 2006. *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879–1939*. Berkeley: University of California

Press; Karen Piper. 2006. *Left in the Dust: How Race and Politics Created a Human and Environmental Tragedy in L.A.* New York: Palgrave; Laura Pulido. 2006. *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles*, University of California Press; Josh Sides. 2003. *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present.* Berkeley: University of California Press; RJ Smith. 2006. *The Great Black Way: L.A. in the 1940s and the Lost African American Renaissance.* New York: Public Affairs. The literature on Los Angeles has literally exploded since Mike Davis' *City of Quartz*, published in 1990. These citations are just part of a short list that could easily fill dozens of pages.

41. For more on these coalition efforts and what I call "a people's history of Los Angeles," see Armbruster-Sandoval, 2010. "A People's History of Los Angeles: Teaching the Brown/Black Metropolis: Is Another Los Angeles Possible?" *Latino Studies* 8(2): 271–283; Ralph Armbruster-Sandoval. 2011. "The Life of the Party: Alice McGrath, Multiracial Coalitions, and the Struggle for Social Justice," *Aztlán* 36(1): 37–68.

42. Frank P. Barajas, 2006. "The Defense Committees of Sleepy Lagoon: A Convergent Struggle Against Fascism, 1942–1944," *Aztlán* 33(1): 33–62; Edward J. Escobar. 1999. *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900–1945.* Berkeley: University of California Press; Mauricio Mazon. 1984. *The Zoot-Suit Riots.* Austin: University of Texas Press; Alice McGrath. 1987. "The Education of Alice McGrath," Interview by Michael Balter. Oral History Program Office. University of California, Los Angeles; Eduardo Obregon Pagan. 2003. *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, and Riot in Wartime L.A.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; Catherine S. Ramírez. 2009. *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press; Luis Valdez. 1992. *Zoot Suit and Other Plays.* Houston: Arte Público.

43. Barajas 2006; McGrath 2004.

44. Peter Richardson. 2005. *American Prophet: The Life and Work of Carey McWilliams.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

45. McGrath 2004.

46. Armbruster-Sandoval 2011; McGrath 1987. The movie *Zoot Suit* (1981) implicitly suggests this, erasing the efforts put forth by Latinos in particular to win the release of the "boys." *Zoot Suit* also focuses quite heavily on George Shearer, a white "people's lawyer," who in actuality was George Shibley, a Lebanese-American civil rights and labor attorney who was an extremely capable litigator for more than forty years.

47. Yolanda Broyles-González. 1994. *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement.* Austin: University of Texas Press; Mario T. García. 1994. *Memories of Chicano History: The Life and Narrative of Bert Corona.* Berkeley: University of California Press. These two texts, the latter one being Chicano labor activist Bert Corona's narrative, have long been cited as the definitive works on this matter. And yet, while both rightly focus on the role that Chicana/Latina activists played in the SLDC, particularly Josefina Fierro de Bright, more recent works indicate that she was instrumental in the formation of the first Sleepy Lagoon defense committee. Indeed, as Barajas' (2006) research

shows, there were two defense committees, not just one. Both were multi-racial; a fact, once again, that many have overlooked or ignored. For more on these issues, see Armbruster-Sandoval, 2011.

48. Armbruster-Sandoval 2011.
49. McGrath 2004.
50. Robert Gottlieb et al. 2005. *The Next Los Angeles: The Struggle for a Livable City*. Berkeley: University of California Press; Kevin Allen Leonard. 2006. *The Battle for Los Angeles: Racial Ideology and World War II*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 309–342. Alice Greenfield married poet Thomas McGrath in the 1950s; they divorced after several years. Known to most as simply "Alice," she preferred the name McGrath over Greenfield.
51. Gottlieb 2005.
52. Ramírez 2009.
53. George Lipsitz. 1994. *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
54. Chester Himes. 1986 [1946]. *If He Hollers Let Him Go*. New York: Thunder Mouth Press, 203.
55. Barajas 2006.
56. George Sanchez. 1993. *Becoming Mexican American*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
57. *War Worker*. 1944. "Japanese American High School Students Send $10 to Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee." March 10.
58. John Esaki. 2004. *Stand Up for Justice: The Ralph Lazo Story*. Los Angeles: Visual Communications.
59. Indeed, the SLDC disbanded before the Chicana defendants were released from the Ventura School for Girls (Ramírez 2009). The committee has been criticized for this fact, but McGrath (1987; 2004) has disputed this charge, stating this wasn't one of its main tasks. For more on this issue, see Armbruster-Sandoval, 2011; Barajas, 2006.
60. Eric Mann, 1987. *Taking on GM: Case Study of the Campaign to Keep GM Van Nuys Open*. Los Angeles: UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education.
61. Tom Mertes, ed. 2004. *A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Really Possible?* London: Verso.
62. James Scott. 1987. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press
63. Rice's second cousin is former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.
64. Robin D. G. Kelley. 1996. "Freedom Riders (The Sequel)," *The Nation,* February 5: 18–22.
65. Jean Guccione. 2006. "Court Oversight of L.A. Transit Services Lifted," *Los Angeles Times,* October 26.
66. For more on this campaign, see Milkman, 2006.
67. David M. Grant, Melvin Oliver, and Angela James. 1996. "African Americans: Social and Economic Bifurcation," In *Ethnic Los Angeles*, edited by Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, 379–412, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
68. Carol Hardy-Fanta. 1993. *Latina Politics Latino Politics*. PA: Temple University Press; Paula Cruz Takash. 2003. "Breaking Barriers to Representation:

Chicana/Latina Elected Officials in California," *Urban Anthropology* 22: 325–60; Mary Pardo. 1998. *Mexican American Women Activist*. PA: Temple University Press.

69. Victor Manuel Valle and Rodolfo D. Torres. 2000. Latino Metropolis. University of Minnesota Press. 105–106.

70. Sánchez 1993, 233.

71. Ibid., 234–35.

72. Ibid., 234.

73. Ibid.

74. Ana Louise Keating, ed. 2000. Anzaldua Interviews. Routledge. 156–158; Gloria Anzaldúa. 1987. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 85–86; Elizabeth Martínez, 1999. *De Colores Means All of Us: Latina Views for a Multi-Colored Century*. Boston: South End Press.

75. This song is included in Shakur's last studio album, *The Don Killuminati: The 7 Day Theory* (1996).

76. This song is included on the album, *Hypocrisy is the Greatest Luxury* (1992).

77. "California Uber Alles" was first released in 1979 as a single and later appeared on the DK's first album, *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables* (1980).

78. This song is called "Know Your Enemy," it can be found on *Rage against the Machine* (1992).

79. Savio's name may seem out of place here, but fifty thousand people laid their bodies upon the "wheels and levers of the machine" when they shut down the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle, Washington in November 1999. The much-discussed action, which included relatively few people of color, included a speech from former California State Senator and Student for a Democratic Society (SDS) leader, Tom Hayden, who said, "So you have slowed down the machine of destruction, but it can't just about that, it has to be about speeding the rate of creation." Hayden's quote is included in the film *This is What Democracy Looks Like* (2000), which examines the "Battle in Seattle" and includes music from Rage against the Machine.

80. Raja Gosnell. 1999. *Never Been Kissed*. Feature Film. 20th Century Fox.

81. Arturo Aldama. 2001. *Disrupting Savagism: Intersecting Chicana/o, Mexican Immigrant, and Native American Struggles for Self-Representation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

82. For more on this struggle, see Viesca, 2000, 445–473. For more on Ozomatli, see Kun, 2005.

83. In 1992, the Red Hot Chili Peppers released "Under the Bridge," also sometimes called "City of Angels," which continues to be a standard on most Southern California radio stations.

84. Derrick Bell, 1992. *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism*. New York: Basic Books.

85. California Legislative Black Caucus 2007.

86. There are variations in the kind of risks experienced by both groups as function of poverty. For variations in infant mortality and longevity in which Latinos fare better than Blacks, see Hayes-Bautista 2004, 64–88.

2

The Rebirth of Latino Urban Agency in San Francisco: From the MCO to the MAC, 1967–2006

Richard Edward DeLeon

THIS IS AN ANALYTICAL CASE STUDY OF THE FALL AND RISE OF LATINO URBAN agency in San Francisco, with a sharp focus on the city's predominately Latino Mission District over the period 1967–2006. The argument to be made here, based on the case study, is that San Francisco's Latino community is at once politically empowered and economically threatened by the special conditions that define the city's local political economy. That is to say, Latino agency in San Francisco is defined by the very conditions that threaten its existence. On the one hand, San Francisco's liberal political culture, celebration of diversity, and assertion of local autonomy has provided the ideal conditions for the development of Latino urban agency. On the other hand, the wide appeal of the city's spectacular physical setting and its status as one of the nation's top "creative cities" in the emerging new economy have frequently combined to attract business interests and capital investment on a scale that has threatened massive displacement of all low-income working-class residents, especially in the Mission.[1] Indeed, the most impressive testimony to the power of Latino urban agency in San Francisco is the fact that the Mission District neighborhood, where many of the city's Latinos live, has defended itself well over the last forty years against repeated waves of proposed economic development that have threatened the very existence of the Latino community in the Mission District.

San Francisco officially became a majority-minority city in 1990 when the US Census reported that the Anglo population had dropped below 47%. In

2000, the city's Anglo population dropped to 43.6% with the Latino population growing to 14.1%, the Asian/Pacific Islander population at 30.7%, while the city's African American population dwindled from 10.7% to 7.6%.[2] Cross-cutting the city's racial and ethnic diversity is a large and politically active gay and lesbian community that represents 10–15% of the city's adult population and 15–20% of its active electorate. Thus, combined with other forms of cultural difference and class stratification, San Francisco's racial and ethnic diversity greatly complicates any attempt to mobilize solidarity along only one dimension. What Bailey calls "identity-multiplexing"—the "layering and ranking by individuals of their different identities in different arenas"—has increasingly become an essential political skill. Similarly, leadership skills in building multiracial and multicultural coalitions are increasingly vital for achieving electoral success and political incorporation.[3]

The Rise and Fall of the Mission Coalition Organization

The roots of the MCO were struck in late 1966 with the formation of the Mission Council on Redevelopment (MCOR). The MCOR was a coalition of churches, Latino service agencies, and radical Latino nationalist groups (including the Brown Berets) that stopped a major urban renewal project threatening demolition and displacement in the Mission. The MCOR disbanded after the threats had passed, but its brief life and political success laid the groundwork for the creation of the MCO in early 1968, when the city's newly elected mayor, Joseph Alioto, applied for a federally funded Model Cities program targeting poverty and blight in the Mission and in the predominately African American Hunter's Point neighborhood. Seeing an opportunity to move beyond the mainly defensive stance of the MCOR and toward a more comprehensive community development agenda funded by new federal money, 600 delegates representing 66 neighborhood-based organizations held a convention in October 1968 and gave birth to the MCO.[4] The assembly elected Ben Martinez as MCO's first president, hired Mike Miller (an Alinsky-trained community organizer) to direct a small staff, and outlined key neighborhood priorities and a mobilization strategy.

By the summer of 1971, the city was approved for a $15 million, five-year Model Cities project. The MCO had demonstrated its political power when the mayor ceded administrative control of the new program in the Mission to MCO. The MCO was given the power to appoint 14 of the 21 members of the new Model Mission Neighborhood Corporation (MMNC),

which was charged with giving highest funding priority to producing more low-income housing and job opportunities for Mission residents. Among many other projects, the MCO-dominated MMNC created a hiring hall to compel employers to follow MCO guidelines in the non-discriminatory hiring of job candidates from the neighborhood; established a seed-money fund to encourage local banks to end red-lining practices and invest more in building more affordable housing in the Mission; and offered financial incentives to the school board to promote parents' participation in shaping education policy and the curriculum. The MMNC expanded funding of existing social service agencies and created new agencies and programs.

Despite these impressive achievements, however, the MCO began to come apart at the seams as early as 1972. A crucial split developed between the MCO and the MMNC. As Castells writes: "As a result, the confrontation between the MCO, now controlled by the Latino social agencies, and the MMNC, now managed by the Alinskyite cadres, replaced the anticipated confrontation between Mission residents and city hall."[5] Mayor Alioto, rather than facing a unified leadership, common agenda, and grassroots mobilization in the Mission, instead played the role of mediator between the rival factions while exercising overall control of the Model Cities program. By early 1974, most of the MMNC programs were placed under the authority of various city bureaucracies with reduced funding. What had once been an incipient neighborhood-based social movement was now reduced to interest-group politics as usual, leading Castell's harsh words about the opportunities lost: "[H]aving established their legitimacy exclusively on the basis of their capacity to deliver immediate rewards, they reproduced the social fragmentation of different interest groups fighting for the diminishing pieces of an unquestioned pie of dubious taste."[6] During MCO's brief life, it did succeed in bolstering neighborhood defenses against the ravages of urban renewal. And it did provide federally-funded services that benefited thousands of Mission residents. But the price paid for thinking so defensively and so small (the Mission only, services only, Latinos only) was the continued fragmentation of leadership, the lack of allies outside the Mission, and the lack of formal representation or political clout in city hall.

The Dot-Com Boom and an Awakening Grassroots Resistance

Latino urban agency, to a large extent, lay dormant for a twenty-year period from 1975, when George Moscone was elected mayor and the

Manhattanization of San Francisco's skyline took hold, to 1996, when Willie Brown took office as a business-friendly pro-growth mayor. But it was during this period that certain key trends and events occurred leading to the emergence of a Latino resistance in the Mission district. For example, Latino immigration accelerated, Republican Governor Pete Wilson endorsed the anti-immigrant Proposition 187 as a wedge issue to win reelection, and Latino community leaders and their allies successfully declared San Francisco an official City of Refuge. Most important, in 1996, the city's voters also approved a highly significant change from at-large to district elections of supervisors (SEE FIGURE 1), which became effective in the November 2000 elections.
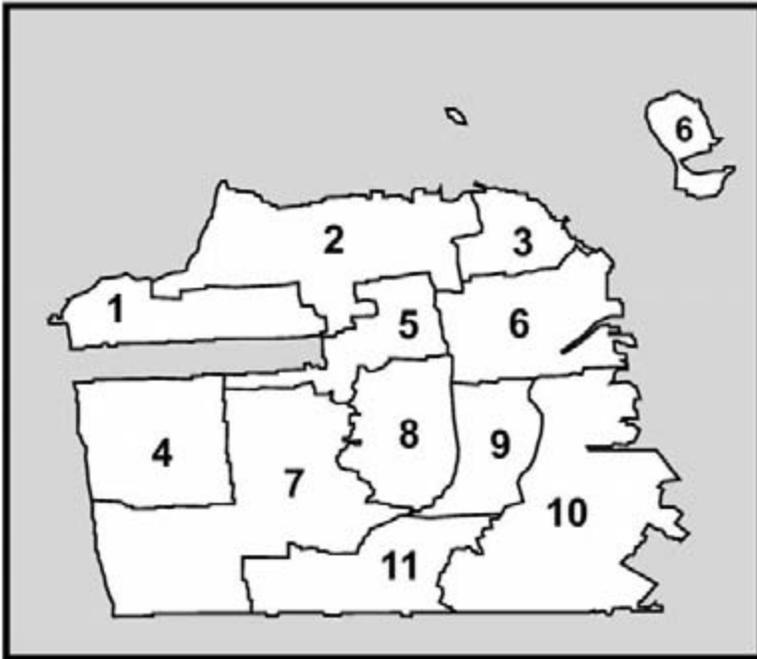
Figure 1: Map of Districts, San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Starting around 1997, shortly after Mayor Brown took office, the local economy turned from cold to hot, the commercial real estate market revived after ten years of doldrums, and a rogue wave of capital investment hit the city. The economic forces that threatened San Francisco in the late 1990s, however, were different from those that had "Manhattanized" the city's skyline in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The political response also was different. That earlier investment surge had been driven by high-rise office developers funded mainly by commercial banks and tax syndicates. The

negative impacts of unregulated growth on transportation and housing were confined mainly to the city's downtown financial district. The political response was the emergence of a grassroots slow-growth movement led by white, middle-class professionals, environmentalists, and historical preservationists. In 1986, as a result of their efforts, the city's voters approved Proposition M, which imposed stringent caps and controls on future high-rise office development.[7]

This latest surge of investment, however, was fueled mainly by Silicon Valley venture capitalists who poured billions of dollars into hundreds of Internet and other high-tech start-up firms.[8] This sudden onslaught of well-funded, dot-com start-up firms and their voracious demand for space quickly bid up the low rents in places like the Mission that had made it possible for low-income families, nonprofit workers, artists, and musicians to live in an expensive city like San Francisco.[9] A swarm of local "place entrepreneurs," particularly residential and commercial landlords and developer lobbying groups like the Residential Builders Association, took advantage of the economic opportunities.[10] Between 1997 and 1999, average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in the Mission rose 26%, and the median sales price for homes jumped 62%.[11]

Mayor Brown, his allies on the Board of Supervisors, and his downtown business friends all welcomed this latest chaos of capitalism with open arms. Brown, the most brazenly pro-business, pro-growth mayor in recent memory, was in his element. "Mayors are known for what they build and not anything else," Brown declared, "and I intend to cover every inch of ground that isn't open space."[12] At a city-sponsored "Multimedia Summit" in early 1998, Mayor Brown called the burgeoning multimedia industry "our modern day gold rush." He promised the gathered entrepreneurs and developers that he would provide tax incentives, streamline the permitting process, and improve transit policies to attract more start-up firms to the city.[13] Stacked with Mayor Brown's obliging appointees, the Planning Commission and Board of Permit Appeals approved dozens of building projects and live-work developments. Many of these decisions violated the spirit, if not the letter, of Proposition M, ignored the city's neighborhood preservation priorities, and made mush of other planning codes.

The sudden gentrification and displacement impacts of this high-tech gold rush on the low-income residents, merchants, artists, and nonprofit workers living in the Mission, South of Market, and Portrero Hill neighborhoods provoked a new grassroots, slow-growth movement. It began with spasms of anarchic revolt in 1998, starting with the Yuppie Eradication

Project, whose leaders urged residents of the Mission to engage in acts of politically-motivated vandalism, including keying and tire slashing, against the "yuppie" sports cars and SUVs that increasingly clogged the streets around the new trendy restaurants and office buildings where dot-com firms were setting up shop.[14] Later, mobilized by new umbrella organizations, principally the Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition (MAC) and the South of Market Anti-Displacement Coalition (SOMAD), growing numbers of low-income, working-class renters, and people of color would join the movement, many of them in leadership roles.

In 1999, as the NASDAQ continued to climb along with the skyrocketing rents and massive evictions, Mayor Willie Brown launched his reelection campaign into the first winds of a brewing political storm. Initially, his chances looked good to win an outright majority in the November 2 mayoral election, despite his plummeting popularity. His two declared rivals—former mayor Frank Jordan and local political consultant Clinton Reilly—posed no real threat. One potential challenger who did scare Brown a bit, however, was Tom Ammiano, president of the board of supervisors and a nationally known gay rights advocate. Ammiano, who lived in the Mission district, strongly opposed Brown's pro-growth policies and was a tough political fighter. But he had announced much earlier that he would not run for election as mayor and was all but counted out. Then, six weeks before the election, sensing the spread of the anti-Willie Brown backlash and the surge of a new slow-growth movement in the making, he changed his mind. He and his supporters mobilized an intensive, last-minute, grassroots write-in campaign that succeeded in winning enough votes on November 2 to place him in the December 14 run-off against Brown.

Many outside reporters at the time framed the run-off election campaign in identity politics terms as a contest between a straight, black, liberal incumbent and a gay, white, progressive challenger. Locally, however, the discourse of racial and sexual identity politics was rarely heard. The main content of the candidate forums and debates focused on issues like affordable housing, public transit, schools, and, most prominently, the destructive impact of the dot-com invasion and what to do about it.

Mayor Brown had the support of the state and local Democratic Party establishment, the downtown business elites, most labor union chiefs, nearly all African American voters, most Asian voters, and many gay and lesbian voters. Ammiano's main support came from the Haight-Ashbury and Portrero Hill white progressives, gays and lesbians affiliated with the progressive Harvey Milk Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club, some sectors

of organized labor (especially in the public employee and teachers' unions), and the growing cadres of militant slow-growth organizers in the Mission and South of Market. Brown raised a mountain of corporate soft money for his campaign through his affiliated PACs, overwhelming Ammiano's paltry sums. Brown also tipped the scales strongly in his favor by appealing to the politically conservative white homeowners in the Sunset, Lake Merced, and West of Twin Peaks neighborhoods. He won most of their votes, helped by an official endorsement from the San Francisco Republican Party.[15]

At the end, on December 14, Mayor Brown soundly defeated Supervisor Tom Ammiano by a 60-40 vote to win a new term as mayor.[16] But the winds of a voter revolt were blowing.

Year 2000: Birth of the MAC

In April 2000, at the peak of the dot-com feeding frenzy, Stein Kingsley Stein Investments (SKS) sought the planning commission's approval for a huge project at Bryant and 20th Streets, the biggest to hit the Mission in years. SKS, a major financial contributor to Brown's reelection campaign, proposed to build 160,000 square feet of new high-tech and multi-media office space on a site that then housed a garment factory employing twenty Mission residents and an artist loft structure used by eighty local artists, all of whom would have to be evicted. Other development projects in the Mission were on track at the same time, including one backed by Eikon Investments that proposed to convert the former National Guard Armory into 260,000 square feet of dot-com office space.[17] But the Bryant Square project, in particular, was the critical tipping point that galvanized neighborhood resistance and gave it political form. Angry and beleaguered, neighborhood activists, community organizers, and nonprofit service providers formed a partnership called the Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition (MAC) to fight the Bryant Square project and others like it that threatened the sudden and massive displacement of Mission residents, small businesses, artists, and service providers.

By several accounts, among the dozen or so groups and agencies involved, the key founders of the MAC were the Mission Housing Development Corporation (MHDC) and Mission Economic Development Association (MEDA), both of which dated back to the old MCO of the 1970s; tenant organizers from the Mission Agenda and St. Peters Housing Committee, and an important new local environmental justice

group, People Organizing to Demand our Economic and Environmental Rights (PODER).[18] The MAC's declared mission was to "eliminate the displacement of low-income and working-class people from the Mission District—who are primarily Latinos and other people of color, tenants, artists, and community serving businesses and nonprofits."[19]

From the beginning, MAC established itself as a grassroots operation; it held weekly meetings open to everyone; forged alliances with displaced artists, low-income whites and other groups; and made decisions by consensus. One observer reported, however, that there was "a determination to let the movement be led and defined by working-class Latinos." When asked if the "struggle faced by artists and low-income whites was similar to the struggle faced by Latino families," many of the white artists said yes, but Latino activists "overwhelmingly said no." MAC member Paola Zuniga said: "It's extremely different. A lot of us lack the language skills and social skills required in this society to be able to navigate. As for families, it's harder to move."[20]

By assuming leadership of MAC, Latino activists accelerated the process of what Ronald Inglehart has called "cognitive mobilization" in the Mission's Latino community.[21] As they prepared to do battle with city hall politicians and the planning bureaucracy, protest alone was not enough. "In their struggle at the Planning Commission," Gin writes, "MAC activists realized that they had to learn about and educate their members about the technical minutiae of the planning process."[22] To be effective in this new arena, they were forced to learn a great deal about urban economics, land use policies, zoning regulations, and the local politics of planning. "We have been learning and developing an understanding of the planning process and have become much more sophisticated in understanding it," said Eric Quezada, a MAC organizer and program director for the Mission Economic Development Corporation. "People thought it was just about the market forces. As if there was no facilitation process by the city."[23]

Orchestrating what June Gin has called a "bricolage of movement strategies," MAC leaders and their followers engaged in a wide range of tactics to capture public attention and influence city hall politicians and planners: rallies, marches, sit-ins, shut-downs of meetings, mock funerals, and other forms of mass mobilization.[24] On May 4, in a last-ditch effort to persuade planning commissioners to reject the Bryant Square project, MAC activists crowded the meeting room and lined up more than twenty opponents to speak against it. The commissioners, all mayoral appointees, turned a deaf ear and voted six to one in favor of the project, causing

widespread anger and disappointment in the Mission. The commission's decision was affirmed by the board of supervisors on appeal in late June. Thus, MAC leaders lost this first battle with the dot-com developers and their city hall backers. But they also attracted media attention to the cause and established MAC's street credentials as the new champion and defender of the barrio.[25]

MAC leaders went on to organize a number of protest marches and rallies in the Mission; chants of "Aquí estamos y no nos vamos" (we're here and we're not leaving) became a common refrain, and red signs bearing the words "residentes orgullos de la Misión" (proud residents of the Mission) were distributed and placed in windows throughout the district.[26] In early June, after staging another loud protest outside the city's planning department offices on Mission St., MAC leaders scored a major victory by compelling the planning director, Gerald Green, and two planning commissioners to meet with them and hear their demands. On June 28, more than four hundred people showed up for that meeting at Horace Mann Middle School "in a show of solidarity not seen in the Mission in decades."[27] Responding to some of MAC's demands, Green agreed, among other things, to support and fund a community planning process. But he claimed he lacked authority to impose a temporary moratorium on new office buildings, lofts and housing in the Mission, which was MAC's top priority and most urgent demand.[28] Ultimately, the mayor and the supervisors would have to make those kinds of decisions, and it was clear at the time that they were not so inclined. Nonetheless, MAC had once again flexed its organizing muscle, and angry voices in the Mission were at last being heard. Renee Saucedo, a MAC member, boasted that "MAC is known not only citywide but nationally…. The eyes are on San Francisco as to how city officials can be held accountable for the makeup of the neighborhood."[29]

"A Perfect Political Storm"

In August 2000, weeks before the November 7 general election, Richard Marquez, a leader of the recently formed MAC, spoke to a crowd at a MAC-sponsored rally in the Mission: "We have the potential in November to build the perfect political storm," he said. "We've got no choice, because our backs are up against the wall. We've got to come out swinging."[30] The "perfect political storm" he envisioned combined three

powerful forces that were converging to cause political ruin for Mayor Brown on election day.

The first was the continuing and unabated fury of the anti-Willie Brown backlash that had fueled Tom Ammiano's write-in campaign for mayor in November 1999. That backlash intensified in late June 2000 when the mayor bolted from a compromise slow-growth plan offered by a group of stakeholders and went his own way with Proposition K, a pro-growth ballot proposition favored by his downtown business allies that did nothing to solve the problem. Meanwhile, the cresting dot-com tidal wave was at the peak of its sharpest impacts on commercial real estate, housing prices, and low-income neighborhood communities, especially in the Mission and South of Market. Now certain they could expect no help from the mayor or board of supervisors, MAC organizers began mobilizing direct action and civil disobedience against individual dot-com firms. Illustrative of the kinds of battles that took place, fifteen local activists were arrested in late September after engaging in a non-violent, sit-in protest at the Bay View Bank building in the Mission. The action was aimed at Bigstep.com, a business service firm that had moved into two floors of the building months earlier, displacing two Spanish-language newspapers, a radio station, and a number of small businesses and nonprofit organizations serving the local Latino community. MAC leaders demanded that the firm obtain a conditional use permit for its operation and that it relocate the businesses and nonprofits it displaced. Bigstep's executives, fearing a community backlash and the wrath of MAC, offered concessions, such as internships to low-income students and discounts on rents charged to nonprofits, but these were refused.[31] Finally, backed by city hall, Bigstep rejected the protesters' demands and called the police.[32]

The second force was set in motion by a citizen-initiated ballot measure, Proposition L, placed on the November 2000 ballot by a citywide signature-gathering campaign led by MAC and other community activists.[33] Proposition L would have banned new development in parts of the Mission and South of Market districts; imposed an indefinite moratorium on new development in certain other neighborhoods; raised exaction fees to pay for growth-induced demands on housing and public transit; halted further live-work loft construction; redefined zoning codes to place more dot-com firms in a business class requiring higher exaction fees, and allowed only a few of the exemptions demanded by high-rise developers and dot-com entrepreneurs from the growth caps imposed by Proposition M in 1986.[34] Dubbed the "daughter of Proposition M," Proposition L would have closed all the loopholes and barred all the gates that had allowed the dot-com firms to enter the city so suddenly and displace its most vulnerable populations.

The third force at work that converged with and magnified the other two was the scheduled change to district elections of supervisors. Thanks to voter approval of Proposition G in 1996, all eleven seats on the board were now up for grabs. The consequence of this institutional reform was that all of the mayor's loyal allies on the board who sought reelection would now have to stand trial before angry neighborhood electorates. The timing of this shift from at-large to district representation coincided perfectly with the cresting of the dot-com wave, the peaking of the grassroots revolt against Mayor Brown, and the reemergence of Latino urban agency in San Francisco.

Mayor Willie Brown versus MAC and the Neighborhoods: The 2000 Board of Supervisors Elections

By August 2000, a total of 87 candidates had filed for candidacy in the 11 new districts. Eight of the candidates were board incumbents seeking reelection in different districts, guaranteeing that at least three new supervisors would serve on the board. Of those eight, four (Michael Yaki, Mabel Teng, Alicia Becerril, and Amos Brown) were loyal allies of Mayor Willie Brown; two (Mark Leno and Gavin Newsom) agreed with Mayor Brown on most issues and supported his pro-growth agenda; and only two (Tom Ammiano and Leland Yee) consistently opposed the mayor and voted against his development plans and land use policies. Two of the incumbents faced little opposition and were assured of victory: Newsom, running in District 2, and Ammiano, running in District 9, which included the Mission. In the remaining nine districts, the mayor pulled out all stops to maintain his working majority on the board. Mayor Brown had created that majority by appointing six individuals to board vacancies over the 1996–1999 period, vacancies which he had arranged through artful shuffling to allow his new allies on the board to run as incumbents in later elections. His organized network of corporate executives, political action committees, and political clubs now spent an unprecedented $1.6 million in soft money to fund the campaigns of loyal incumbents and anointed candidates.[35] For many voters, however, this mayoral orchestration of political careers, funding flows, and district campaigns confirmed their suspicions that Mayor Brown really did own and operate a political machine in a city renowned for its neighborhood activism and grassroots democracy.

The issues of land use, displacement, and growth controls defined the main agenda for debate in most of the district campaigns. MAC leaders

and their allies made sure of that by sending campaign organizers and volunteers out from Mission, South of Market, and other growth-impacted neighborhoods into other areas of the city to educate the residents and do battle. They demanded that candidates in every district address those issues and state their positions on Propositions K and L.

Meanwhile, the city's long tradition of divisive racial and identity politics was suspended, at least for this election (there is a very apt saying in San Francisco that "truce is stranger than friction").[36] In particular, MAC leaders resisted any temptation to endorse Latina incumbent and Brown-appointee Alicia Becerril in District 3. They also decided not to advance Latino candidates for the seats in District 6 (South of Market) and District 9 (the Mission). Instead, they backed three Anglos in those campaigns: Aaron Peskin in District 3, Chris Daly in District 6, and Tom Ammiano in District 9. Peskin was a tenant organizer in the city's North Beach neighborhood. Daly was a community organizer in the South of Market area and a member of MAC. Ammiano had stood up to Mayor Brown while serving on the board and in his 1999 campaign for mayor. All three strongly endorsed Proposition L and spoke out against Proposition K. And all were popular in their districts and highly electable. MAC leaders and many Latino voters backed Latino candidates in two other districts—Matt Gonzales in the predominately white District 5 and Geraldo Sandoval in the racially diverse District 11. In their campaigns, however, neither appealed to ethnic identity, and both stressed their credentials as slow-growth progressives and sworn political enemies of Brown and his political machine.

Matt Gonzalez, in particular, dramatically signaled the priority he placed on ideology over identity by announcing his switch from the Democratic Party to the Green Party following the November election and before the December run-off in District 5. Upset with the centrist positions taken by presidential candidate Al Gore and with the state Democratic Party establishment for excluding Green candidates from forums and debates, Gonzalez wrote: "I decided I am not going to vote for candidates who support the death penalty or oppose gay marriage. I'm not going to vote for candidates who oppose campaign-finance reform or value the corporation over the individual. Nor will I give the local machine party any legitimacy by remaining a part of it."[37] At a time when many local Democrats blamed the Green Party for Bush's likely victory over Gore, Gonzalez's conversion was seen by many observers as a risky political move. Nonetheless, disgruntlement with Brown and the local Democrats was widespread, especially among the city's Latinos in the Mission. MAC spokesman Eric Quezada

acknowledged that he would like to see more Latino representation on the board. His primary goal, however, was to elect supervisors who could take on Brown and protect area residents from eviction. "It's not enough to be Latino right now, to run in the Mission."[38]

Many of the city's other leading political organizations and clubs also put identity politics on hold to maintain coalitional solidarity in opposition to Mayor Brown and his pro-growth agenda. The Chinese American Democratic Club, for example, endorsed white progressive Jake McGoldrick in his race against incumbent Chinese American Michael Yaki in the heavily Asian-populated District 1. And the Harvey Milk Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club endorsed several progressive straight candidates in opposition to a "lavender slate" of pro-growth gay candidates supported by Brown and funded by his political machine.[39] One could argue that a communal sense of place identity was strongly asserted in this campaign. Even the conservative columnist Ken Garcia made that point in characterizing the Mission's battle against the dot-coms as a struggle for the "soul" of the city.[40] Overall, however, this election was not fundamentally about group interest or ethnic identity narrowly defined but about land use and ideology—and Mayor Brown

The November 7 general election (and nine December 14 district run-off elections) produced three significant outcomes. First, Propositions K and L both lost, the former overwhelmingly (39.2% yes) and the latter just barely (49.8% yes). As a result, Proposition M's tight restrictions on growth would continue to apply by default. Second, many Latino voters, expressing the same disenchantment with the Democrats later voiced by Matt Gonzalez, defected from that party to vote for Green Party candidate Ralph Nader in the presidential election. Politicians like Brown, who would be viewed as liberal or even radical almost anywhere else, are often labeled as conservatives in the local political discourse. Consistent with this trend, majorities of voters in the Mission helped to elect two Green Party members, including Latino Mark Sanchez, to the school board in a citywide election.

Third, and most important, Brown's carefully crafted slate of well-funded candidates was blown to smithereens. Most were eliminated in the November election, and nearly all the rest were crushed in the December 14 district run-offs. Among Mayor Brown's allies, only the incumbents Newsom and Leno survived the onslaught. Tony Hall, a maverick independent, defeated incumbent loyalist Mable Teng in District 7, but could be counted on to vote with the mayor on most issues. On the other side, most of the progressive, slow-growth, anti-Willie Brown candidates for supervisor won in

their districts. Incumbents Ammiano and Yee were reelected, joined by the insurgents McGoldrick, Peskin, Gonzalez, Daly, and Sandoval. These seven supervisors, along with Sophie Maxwell, an African American community activist elected by voters in District 10, formed a unified and veto-proof 8-3 progressive supermajority on the board that would thwart Mayor Brown and clip his wings over the rest of his term.[41]

At the end, Mayor Brown's political machine was in ruins. Its moving parts, lubricated by corporate money, worked well enough under the old, at-large system. Under district elections, however, the MAC-led neighborhood revolt ultimately brought down the machine.[42] The result was a ghastly political nightmare for Brown, who now had to look forward to a progressive super-majority voting against him on the board of supervisors and to demands from the downtown corporate CEOs for an accounting of how their huge financial investment in local political control could have been so wildly misspent.

After the Storm:
Consolidating and Expanding Latino
Urban Agency in San Francisco

Over the years since the watershed 2000 board elections, a number of important developments and events have worked to consolidate and expand Latino urban agency in San Francisco. These can be summarized under the headings of protecting the barrio; curbing mayoral authority; advancing Latino voting power and political incorporation; pioneering new policies and democracy reforms; and Matt Gonzalez's run for mayor.

In January 2001, the board's new progressive supermajority immediately passed a temporary moratorium on building additional live/work units in the Mission.[43] Encouraged by that example, and with neighborhood-friendly district representatives now in power, activists in the South of Market and Portrero Hill districts pushed for similar bans in their communities and got them. Although it was true that the NASDAQ bubble had burst by this time and that the local dot-coms were dropping like flies, MAC leaders wanted to keep pressure on the city "to implement strict development controls before the next economic boom," according to one reporter.[44] "It's especially obvious that planning cannot be left to the free market," said Tom Ammiano, newly elected president of the board of supervisors and now the representative of District 9 and the Mission.[45]

MAC leaders were emboldened by these victories; they also felt empowered by a stronger and more sympathetic board of supervisors standing up against a weakened mayor and his planning bureaucracy (see below). In 2002, they formed the Mission Anti-Displacement Partnership in collaboration with other neighborhood groups and organizations and drafted a "People Plan" that would set priorities and regulate land use in the Mission (Mission Anti-Displacement Partnership 2005). In September 2003, MAC and PODER activists organized yet another sit-in at the city's planning department office, this time to protest the planning director's sluggish response to the People Plan. There were no immediate results, and seventeen of the protesters were arrested.[46] But under the new regime at city hall, this action and others that followed eventually compelled the planning department to adopt a more inclusive and responsive "community planning" process in developing new zoning policies for the Mission district and the entire eastern side of the city.[47]

As these examples illustrate, MAC did not simply fold its tent and fade away after its stunning electoral victories in the 2000 elections. Unlike the MCO of the 1970s, the coalition has consolidated its power in the Mission, maintained its grassroots base, and sustained its pressure on city hall politicians and bureaucrats. MAC also continues to keep a close and critical eye on all outside entrepreneurs seeking to build or invest in the Mission. Operating as self-appointed gatekeepers and toll-takers, and with the backing of key supervisors like Chris Daly and Tom Ammiano, MAC leaders have learned to bargain tough to exact the maximum "community benefits" from private firms and developers, including affordable housing and job opportunities for residents.[48]

Advancing Latino Voting Power and Political Incorporation

As Browning, Marshall, and Tabb argued long ago, however, "protest is not enough" to convert growing numbers and demands for equality into responsive public policies and programs serving the Latino community's needs.[49] Political incorporation is key and involves a combination of formal representation and informal inclusion in the power centers that make policy. A group has achieved substantial political incorporation, argue Browning, Marshall and Tabb, when it "is in a position to articulate its interests, its demands will be heard, and through the dominant coalition it can ensure that certain interests will be protected, even though it may not win on every issue."[50] By this standard,

the political incorporation of San Francisco's Latino population took a great leap forward as a direct result of the 2000 elections. Two Latino politicians, Matt Gonzalez and Geraldo Sandoval, were elected to the 11-member board of supervisors, and Mark Sanchez was elected to the School Board. In 2002, the voters elected progressive Dennis Herrera as city attorney, and reelected him in 2006. José Cisneros was elected as treasurer in 2006. Under the new district election system, with more Latinos serving as elected officials, the appointment of Latinos to the city's various boards and commissions rose from a mere 6% of the total in 1993 to 11% in 2002, close to population parity.[51]

New Progressive Policies and Democracy Reforms

As members of the new dominant coalition on the board of supervisors, Matt Gonzalez and Geraldo Sandoval exercised considerable influence on the policy-making process. Gonzalez, elected by his colleagues in 2002 as president of the board of supervisors, was particularly effective in advancing legislation or ballot propositions that benefited the city's Latinos, in particular, and low-income working class renters and their families in general. These initiatives included imposing greater board control over mayoral appointments to the planning commission and board of appeals; establishing a new elections commission along with restrictions on mayoral authority over redistricting and appointments to vacancies on the board; regulating growth and protecting neighborhoods, particularly the Mission; promoting the construction of additional affordable housing; strengthening tenant rights while preserving the declining stock of rental units under the city's residential rent control policies; raising the city's minimum wage; mandating feasibility studies of municipal ownership of PG&E and alternative energy sources, including solar and tidal power; and extending sunshine laws requiring greater transparency and accountability in the city's bureaucracy. Gonzalez also took the lead in persuading voters to adopt instant run-off voting (IRV) in 2002, which was implemented for the first time with district elections for supervisor in 2004.[52] Inspired by San Francisco's success with IRV, voters in the city of Berkeley overwhelmingly adopted it the following year, and the IRV movement has since spread to other cities in California, Vermont, Washington, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Florida. Gonzalez also pushed for non-citizen voting rights in school board elections, an initiative that was barely defeated by the voters in 2004 but has good prospects of passage in the near future.[53]

For his part, Sandoval co-sponsored or endorsed most of Gonzalez's legislative agenda, and was the principal author of pioneering legislation requiring all city agencies to officially honor "matricula consulare" ID cards as legal identification.[54] In the wake of September 11, he also took the lead in affirming San Francisco's city of refuge policies, official non-cooperation with the Immigration and Naturalization Services in facilitating its raids and detentions, particularly in the Mission, and restrictions on local police cooperation with federal agents in the practice of racial profiling and arresting of foreign persons not suspected of a crime.[55]

Going Against the Grain

In November 2003, Matt Gonzalez ran for mayor. He eventually lost to rival Gavin Newsom in the December run-off election, but he came close, and his electrifying campaign vaulted him into the national spotlight as a rising Latino star and a leader of an emerging urban-based progressive reform movement. Convinced that Tom Ammiano, icon of the local left, would only lose again, this time to Willie Brown's protégé and heir apparent, Supervisor Gavin Newsom, Gonzalez threw his hat in the ring. That move angered Ammiano and his followers, and the internecine battle that ensued was aptly dubbed by one reporter as a "left coast brawl."[56] He and Newsom were the top two voter-getters in November, beating out four other candidates, and both waged furious campaigns in the five weeks leading to the December 9 run-off election.

Although city elections are officially non-partisan, the fact that Gonzalez was a Green and Newsom was a Democrat drew national and even international media attention. Afraid that Newsom might actually lose to a Green in the Democratic Party's urban stronghold at a time when the Democrats were gearing up to challenge President George W. Bush's reelection bid in 2004, top state and national Democratic Party leaders raced to the rescue. The California Democratic Party paid $153,000 for an anti-Gonzalez mailer, a part of the total of $4 million raised for Newsom's campaign against only $400,000 for his rival. Leading a long parade of Democratic Party notables, Al Gore, Bill Clinton, and Nancy Pelosi flew to the city to endorse Newsom and praise him, prompting a Gonzalez spokesperson to ask: "What's next? The Pope?"[57]

Great pressure was placed on the city's more progressive Democratic political clubs to stay in line. Even so, some members of the powerful

Democratic County Central Committee (DCCC) abstained from the committee's endorsement of Newsom, and several took the step of endorsing Gonzalez as individuals. Among others, the Harvey Milk Democratic Club rejected the entreaties and formally endorsed Gonzalez. Later, in 2004, angry state party officials demanded that the DCCC require its members to take loyalty oaths to the party; the DCCC refused to comply. In 2006, a faction of the DCCC attempted to rescind the Harvey Milk Club's charter; the move failed.[58] The Latino Democratic Club dutifully endorsed Newsom, as did the local chapter of the officially non-partisan Mexican American Political Association. But in the barrio, defection was in the air. The city's Latino voters, most of them Democrats, had backed Newsom (30%) over Gonzalez (26%) in the November election, according to one poll. Results of another poll in late November, however, gave Gonzalez a lead of 68% to 28% among Latino voters.[59]

Matt Gonzalez clearly had the momentum going into the last days of the campaign. Unfortunately for Gonzalez, thousands of conservative absentee voters had already registered their choice between a liberal Democrat and a progressive Green, and time simply ran out. On December 9, although Gonzalez won a majority of the election-day votes, Newsom's absentee vote was overwhelming and he won the run-off 53% to 47% to become the city's next mayor.

Figure 2, a scatter plot of precinct data showing the relationship between the vote for John Kerry for president in 2004 and the vote for Matt Gonzalez in December 2003, helps to visualize some important points about San Francisco politics in general and the voting tendencies of the city's Latino voters in particular. First, the plot reveals a strong positive correlation between the precinct vote for Kerry, the Democrat, and the vote for Gonzales, the Green. In a city owned by Democrats, in which only 3% of voters registered Green, that is an odd correlation to find.

Most Democrats voted for Gonzalez in 2003. The Democrat Newsom, like Mayor Brown in 1999, could not have won without significant help from Republicans and conservative independents. Second, however, as Figure 2 shows, the Latino ("H") and white progressive ("P") precinct electorates that voted Green in 2003 snapped to the party line in voting for the Democrat Kerry in 2004, joining the African American precincts ("B") that voted loyally Democratic in both elections. The white conservative precincts ("C") showed relatively little support for either Gonzalez or Kerry and are lumped in the lower left of the plot. The Asian/PI precincts ("A"), illustrating a general pattern of moderate/centrist voting in San Francisco, are grouped

in the center of the plot. Third, as suggested by the last point, the city's Latino voters as a group are inclined to support the most progressive candidate in any given election (as in 2000 and 2003) and will shift to a default party-line vote for Democrats only if there are no electable alternatives (as in 2004). No doubt some Latinos voted for Gonzalez in 2003 out of ethnic solidarity alone, but clearly ideology trumped identity and partisanship in this election.
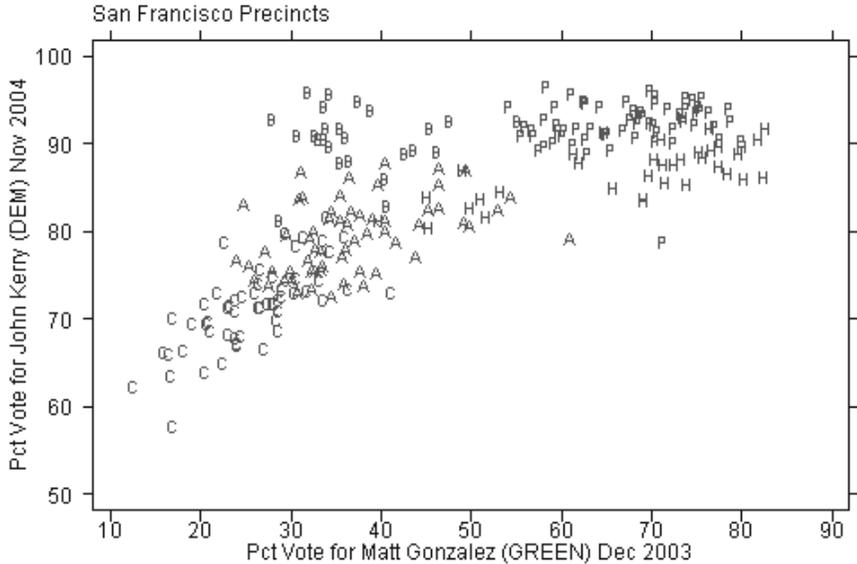
Figure 2: Scatterplot of the Vote for Kerry 2004 versus Vote for Gonzalez 2003 in San Francisco Precincts. Legend: B = Black/African-American majority or plurality, H = Hispanic/Latino majority or plurality, A = Asian-American 55%+ majority, C = "White Conservative," and P = "White Progressive" precinct electorates.*

*   Note: This scatterplot is a purely heuristic graphical tool for roughly sorting out and identifying racial/ethnic and ideological voting patterns in the city's precinct electorates. The plotting symbol "B" identifies the precincts in which Blacks/African-Americans were a majority or the dominant plurality of the estimated total 2000 precinct population, the symbol "H" the precincts in which Hispanics/Latinos were a majority or plurality, and the symbol "A" the precincts in which Asian-Americans were at least a 55% majority. The symbol "C" identifies the precincts which were at least 60% white and scored in the lowest quartile of a 22-item Progressive Voting Index (PVI), and the symbol "P" those precincts which were at least 60% white and scored in the highest quartile of the PVI. Precincts that did not meet these criteria were not plotted in the graph. For details on methods and data sources, see Rich DeLeon and David Latterman, "Updating the New Progressive Voting Index (PVI) with Tables, Map, and Precinct Scores," San Francisco: SF Usual Suspects, April 16, 2004, http://www.sfusualsuspects.com/resources/docs/DeLeonFiles/DeLeon%20Latterman%20 New%20PVI%20Report%20April%202004.pdf www.sfusualsuspects.com/deleon.shtml.

Leaders of the national Democratic Party were relieved to have dodged a bullet on their home turf in 2003. Still, in September 2006, they did not appear to have drawn any lessons from it about the need for their party to turn left from the center to recapture and hold its base in the cities . The message was not lost on Gavin Newsom, however.

Starting in 2004, the city's new mayor went on to challenge his own party's timidity on social issues by famously authorizing marriage licenses for same-sex couples. He also demanded that the city's business elites, who had backed his run for mayor, submit to higher taxes to cover a revenue shortfall. He later joined the picket lines of Local 2 UNITE-HERE (a third of which are Latinos) to protest the lockout of striking hotel workers by the same hotel owners and managers who had funded his mayoral campaign. In November 2005, addressing a fund-raiser in Iowa for Democrats seeking to recapture the Senate, he urged the crowd to face issues like gay marriage head on: "I don't think we have anything to be ashamed of in our party, standing up for the foundation of those principles which have been historic."[60] And in April 2006, citing San Francisco's City of Refuge laws, Mayor Newsom signed a resolution—sponsored by Geraldo Sandoval and passed unanimously by the board of supervisors—that advised the city's law enforcement officers not to comply with the criminal provisions of any new immigration bill. The US House of Representatives had passed just such a bill, H.R. 4437, making it a crime to be in the United States illegally or offer aid to illegal immigrants. "San Francisco stands foursquare in strong opposition to the rhetoric coming out of Washington, DC," Newsom said. "If people think we were defiant on the gay marriage issue, they haven't seen defiance."[61]

Newsom saw that the 2000 board elections and the insurgent Gonzalez campaign in 2003 had shifted the city to the left, and now he was urging his fellow Democrats to do the same. Matt Gonzalez, perhaps because he saw no role for a loyal opposition—what was there to oppose? —decided not to run for reelection to the board in 2004, focusing instead on starting a new law firm and touring the country to build the Green Party in cities that seemed ripe for political change.

Conclusion: Is MAC the Vanguard of a New Urban Progressivism?

Unlike the MCO, which ultimately failed for lack of ambition, unified leadership, and federal money, the Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition became

the organizational core of a still-powerful grassroots social movement that seems to have longevity. MAC's activities and initiatives reach far beyond the boundaries of what Paul Peterson has called the "allocational" arena of local government decision-making into the arenas of "developmental" and "redistributive" policy.[62] The city's development policy should be left to the business CEOs, planners, and technocrats, Peterson argues, and redistribution should be the exclusive responsibility of the federal government, not the locals. Writing at a time long before the federal government "devolved" its responsibilities for national welfare policy and urban assistance onto state and local governments, Browning, Marshall, and Tabb accepted these Petersonian "city limits" in defining very modest yardsticks for measuring Black and Latino political incorporation and progress toward equality.

What this case study demonstrates, if nothing else, is that San Francisco's Latinos have adapted to the new political reality. They have learned not to depend on the federal government for needed resources, and have strongly emphasized the "urban" in their quest for greater Latino urban agency. Years ago the MCO fell apart when the federal money disappeared. As a result, Latino agency failed to make a claim on local state power or the resources of the private sector. In the current era, however, MAC serves as a model of how Latinos can wield land use planning tools to secure their turf in big cities; mobilize voters and elect Latinos to positions of power in local government; and sustain a grassroots movement to force the bureaucrats and politicians to do the right thing while extracting needed resources from the local private sector.[63] In the Mission, where ethnic identity and place identity intersect, MAC has achieved significant power by combining multiple and overlapping forms of Latino urban agency as a grassroots movement, as a social service network, and as a disciplined political apparatus with electoral and lobbying clout.

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3

The Fight for School Equity
in Chicago's Latino Neighborhoods

Melissa R. Michelson

Introduction

LATINOS IN CHICAGO HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY political action. As Latinos began to move to Chicago during World War I, they almost immediately found themselves forming voluntary associations in response to the hardships they faced as newcomers. During subsequent decades, these groups began to cross neighborhood lines and form larger collective organizations.[1] As the city's Latino population has grown in recent decades—from 3.1% of the population in 1960 to 26% in 2000—so has Latino political representation. In 1983, only one Latino served on the city council; twenty years later, eight of fifty aldermen were Latino. Some of these seats were won only after divisive legal battles to change district lines.[2] Other legal and redistricting battles eventually also led to the election of Latino state legislators and the creation of the "earmuff" 4th Congressional District (connecting Pilsen and Little Village), held by Luis Gutierrez since 1992.[3] Latino representation in the city has also increased in recognition of the community's electoral power. After being elected in 1983 with strong Latino support, Mayor Harold Washington named at least one Latino to every major board and commission, and put in place an affirmative action plan.[4] Mayor Richard M. Daley, first elected in 1989 with significant Latino support, gave a large number

of city jobs and contracts to Latinos and supported various Latinos for city council.[5]

Notwithstanding this increased political representation, Latino parents still felt the need to resort to protests, demonstrations, and most notably hunger strikes in order to get city officials to agree to their demands regarding public schools. In 1994, Latino students went on strike and Latino parents and state legislators staged a hunger strike to demand the city promise to build a new local elementary school. On Mother's Day 2001, yet another hunger strike was launched by Latino parents demanding the fulfillment of a years-old promise for a new local high school. Given the recent increases in Latino political representation in the city, and recognition by city leaders of the importance of the Latino vote, why were such tactics used rather than more conventional political activities? What do the hunger strikes tell us about the level of, and nature of, Latino political power in Chicago? Were they a sign of weakness, or of strength?

After recounting the details of these two battles for school equity, this chapter discusses their motivations and meaning. I argue that the Latina mothers of Pilsen and Little Village staged these protests not only due to community traditions, but also because they recognized that their position in Chicago society afforded them a unique political opportunity structure where unconventional politics were quite likely to succeed. In addition, while the presence of many elected and appointed Latino officials did not give the community the conventional political power they needed to win the new schools, it emboldened them to take action against a city known more for machine politics than for responsiveness to citizen demands.

The School Battles

In early 1994, parents of students at the predominantly Latino Richard J. Daley Elementary School repeatedly complained about the presence of lead and asbestos, as well as numerous maintenance issues such as a faulty heating system, clogged toilets, a leaky roof, and broken water fountains. The school was also severely overcrowded. Eventually, the building was declared unsafe, and the Board of Education agreed to build a new school by 1995. When school started in September 1994, students went to Daley for three days before being informed that they would be bused to Washington Elementary School, twenty-six blocks away in Englewood, starting the next week. Daley parents complained that Washington School was too far away,

asserting that their children should have been switched to Chavez School, which is only four blocks from Daley. They claimed the Washington neighborhood was unsafe, and that the bus rides were dangerous. Parents of about seventy-five of the seven hundred students announced that they were on strike, and that they would teach the children themselves. The parents set up an outdoor classroom on a vacant lot down the street from Daley, complete with portable chalkboards and a cloth banner naming the site the "Richard J. Daley Elementary School."[6]

At first, school officials resisted any changes to their plans. Some school officials warned that the parent-led truancy could lead to charges of neglect with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Daley School Assistant Principal Liliana Evers argued that Washington School was safe, and that students were finding the bus rides fun and free of accidents. She urged parents to "give Washington School a chance." A few days later, the school board offered to let concerned parents join students on the buses, but parents rejected the deal. Eight days into the strike, parents offered the school board a deal—they would send their children to Washington School if they got a promise, in writing, for the long-promised new school, including a date for its opening. They wanted the new school to be built in the vacant lot in which they were holding their strike, but school board officials were reluctant to commit to a specific location.[7] Parents wanted a new school, and they vowed to wage a hunger strike until they got it. Four women began their hunger strike a few days later. Soon afterwards, four Latino state legislators pledged to join the hunger strike: State Senators Jesus Garcia and Miguel del Valle, and State Representatives Ray Frias and Edgar Lopez. These elected officials also began to lobby the Daley School administration and the school board on behalf of the parents. Meanwhile, the number of students on strike continued to increase, and school board officials continued to claim that the strike was unjustified.[8]

A few days later, after almost eight hours of negotiations, a deal was announced between the city and the school board to build a new school, including a promise to give parents a role in the design and location planning. Instead of sending the striking students to Washington School, the school board agreed to set up temporary accommodations on the Daley School grounds and pledged that students would eventually go to "mobile" units at one of the various neighboring schools as soon as possible. At the school council meeting the next day, the deal was almost killed. Teachers refused to support it, and the council's first vote on the issue was 5-4 against. Parents attending the meeting reacted to the vote with shouts

and screams; one woman, who was involved in the hunger strike, fainted and had to be resuscitated. Finally, after a closed session, another vote to reject, and unheard whispering among city council members, the plan was approved on a 6-4 vote.[9] The new school opened for business in 1995 under the temporary name of Whitney-Corkery. Two years later, the school was renamed Emiliano Zapata Academy.[10]

Just a few years later, Latino parents staged another hunger strike, in order to bring political pressure on the school board to build a new school in their neighborhood. In 1998, the district had promised to build three new high schools in the city, including one in Little Village. Land was purchased at the corner of 31st and Kostner Avenues, but political conflict and budget problems delayed actual construction. Although the site was initially intended for a high school, in late 2000 Chicago School Board President Gery Chico announced plans to add a grammar school to the site to relieve overcrowding at local elementary schools. The plan was immediately attacked by United Neighborhood Organization (UNO) President Juan Rangel, who charged that high school gang members would be a danger to young elementary children if the two buildings shared the same site. The criticism from Rangel was notable, as UNO had been one of Washington's staunchest allies in the Latino community. Rangel was joined in his criticism of the plan by Ald. Rafael Frias, state Rep. Edward Acevedo, and state Rep.-elect Susana Mendoza. Others defended the plan, including Ald. Ricardo Muñoz, who noted that the eighteen-acre site was so large that the two schools could be as much as two blocks away from each other. School Board President Gery Chico noted that high schools and elementary schools already shared campuses on ten sites in the city, but opponents countered by noting the high amount of gang activity in the Kostner Avenue neighborhood.[11]

By 2001, while two selective-enrollment high schools had been built in wealthier neighborhoods, Little Village was still waiting.[12] The Little Village Community Development Corporation (CDC) helped lead a 2001 campaign, including a hunger strike, which forced the Chicago Public Schools to begin building the new high school they promised the community. The Little Village CDC was formed in 1998 to improve housing and support local businesses. However, in the summer of 2000, its volunteers kept coming back with a different priority. "Everywhere our block club organizers went, people would ask them, 'Whatever happened to the new school we were promised?'" said Jaime de Leon, the corporation's director of community initiatives.[13] For a year, the CDC staff and a small group of

parents and community members fought for the school. They unearthed the history of the school board's promises for a new school in Little Village. They gathered signatures on petitions. They pleaded at school board meetings. They disrupted public events. They met with Chicago Public Schools officials. They went to Springfield. However, no real progress was made. Chicago Public Schools budgeted $5 million for site preparation in 1999 and $25 million for construction in fiscal 2000 for the new high school, but plans were delayed by budget constraints and opposition from Pilsen Ald. Danny Solis (25th), who wanted funding for a new high school in his ward. The school was eventually taken off of the schools' capital improvement program as delays and shifting budgets meant the school board no longer had the funding available to make good on its 1998 promise.[14]

Frustrated by more conventional efforts, the Latino community turned to the tried-and-true strategy of a citizen hunger strike. The hunger strike began small, with just eight parents (mostly women) camped out at the vacant lot at 31st and Kostner—the site approved for a high school by the Chicago school board in 1998—on Sunday, May 13, 2001 (Mother's Day). Protestors claimed the three-year delay was due to politicians ignoring the needs of Little Village residents, although Public Schools Chief Paul Vallas insisted that the board's hands were tied by lack of funds. The tent city was called "Camp César Chávez," and was decorated with an American flag between two Mexican flags. Two weeks into the hunger strike, the mothers were joined by Juan Andrade, head of Chicago's United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI). Vallas called the hunger strike "blackmail."[15]

On May 21, about seventy-five protesters took their demands to City Hall, disrupting a press conference being held by then-California Governor Gray Davis in front of Mayor Richard M. Daley's office. The protesters chanted, "Daley, Vallas, keep your promise," until Davis left, then delivered a letter to Daley's office that demanded a new high school at the Kostner site.[16]

The hunger strike ended on June 1, after participants had gone without solid food for nineteen days. Although it ended without a political victory on the school issue, organizers called it a success because it had mobilized the community. Started by only eight people, other hunger strikers eventually joined in, bringing the total number of participants to fourteen, not including the last-minute addition of Andrade. The hunger strike was called off after participants began to suffer health problems, including one woman who had to be hospitalized. On June 2, the next day, Little Village residents paid tribute to the hunger strikers and launched a second phase

of their effort to demand a new public high school: pickets at City Hall and weekly rallies in Little Village.[17]

The second phase seemed to go nowhere for a while, but in August, after the mayor replaced Paul Vallas with Michael W. Scott and Arne Duncan, the new schools team promised that the new high school would be built. New Board President Duncan announced plans to move forward with two new high schools for the Latino neighborhoods of the city, one each in Pilsen and Little Village. Although only $5 million was allocated to each site in the 2001–2002 capital improvement budget, and each school was expected to cost at least $30 million to construct, the announcement was seen as a victory for the community.[18]

The Little Village CDC continued involvement after the promise was renewed, organizing a committee headed by Jaime de Leon to advise the district to ensure that the new high school would meet residents' needs. After the promise for a new school was renewed in August 2001, Latino activists continued their involvement, meeting with the CPS staff and architect to help design the new school. The Little Village CDC conducted meetings, surveys and focus groups to find out what parents, students, and the community wanted from the new school.[19] Design plans were approved in November 2002; in late September, 2003, the Chicago Board of Education approved $60 million in construction funds for the 31st Street and Kostner Avenue site. Little Village Lawndale High School opened in the fall of 2005, with four hundred students.[20]

Although the hunger strike comprised only a few weeks of the multi-year battle for the new school, it was crucial to the community's success. "The hunger strike was the pinnacle of the organizing," according to de Leon. The importance of the hunger strike to the school is evident in various features of the architecture and landscaping. Honoring the fourteen hunger strikers are fourteen flowering trees. Symbolizing the nineteen days of the strike are the nineteen-degree angles of the entryway, a walkway, and six glass partitions. Inside the school's courtyard is a unique solar calendar that shows the sunlight slowly fading from May 13 to June 1, the days that coordinate to the 2001 action. George Beach, the architect who designed the school, said that the hunger strike was a constant theme during two years of design meetings with local residents. "They constantly talked about their struggle and how to sort of bring that into the school so the students know what transpired to make the building—so they would not forget."[21] The hunger strike is also noted prominently in the school's current website.[22]

Chicago Latino Community Activism

In the early 1970s, Latinos in Chicago (Mexicans and Puerto Ricans) came together in a spirit of *latinismo* and formed larger, stronger organizations to fight for better conditions, including the Spanish Coalition for Jobs. In the face of job discrimination by Illinois Bell and Jewel supermarkets, unsuccessful meetings and negotiations led to protests and demonstrations until Latinos' demands were finally met. Padilla notes:

> [T]he Illinois Bell and Jewel controversies provided both material and symbolic benefits to the Spanish Coalition constituency…these successes demonstrated that adoption of a "Latino ethnic identity" could alter institutional racist practices.[23]

Latinos in Chicago have since continued to turn to community organizations for political power. Traditional routes to equal treatment and representation have been supplemented as needed with protests, boycotts, and demonstrations. But given the increased number of Latino elected and appointed officials in Chicago in recent decades, why did the fight for improved educational facilities turn to protest politics?

The continued need for such unconventional political action is in some measure a reflection of the lack of political power of Latinos in Chicago. On the other hand, the continued success of such actions reflects the power of the community to achieve positive results. Michael Jones-Correa's description of Latino politics in Queens, New York, provides a good parallel to that of Chicago and insight into how and why the women of Pilsen and Little Village acted as they did in these instances.[24] In Queens, Latinos are marginalized by politicians because those who are active participants "tend to be Democrats in any case, regardless of the way they are spurned by the local party organization."[25] Because Queens is overwhelmingly Democratic, there is no effective competition from the Republican Party, leaving Latinos little choice but to either abstain or vote Democratic despite discontent with Democratic politicians. The same could easily be said of Chicago. Explaining the gendered approach to politics, Jones-Correa notes that "while mainstream immigrant organizations, dominated by men, are oriented toward their home country, activist women attempt to circumvent the obstacles to local participation placed there by the once supposedly helpful political party structure."[26] Elsewhere, he clarifies: "While men are likely to keep a sojourner mentality, and

organizations dominated by men will focus on the home country, activist immigrant women are more likely to turn to the problems of the immigrant community in this country."[27] Again, the parallel to Chicago is clear: such a gendered approach to politics explains why women took the lead in both school equity battles. The legitimacy of Latino parents' concerns was likely heightened by the right of non-citizens to vote in Chicago school board elections, a right extended to all community residents and parents of children in schools in 1988.[28]

Another insight from Jones-Correa is that Latin American immigrants are creatures of habit in how they engage in politics:

> "The forms of mobilization immigrants choose are almost ritualistic in nature. Like others mobilizing collectively, immigrants are not calculating tacticians who seize every available opportunity to act; instead, they choose the form and timing of their collective action from a narrow repertoire."[29]

This explains the frequent use of hunger strikes by the Latino community of Chicago. It is part of their political repertoire.

The political opportunity structure surrounding these school battles was impacted not only by the ethnicity of the affected communities, but also by the gender and family identities of the mothers involved. In other words, that this occurred in the Latino community, and that the primary actors were Latina mothers, created a unique political context which must take into account the various categories of difference involved. The "multiple marginalizations" of individuals—in this case, as non-Anglos, as women, and as members of an economic lower class—locked these women in an "interlocking prison from which there is little escape."[30] In other words, the political context faced by the Latina mothers of Chicago was impacted by their ethnic identities, their gender identities, their class identities, and their identities as mothers. But, to paraphrase Hancock, it is not just an arithmetic problem. Women as mothers can arguably have more power—a different political opportunity structure—than women in general. The traditional commitment of Latinos to school policy increased their credibility.[31] Their identity as mothers increased their power and legitimacy because they were not acting self-interestedly, but out of concern for others: their children and the community. As noted by Little Village CDC Board President Elena Duran:

> We didn't want an olympic sized swimming pool; we were not asking for a shopping mall, we were not asking for extraordinary things, frivolous things. We wanted education for our kids.[32]

Would the hunger strikers have had the same success if they had been predominantly men? Arguably not, as starving (and fainting) *women* cues certain social responses that are unique to women. Would the need for a hunger strike have existed if the affected community had been Anglo and higher income? Again, arguably not. Here, then, is the intersectionality and the unique political opportunity structure. In part it was imposed from above, but the positive aspects were generated from below by the involved women. That the second hunger strike initiated on Mother's Day suggests an understanding of that structure and how it could best be manipulated.

Traditional (what Hancock refers to as unitary or multiple-strand) research would conclude that the political opportunity structure here was quite dire. Latinos have less political power than Anglos. Women have less political power compared to men. Members of lower socioeconomic classes have less political power than those of higher classes. But the unique intersectionality of these categories in this instance created a *positive* political opportunity structure, due to the way in which these poor Latinas were able to manipulate and benefit from their position in Chicago society.

The approach by the Latina mothers of Chicago—protest rather than conventional politics—is not only a reflection of their lack of institutional power, but also a reflection of the different conception of ethics and rights held by men and women. Gilligan argues that while men are taught "to respect the rights of others and thus to protect from interference the rights to life and self fulfillment," women instead are taught "to care"—to "alleviate the 'real and recognizable trouble' of this world."[33] Other feminist theorists have expanded on Gilligan's "ethic of care" theory to argue that women do not "treat people as self-interested maximizers of private or existing desires."[34] Such "ethic[s] of justice" approaches, while perhaps appropriate to the experiences and understandings of men, do not adequately explain the behavior of women in the political arena.

Actions done for the good of the community are often not even considered political, masking the extent of women's militancy. Naples notes that the low-income, community activist women she interviewed did not consider community work political, because "politics, in their view, was designed to serve those in power, not the low-income communities."[35] The involvement by these women with the PTA and block associations, their

participations in public hearings, demonstrations, and local coalitions and advocacy programs, was understood by the women as "civic" activities or "citizen activism," but not as political activity. This suggests that women seeking improvements in their communities are unlikely to turn to elected officials or more traditional political routes, and more likely to seek change through "civic" (as opposed to "political") means.

This distinction between the motivations, ethics, and understandings of politics between men and women is illustrated by the Chicago school battles described in this chapter. The Latina mothers were motivated to work to improve the educational situation in their community due to a concern for their children. While perhaps clearly a political issue to outside observers, the women interpreted the situation as a non-political community problem, to be solved with local meetings and actions. In fact, their willingness to act, and their determination over time, illustrates that they not only felt strongly about the issue but also expected to win, an expectation that likely would not have persisted had the problem been understood as a political one requiring action by elected officials.

In the two school equity battles reviewed here, Chicago Latinos were able to achieve their goals not through conventional methods, but through protest politics coordinated by community organizations. Of what use, then, is increased political representation? Research on Black political representation suggests that the symbolism of those Latino officials, perhaps combined with the right of non-citizens to vote in school board elections in Chicago, provided important psychological support to the activists in these struggles. In other words, the existence of a substantial number of elected and appointed Latino public officials encouraged members of the community to believe that city officials would be responsive to their demands, while their right to vote in school board contests gave them an additional sense of legitimacy in the arena of school policy.

Gay notes that "research on minority political leadership at the local level suggests that descriptive representation can favorably affect attitudes towards public officials and institutions."[36] Building on Fenno's claim that constituents value accessibility and the availability of two-way communication between themselves and their representatives,[37] Gay theorizes that descriptive representation improves citizens' attitudes about such accessibility and communication. She found that both white and Black citizens were more likely to contact same-race members of Congress, evidence that those attitudes translate into substantive political behavior. Similarly, Williams argues that descriptive representation sets in motion a "spiral of

trust" which has real implications for political life.[38] Abney and Hutcheson find that having a same-race mayor increases trust among city constituents.[39] Mansbridge argues that descriptive representation can be necessary to overcome distrust between legislators and constituents and ensure adequate communication.[40] Swain argues that descriptive representation increases minority trust in government.[41] Burrell notes: "When citizens can identify with their representatives they become less alienated and more involved in the political system."[42] What all of these researchers conclude in common, albeit about Blacks rather than Latinos, is that descriptive representation has substantive effects; increased trust, communication, and political behavior increases the political voice of minorities beyond any substantive representation elected officials might otherwise be delivering.

Applying these findings to the local Chicago context suggests that members of the Latino community were more likely to approach and make demands of school officials because of the presence of Latino leaders. While Latinos in Chicago may not have enough traditional political power to achieve their goals without going to extremes (e.g. hunger strikes), they have enough to be empowered to take such extreme action when they believe it to be necessary, and also enough for it to be successful. In Chicago, although the Daley administration was not delivering the school policies favored by the Latino community, the parents in Pilsen and Little Village were empowered to act, first using traditional means and then turning to protest politics when those initial efforts were unsuccessful. It is impossible to know whether the same actions would have been undertaken given less descriptive representation, but it is consistent with the theories reviewed here that the Latinos of Chicago might have been more likely to suffer quietly, or to give up more quickly, in an atmosphere of less trust and weaker feelings of political efficacy.

Conclusion

The Latino community in Chicago can point to significant advancements and successes in the last few decades. After years of being denied a proportional share of political power, based on population size, they won lawsuits and redistricting battles that led to notable increases in the number and strength of city and state elected and appointed officials. The resulting presence of Latino members on the city council and in the state legislature in Springfield have led to tangible gains for Latino residents, including more

jobs and more city contracts. In the face of unfulfilled promises from city officials to do something about overcrowded schools in Pilsen and Little Village, community activism and determination led to renewed promises and promises kept, resulting not only in the desired outcome (new and expanded schools), but also a renewed sense of community power—the same lessons learned by those who fought for jobs at Illinois Bell and Jewel in the 1970s. While in some ways the continued need for such tactics as hunger strikes and pickets is evidence that Latino political power in Chicago still lacks sufficient strength, the school equity battles also indicate the power of the community to successfully exploit available political opportunity structures.

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4

Manny Diaz and the Rise and Fall
of the Miami Renaissance

Jessica Lavariega Monforti,
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and Dario Moreno

Introduction

IN THE EARLY TO MID-2000S, MIAMI UNDERWENT THE LARGEST REAL ESTATE boom and bust in its history. The frenzy of new construction in Miami's urban core radically transformed the politics and demographics of the "Magic City." Hispanics, especially the city's powerful Cuban American business and political establishment, were the prime agents behind the redevelopment of Miami's historic neighborhoods. However when the city's real estate market collapsed in 2006, the effects of the ensuing recession were disproportionately felt by those residents who did not benefit from the boom years. In large measure, it was the city's working-class Hispanics and African Americans who bore the burden of 10% of unemployment and had one of the nation's highest foreclosure rates. The major agent responsible for the Miami Renaissance and its consequences was then-Mayor Manuel (Manny) Diaz (2001–2009) who reasoned that if he provided political stability, efficient government services, and development incentives, then developers would flock to the city and redevelop its downtown and the surrounding, depressed, waterfront neighborhoods. His logic at that time was that growth would revitalize the city and bring prosperity to one of the nation's poorest city.

The real estate boon under Mayor Diaz was different from Miami's past boon in that its main beneficiary was the Latino-owned development and

construction companies. These projects were largely financed, planned, developed, and constructed by Miami's Latino bourgeoisie. Latino developers and bankers were able to negotiate with the Diaz administration's favorable government-private partnership that added fuel to Miami's already hot real estate market. Miami's Latino-owned businesses, along with the Diaz Administration, were the principal agents of the so-called Miami Renaissance. While the building boon enriched the mostly Cuban business community, it only temporarily improved the lives of working-class Hispanics and African Americans. Unemployment dropped to 4% during the height of the boon, and housing values skyrocketed, increasing the assets of many middle- and working-class Hispanics. But when the boon ended it was Miami's Hispanic working- and middle-classes who bore the burden. Unemployment climbed to 10%, and many families lost their homes due to second mortgages taken out during the height of the housing bubble.

At its height in 2005, the scope, scale, and speed of the Miami real estate boom was breathtaking:

> More than 114 major projects, most of them high-rise condos, were under construction or in the planning stages in the urban core along Biscayne Bay. Citywide, developers were proposing more than 61,000 new condominium units, eight times the number built during the past decade.[1]

This unprecedented growth came under the leadership of Miami's Cuban American Mayor Diaz.

Elected in 2001, Diaz counted on the boom to reverse Miami's long decline. The 2000 Census found that the City of Miami was the poorest city in the nation. Diaz also became Mayor after a period of political instability and corruption that tarnished the city's image. In 1996, City Manager Cesar Odio and City Commissioner Miller Dawkins were convicted of accepting bribes from city contractors. The following year, the city's mayoral election was tainted by widespread vote fraud that eventually led to the removal of Mayor Xavier Suarez in February 1998. During Suarez's brief, 100-day tenure as Mayor, his extraordinary behavior led the city's major newspaper to refer to him as "Mayor *Loco*." The crisis in Miami politics exploded on national television during Easter week 2000 when Elián González was forcibly removed from his Miami relatives' home in Little Havana, sparking days of civil protest.

Diaz was committed to reviving the city's faltering fortunes; therefore, neighborhood issues were very much a part of his election campaign. The mayor outlined his version of the Miami Renaissance during his 2005 State of the City address when he announced that Miami was becoming a world class city. He said, "Now it is the time we stop talking about potential. Now is the time to take our rightful place as one of the world's greatest cities."[2] The Mayor then tracked the city's progress from the financial turmoil and fraudulent mayoral election of the 1990s to its boom town status as one of the hottest real estate markets in the country and the darling of such entertainment events as the MTV Video Music Awards.[3]

An important dimension of the Miami Renaissance story was Diaz's leadership style. He governed as an *Agentic* leader—that is he has a "power over" orientation towards leadership. Such leaders describe themselves as "aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, daring, self-confident, and competitive."[4] These attributes are reflective of what Burns calls *great man* leadership, in which a heroic figure employs his "will to power" to achieve desired results.[5] As a result, Diaz's vision of the city's transformation was very much his own; he worked very little with people and/or groups *in* neighborhoods to bring about neighborhood change. Even the city commission and the city manager were reduced to rubber stamping the vision advocated by the Mayor's Office. Diaz was able to bulldoze his agenda through the city's commission and bureaucracy because of his close ties to the Miami business establishment, combined with his appeal to voters as reflected in his surprise come-from-behind victory in the 2001 mayoral election.

The 2001 Election: The Neighborhood Candidate

Diaz's commitment to the revitalization of Miami's downtown is ironic given that in the 2001 mayoral election he ran as the candidate of Miami's neighborhoods. The frontrunner in the election was former-Mayor Maurice Ferre (1970–1985). Ferre based his candidacy on the city's 1970s construction boom that saw the development of Miami's financial district along Brickell Avenue. Ferre entered the race as a clear favorite leading his nearest rival incumbent, Mayor Joe Carrollo, by 15 points, 35% to 20%.[6] Diaz barely registered at 5%. In fact, in a race that featured two former Mayors (Ferre, Suarez), an incumbent Mayor (Carrollo), the chairman of the City Commission (Willy Gort), and a former city

manager (Jose Garcia Pedrosa), Diaz, who had never held elected office, was clearly the underdog.

Diaz overcame his early underdog status by exploiting his ties to the city's business community and raising more money than all his rivals. In the primary election, Diaz raised over $1.1 million. Ferre was only able to raise $900,000 while incumbent Mayor Carrollo, who had offended both the Anglo and Cuban American business establishments, barely reached $300,000. Diaz's fundraising muscle came from his close relationship with then-Insurance Commissioner and former US Senator Bill Nelson, and his business relationship with many of the city's most prominent developers. Diaz, a life-long Democrat, also had strong connections with the city's Anglo legal establishment. These connections allowed him to collect monies from the state insurance industry, from Hispanic developers, and from Miami's silk stocking law firms. He also was able to organize a campaign staff that brought together three of Miami's most savvy campaign consultants (Armando Gutierrez, Alberto Lorenzo, and Steve Marin).

Candidate Diaz combined his elite fundraising and campaign organization with a populist message and touch. Though Diaz never held public office, he was relatively well known in the city's Cuban community. He had been the founding President of the Spanish American League Against Discrimination (SALAD) that defended the civil rights of South Florida's Spanish speaking immigrants. More importantly, Diaz gained notoriety as Elián González's lawyer. He was in Elián's relatives' Little Havana home the morning it was raided by federal agents. Diaz justified his abandonment of the Democratic Party by pointing out that Janet Reno, the Democratic Attorney General, had ordered federal agents to point a gun to his head. Diaz's reputation gave him entry into the city's Hispanic neighborhoods, and he became a Republican.

Diaz's campaign strategy was designed to capitalize on his strong Cuban credentials. Early in the campaign, Diaz spent three months walking door-to-door in the heavily Cuban neighborhoods of The Roads, Shenandoah, Little Havana, Coral Gate, and Flagami. He stressed his strong community links and the fact that he came from humble origins, having been raised in the city's Hispanic neighborhoods. In the debates, Diaz criticized Suarez, Ferre, Carrollo, and Garcia Pedrosa, all of whom had been mayors or city managers, for ignoring Miami's ethnic neighborhoods and concentrating their efforts on Downtown and the Biscayne and Brickell corridors. This strategy paid off. By October 2001, four weeks from Election Day, Diaz was in a close race with Ferre and Carrollo. On Election Day, Ferre was

in first place with 14,310 votes, while Diaz barely edged out incumbent Mayor Carrollo by just over 200 votes (10,808 to 10,581) to make it into the run-off with Ferre.

The run-off election for Mayor of the City of Miami was no contest. Despite the fact that Ferre had bested Diaz in the primary, Ferre suffered from the handicap of being a Puerto Rican in a Cuban city. In the primary, Ferre had been the only non-Cuban in the race, now he was head to head with a Cuban Republican who had developed a strong base in that community. To make matters worse, Ferre, a Democrat, muddled the question of whether he would endorse Janet Reno for Governor of Florida. The confused answer set off a firestorm in the city's Cuban American community that the Diaz campaign gleefully exploited. Needless to say, Diaz easily defeated Ferre 55% to 45% in the run-off. Moreover, Diaz carried the Hispanic neighborhoods by nearly 70% of the vote, while Ferre received two-thirds of the Anglo vote and nearly 90% of the African American vote.

Reforming the City

The incoming Diaz Administration faced formidable challenges as they took office. First, repairing Miami's tarnished image in the wake of the Elián González affair and the corruption and electoral fraud of the 1990s. Second, dealing with the endemic poverty that plagued the city, especially its traditional ethnic neighborhoods. The new administration was barely in power a month when they received the official notification from the US Census Bureau that Miami was the United States' poorest city. Third, the administration faced a city bureaucracy that was inefficient and unresponsive to citizens. Moreover, previous administrations had granted the police and fire employee unions generous pensions and benefit packages that threatened the city's financial stability. Finally, the Diaz administration had to deal with a shrinking tax base that, along with financial mismanagement, had pushed the city to the edge of bankruptcy. From the 1990s to the 2000s the city's population had actually declined and urban development projects were rare.

Almost immediately, the new administration began a vigorous campaign to restore the Magic City's image. During his first year in office, Mayor Diaz, working with the city's large Latino music industry, began negotiations to host the Latin Grammys. Miami had been scheduled to host the 2001 award show but a dispute over the appearance of Cuba-based musicians had led to the relocation of the Grammys to Los Angeles. After a year

of intense negotiations between the Diaz Administration and the Latin Recording Academy, Miami was chosen to host the awards in 2003. The success of the show, plus Miami's knack for hosting extravagant events, led the city to host the more popular MTV Video Music Awards in both 2004 and 2005. The Diaz Administration's ability to host these events without generating protest from radical elements of the city's Cuban community was a major breakthrough. In the past, the city's reputation had been blemished by extremists who had been able to shut down major mainstream events because they somehow offended local sensibility regarding Castro's Cuba. During the negotiations to bring the Latin Grammys and the MTV awards, the Diaz Administration did not allow the unreasonable demands of right wing groups to determine the city's official position. This was a radical shift from the policies of past city administrations. Therefore, in this case the avoidance of conflict, rather than the use of conflict, proved effective.

Diaz also made reforming the Miami Police Department (MPD) a major priority of his tenure. Before the new administration, the national image of the Miami Police Department had been tainted by numerous deadly encounters between police officers and community members. In a 12-year period (1991–2003), 33 civilians were killed by Miami police officers under questionable circumstances. Miami officers, for example, shot fifteen people in the back, killing five. These incidents became very high profile, dominated press coverage of the department, and overshadowed the hard work of the department in crime reduction. In 2002, the Department of Justice published a report which criticized MPD's policy on the use of deadly force. Mayor Diaz began his term as eleven Miami police officers were convicted by a federal court of planting guns at the scene of police shootings. The large numbers of bullets at various shooting scenes that were fired indiscriminately, suggesting that officers often lost control and had no line of vision on their intended targets were also disturbing. Six times they wounded or killed innocent bystanders. More often than not, officers missed their intended targets and sent bullets flying, raising questions about whether it was proper to resort to firearms. During a 12-year period (1991–2003), MPD officers fired nearly 1,300 bullets at suspects and missed more than 1,100 times. At least 20 of those bullets ended up inside civilian homes, including one found in a microwave oven.

The Mayor began his reform by hiring one of the most respected law enforcement professionals in the nation to head the troubled department. John Timoney was appointed as Miami's eleventh Chief of Police

on January 2, 2003. Timoney had worked his way through the ranks of the New York Police Department until he was appointed First Deputy Commissioner, the second highest rank in the NYPD, in 1995. The new Chief began his effort to reform the city's police by initiating a new "Use of Force" guideline. Under the new policy, MPD officers discharged their weapons in less than 1% of incidents resulting in arrests in 2004. The policy required officers to, under all circumstances, avoid placing themselves in a position where the only option is the use of deadly force. The new policy also greatly restricted the authority of MPD officers to shoot at moving vehicles, a practice that was all too frequent before the implementation of the 2003 policy. In the past, police officers fired more than 300 bullets at 33 moving vehicles during the same 12-year period (1991–2003). Since the institution of new departmental policies, introduced by Chief Timoney and the adoption of new "less-than-lethal" technologies during threatening situations, the death of officers and suspects, as well as the accidental death of innocent bystanders during these situations decreased to zero.

In addition to restoring the public image of the MPD, the Diaz Administration also initiated a major overhaul of the city's organizational structure. At the end of his first year in office, Mayor Diaz appointed Joe Arriola, a feisty Cuban American businessman, to begin the process of reforming Miami's bureaucratic processes in order to ensure efficiency and economy in the governance of the city. In fewer than six months, every major department head had been removed and replaced from the Parks Director to the City Attorney. Moreover, the new Manager began the arduous process of renegotiating the city's pension programs with its employee unions in order to reduce the city's financial liability in the future.

The mayor also made dealing with the city's high poverty rate one of his top priorities. As part of the mayor's Prosperity Campaign, the city launched a public relations campaign to publicize the availability of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program for Miami's working poor. Duplicating successful campaigns in Denver and Chicago, the city partnered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Human Services Coalition, and Florida International University to conduct the outreach effort. According to the IRS, the number of City of Miami residents receiving EITC increased from 60,170 to 63,247, an increase of over 3,000 applicants. The increase in monies going to low-income workers in the City of Miami increased from $110,000,000 to $123,500,000. The City of Miami captured a little over half of the $26,000,000 that the IRS estimated, are potential EITC claims.[7]

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The legacy of the Diaz Administration, however, is not in these long overdue reforms, but the dramatic transformation of the city's skyline. The inauguration of Diaz as mayor ushered in a period of unprecedented growth in the city's real estate market. The level of private investment in the city outdid in risk and bravado the 1920 boom that created the city. It included a 74-story spire—taller than any residential building south of Manhattan—in Midtown Miami, the largest urban development project in the nation second only to the freedom towers in New York. All this unprecedented growth occurred in a city with fewer than 400,000 inhabitants and only 45 square miles.

The large-scale construction improved the city's economy. During a four-year span (2002–2006), over 11,000 new jobs were added in the City of Miami (from 142,632 to 154,377), cutting the city's unemployment rate in half from 9.8% to 4.7%.[8] Furthermore, the city's fiscal situation was aided by the real estate boom. The Diaz Administration, due to increased tax revenues from the boom, was able to lower property tax rate every year of his administration. The city's bond rating rose from near junk bond to triple "A" rating.

One of the most unique features of the Miami Renaissance is that Latino developers are among the principal agents of growth. Jorge Perez, of the Related Group, has been one of the cataclysmic forces behind the boom. Perez's Related Group is the largest Hispanic-owned business in the United States with a development portfolio with projects valued in excess of $10 billion, and with reported sales of more than $2.1 billion for 2004. The Related Group is responsible for some of the boom's landmark developments, including One Miami, Loft Downtown, Loft II, 500 Brickell Avenue, Icon Brickell, Park Suites, The Plaza, and The Mark. These projects, with a multi-million dollar assessed value, were at the forefront of Diaz's vision of the new Miami. It is important to note that Jorge Perez and other prominent Hispanic developers, such as former ambassador Paul Ceijas, are Cuban Democrats and were associated with Diaz before the 2001 election. While Hispanic developers are the chief beneficiaries of the real estate boom, a sizable number of projects are being constructed by national developers who were predominantly Anglo.

The Diaz Administration initially took a laissez-faire approach to the transformation of the Miami skyline, their attitude was best expressed by commissioner Johnny Winton, who quipped that "the role of government

is to simply stay out of the way."[9] By 2005, the mayor decided that the unprecedented growth offered the city a unique opportunity to create a city-wide Master Plan that would regulate and rationalize the boom. The Mayor was determined that the plan be in harmony with his vision of Miami as a world-class city. The new plan, Miami 21, was coined for the Miami of the twenty-first century and entailed the complete overhaul of the city's outdated and chaotic zoning code. Diaz viewed Miami 21 "as a long-term investment in the preservation and improvement to the quality of life in [the] city."[10]

The city hired architect Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, the high-priestess of new urbanism, as the lead consultant on the project. Plater-Zyberk sought to revive the principle of traditional town planning denser, compact development and walkable streets as an alternative to auto-dependent urban sprawl—this was needed in a Miami where traffic congestion is a major issue for residents. Miami 21 was designed to produce a zoning code that dated back to the city's founding in the early 1900s and had not been re-written since. New regulations, called overlays, were added on top of the original code, making Miami's zoning one of the most complex in the country. The city's new zoning regulations filled several volumes, forcing developers and homeowners to hire lawyers and consultants versed in exploiting loopholes in the code. This complexity has resulted in many cases of inconsistent decisions leading to inappropriate zoning. The Diaz Administration hoped that Miami 21 would create a Master Plan that compelled rational and consistent zoning, resulting in a more livable and pleasant urban core.

The adoption of a form-based code, like Miami 21, places the city in a proactive position as opposed to a laissez-faire attitude in regards to development. Private citizens were encouraged to participate by helping adopt community standards for their neighborhoods. This "form" gave the city the tool it needed to achieve the highest quality of development with a vision that is accepted by citizens at the neighborhood level.

The Diaz administration hoped that Miami 21 would create a predictable and efficient code. Predictability would result from giving residential neighborhoods the tools to conserve and enhance their unique character. It would also give developers clear guidelines of the areas that are available for high-density growth, thus allowing them to concentrate their resources on projects that will succeed. In contrast to conventional zoning codes, form-based codes are highly illustrated and involve a significant level of public participation by engaging citizens in the development process, so that they have ownership over it. These new regulations would actually reduce the

time and cost for development in the City of Miami. Developers are no longer forced to hire land-use lawyers and lobbyists to obtain city approval for their projects as long as they adhere to the form-based code.

Gentrification

The real estate boom has not only changed the Miami skyline but also affected the city's demographics. After nearly two decades of static growth, the City of Miami witnessed a significant increase in population. Between 2000 and 2003, the City's population grew by over 20,000 people, from 362,470 to 382,959. This compares with a very modest population increase of 3,685 between 1990 and 2000. Significantly, the dramatic increase in the city's population has come before 61,000 new units have come online. Given the planned growth in the city's residential units, it was expected that the City of Miami would have a population of half a million by the 2010 decennial census; in fact Miami's population in 2010 approximated 400,000.

However, at the same time that Miami's population was increasing, the number of African Americans continued to decline. During the same three year period, 2000–2003, the African American population of the city declined from 80,858 to 68,817. According to estimates from the US Census Bureau, African Americans comprised only 18% of the city's population in 2003, compared to 22.3% in 2000 and 25% in 1990. This decline of African Americans reflects the growing gentrification of Miami's urban core. This gentrification began before the inauguration of the Diaz administration; between 1990 and 2000, the African American population of the city declined by 11,000. The process began when middle- and upper-middle class Anglos and Hispanics, fleeing the high cost of housing on Miami Beach, began settling in Miami's northeast neighborhoods, such as Morningside and Belle Meade. These new homeowners replaced African American renters in those neighborhoods. By the late 1990s, the process of gentrification had moved to the west side of the Biscayne corridor including the eastern areas of Lemon City and Little Haiti.

The Diaz administration, especially Commissioner Winton, encouraged and promoted this process in the areas adjacent to Miami's declining downtown. An economic development study of Miami's Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad Corridor demonstrated the economic potential of developing a series of poor neighborhoods north of downtown. The

report recommended the residential development of Edgewater, Wynwood, and the areas south of the city's vibrant design district. The centerpiece of this development strategy was the 55 acres of the Buena Vista site. An abandoned railroad switching yard, the Buena Vista site, was the hole in the donut between the design district and the Wynwood and Edgewater neighborhoods. The development of the Buena Vista site into Midtown Miami accelerated the gentrification process in the city. Midtown Miami, an 18-block stretch dubbed "SoHo South," is a place residents and visitors gravitate to, much like its sister neighborhood up north. Designed as a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood, it was to be comprised of 3,000 condominium residences interspersed with street-level retail and commercial space. The pricing of the units were geared toward upper-middle class and wealthy buyers; condominiums are priced between $400,000 and $2,000,000.

The pricing of the Midtown project was in line with the rest of the developments occurring in the city at the time. Most of the new condominium residences under construction and planned, were priced in the mid-six-figure range, pricing out most of the current residents of the city. Many critics of the Miami boom argued that by pricing-out middle- and working-class people, the city will not become a vibrant 24-hour metropolis, but instead, Miami will be nothing more than a seasonal playground for the rich. Joel Kotkin, an urban historian, hypothesizes that Miami is in danger of becoming an "ephemeral city, like San Francisco and [Manhattan]."[11] The danger is that Miami will become a place that caters to the rich, the childless young, and tourists.

In addition to the high cost of the units, many critics of the Miami building boom argued that the real estate market in the city is, in reality, a speculative bubble. They point out that in some projects, nearly 80% of the buyers are investors. The luxury condo market in the city has been dominated by European and Latin American buyers, attracted by the weak dollar and the relatively inexpensive properties in comparison to other coastal US cities. These critics suggest that many of the spectacular new buildings will stand empty and will not create the busy street life the Diaz administration is hoping for.

In 2005, construction began on the "Midtown Miami" development which was planned with eight high-rise residential buildings, a hotel, two parks, and a major urban shopping area—"The Shops at Midtown." Due to the collapse of the real estate bubble in 2007, only two residential buildings, and about two-thirds of the "The Shops at Midtown" were built. In

July 2011, plans were announced to begin construction on a new entertainment center at Midtown, including a hotel, movie theater, and shops on the site of the current temporary park in the center of Midtown. Critics of Midtown state the lack of parks continues to be a major issue. Midtown has grown quickly, despite the development slow down.

Nowhere have the battlegrounds over gentrification been so clearly drawn as in Miami's Overtown neighborhood. Overtown is the city's historic African American neighborhood, adjacent to downtown. The area, in the 1940s–1960s, was a working and viable neighborhood. Within the boundaries of Overtown, there were many black-owned businesses and homes. Moreover, Overtown was nationally famous as a venue for black entertainment. Since black entertainers were prohibited from staying in Miami Beach, Overtown became the place where they lodged. After performing for whites on the beach, the entertainers would then play for African Americans in Overtown clubs like Sir John's and the Lyric. The neighborhood's cohesion was destroyed by the building of I-95 that cut through Overtown, dividing the community. From 1980–2010, Overtown experienced steep decline as businesses and middle- and working-class blacks have moved out. However, Overtown remains a powerful symbol of past injustices for Miami's African American community and remains an important center for traditional black churches.

After years of neglect and broken promises, The City of Miami redirected efforts toward Overtown. The first step in the redevelopment of Overtown was a four-block parcel of parking and vacant lots in the southeast corner of the historic neighborhood. The city awarded the contract to Crosswinds Communities to develop over 1,000 residential units to be sold to medium-income buyers. The city-run Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) would donate the land to the project in exchange for moderately priced units and 65 units to be given to low-income Overtown residents. The Crosswinds deal, supported by the Mayor, divided the Overtown community. Community leaders embraced the development as the best possible deal available while others in the community viewed it as a gentrification project in disguise. Power U, a group of dissatisfied residents, became the project's main critic, suing both the City and the developer.

Since 2011, the city's redevelopment agency has had to settle two lawsuits tied to claims from both the public and private sector about who should control the land. One, between the county and the city, is about whether the city and its CRA should continue to control three county-owned parcels located between Sixth and Ninth streets. These parcels have reverted to

county control. The second has to do with land tied to the stalled Sawyer's Walk/Crosswinds residential project, which has 3.5 blocks that overlap with some of the parcels in question in the county/city lawsuit.

Gentrification was also occurring in the city's Hispanic neighborhoods. However, in sharp contrast to the process in the city's historic black areas, gentrification in Latino areas had not decreased the city's Hispanic population. In fact, contrarily, the city's Hispanics population continues to grow and diversify. In these neighborhoods, young, professional Latinos are buying property from retired, elderly Hispanics. The elderly are replacing single-family homes for mid-priced condominiums along Coral Way and Southwest 8th Street in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood. Young, professional Latinos are remodeling the single-family homes and reinvigorating Miami's decaying historic neighborhoods. Thus, gentrification did not become the hot-button issue among the city's Hispanics, as it did among African Americans. The major issue that the Miami boom created for some elderly and working class Hispanics is that higher property values resulted in higher rents. This has disproportionately affected poor and working-class Hispanics, especially the elderly.

The Failure of the Miami Renaissance

Mayor Diaz was an agent of change for the Miami urban landscape during his tenure, but an agentic leader. This leadership and decision-making style brought both positive and negative results to Miamians. He almost single-handedly rehabilitated the image of the city's Cuban American majority. In the aftermath of the fraud and corruption of the 1990s and the Elián González affair, he demonstrated that Miami's Cuban American community was capable of tolerance and community building. The Mayor broke many of the traditional taboos that had constrained Cuban American politicians in the past. He did not kowtow to the city's right-wing extremists or allow them to veto events and public policy. For example, he was the only prominent Cuban American politician that met with Oswaldo Paya, the founder of the Varela Project that calls for reconciliation between the Cuban American community, Cuban dissidents, and the Castro government.

It was under Diaz's leadership that the city underwent the most profound economic and real estate boom in its history. Moreover, this boom was spearheaded by local Latino developers. Similar to Stone's analysis of Atlanta's black leadership, in Miami it was minority developers who

designed, constructed, and profited from the redevelopment of Miami's urban core.[12] Jorge Perez, Pedro Martin, Paul Ceijas, Sergio Roc, Walter Defortuna, and Alan Ojeda directed the boom. Anglo and outside developers also profited, but it was the Hispanic developers, especially the Related Group, that paved the way and determined the rapid pace of the boom. By encouraging speculators and marketing his products in Europe and Latin America, Perez's firm discovered the formula for Miami's successful real estate development.

However, it was this very formula that overheated the real estate market. For example, in a four-year period (2002–2006), 21,616 units were built in the downtown area, but buyers were only absorbing 2,000 a year. By 2006, there were over 13,000 unsold units just in the city's urban core—a five-year surplus—and over 10,000 more units in construction. Speculators began backing away from their contracts, and the contraction of the market began in earnest. Real estate prices fell over a third in the City of Miami in 2007. The cranes and construction sites, which were a ubiquitous part of the Miami landscape for most of the decade, disappeared. Despair set in.

By mid-2009 all the economic indicators were worse than when Mayor Diaz took office in 2001. Unemployment was in the double-digits, foreclosures at record levels, and the reduction in real estate values had reduced city revenues; in 2012 the unemployment rates hovered around 9.5%. Moreover, the reduction in revenues combined with generous union contracts has again put the long-term fiscal viability of the city in jeopardy. More disturbing is that while the rank-and-file people of Miami did not benefit from the boom, they are surely suffering from the consequences of Diaz's growth-at-all-costs strategy. The failure of the Miami Renaissance does not only reflect the limits of growth-machine strategies of urban development but also reflects the limits of agentic leaders. Diaz's leadership style not only disempowered the working people of the city who elected him but, at the end of the day, made them pay the price for his failed policy.

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5

"I Don't See Color, I Just Vote for the Best Candidate": The Persistence of Ethnically Polarized Voting

Sylvia Manzano and Arturo Vega

"*Ladies and Gentlemen: I have always abided by the axiom that one should never discuss politics or religion with anyone but your immediate family. To do otherwise is a formula for creating a long list of former friends and associates....That said, I feel so strongly about the Mayor's race that I am compelled to break my own rule....Mr. Castro is a smarter version of Ed Garza, making him potentially far more dangerous....Don't blow it. Vote for Phil Hardberger.*"

–Memo widely circulated by San Antonio
business executive, Ken Wolf, May 2005

Introduction

THE ALREADY CONTENTIOUS POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE 2005 SAN Antonio mayoral race was heightened when a private memo authored by a local business executive became public. The media were quick to report that many in the city found the sentiment in the document—which was sent to thousands of voters via email—racist.[1] Interestingly this was the first time in the election cycle that television and newspaper directed their attention to the role of race. The memo made public what many had suspected: Julian Castro's candidacy made ethnicity a factor in the minds of voters,

whether or not the local media, or candidates themselves, were interested in addressing the issue. San Antonio's demographics and electoral environment are unique. In 2000, it was America's eighth largest city, where 58% of the population is Latino, and roughly 34% of registered voters are Spanish-surnamed. Unlike many other urban centers, San Antonio is not characterized by a significant proportion of immigrants or other minority groups.[2] Castro was attempting to become only the city's third Latino mayor. Phil Hardberger, the white candidate, eventually emerged the victor, winning 52% of the vote.

Urban America is characterized by its diversity. Candidates for office are increasingly reflective of the diversity found in their cities. The growing number of minority candidates for citywide offices offers an opportunity to explore how political behavior is shaped and influenced by race and ethnicity. The purpose of this research is to further examine the relationship between ethnicity and politics. Research illustrates that given the choice, voters will generally prefer co-ethnic candidates.[3] This essay looks not only at the persistence of ethnic bloc voting, but also considers which ethnic group sare more likely to support non-co-ethnics. Plainly: who is more inclined to vote for "the other" and cast a cross-over vote? We test the threat hypothesis and project that Anglo voters will be more inclined than Latinos to support a co-ethnic candidate. The 2004 San Antonio, Texas mayoral race between Phil Hardberger and Julian Castro presents unique historical, electoral, and demographic conditions to test this hypothesis. Using precinct level data from San Antonio elections, individual level data from pre-election polls, and in-depth interviews with candidates, we examine the relationship between candidate ethnicity, election context, turnout, and vote choice.

Electoral Context: *Party and Ethnicity*

Like many American cities, San Antonio mayoral and city council races are nonpartisan elections. True as this may be, their partisan leanings are certainly not a secret matter. Traditionally, San Antonio's mayoral candidates have been linked with the Republicans or Democrats and campaigns have incorporated these party ties. Based on the number of San Antonians who participate in the Democratic primary and the number of Democrats elected to represent the city in other avenues of government, it is clear that-Democrats have the electoral advantage in the city. In both the 1991 and

2005 elections, the final two candidates that emerged in the run-off were Democrats with public and formalized associations with the party. Thus, party should not function as an electoral cue to voters in either of these races.

Another important similarity in the 1991 and the 2005 elections is the fact that a Mexican American was vacating the office of mayor. The city has had only two Latinos serve as mayor in its history. Henry Cisneros had been mayor for eight years and decided against running for re-election.[4] In 2005 Ed Garza was term-limited after four years in office. These conditions have only emerged twice in the city: a Mexican American candidate sought to succeed a Mexican American mayor. In both elections, a white candidate emerged victorious.

Given the absence of party cues in these elections and the racial composition of the candidates and city, we surmise that voters relied on ethnic cues to establish their candidate preferences. There is some debate in the literature however that merits our attention as we formulate our hypotheses and put the San Antonio case into a more theoretical context.

Urban Elections and Racialized Voting

Ethnic and racial voting literature consists of three principal strands: 1) The persistence and impacts of racial and ethnic bloc voting and its complementary racial threat frameworks;[5] 2) Deracialized campaigns and multiracial/ethnic electoral coalitions;[6] and 3) Spatial voting models,which emphasize ideology and issues over race/ethnicity.[7] Central to these strands are the varying degrees of racial and ethnic bloc voting and their relative influence on voter turnout and election results.

The focus on racial/ethnic bloc voting, for example, suggests that race and ethnicity are primary determinants of vote choice in elections where a racial or ethnic minority candidate runs against a non-racial and non-ethnic candidate. Hero succinctly puts it as "a tendency (for racial and ethnic minorities) to vote 'for their own.'"[8] Kaufmann tests an empowerment hypothesis for the persistence of racial and ethnic bloc voting by demonstrating that among Denver area Latinos ethnicity was a salient and powerful voting cue.[9] All of these findings are consistent with Uhlaner's 1989 relational goods theory, which argues that certain benefits and incentives exist only for members of the in-group—in this case co-ethnics. Applied to our study then, voters perceive specific benefits and incentives from

electing a co-ethnic. Indeed, a central idea driving the creation of single-member and racially gerrymandered districts is rooted in the assumption and evidence that minority voters prefer co-ethnic candidates.[10]

Others' recent work has concentrated on city politics in Texas, Florida, and California.[11] Brischetto, for example, concludes:

> After examining the results of literally hundreds of bipartisan and non-bipartisan contests in state and local jurisdictions through-out the southwest over the past decade, one must conclude that racially polarized voting is a fact of political life which simply reflects different perceived self interests on the part of Anglo and Chicano voters.[12]

Hill et al., as another example, in their investigation of the 1996 Dade County executive mayoral election added, "Is there anyway that one can avoid the conclusion that the…election was about anything but ethnicity? In a word: no. Absolutely not."[13]

The literature diverges on the persistence of racial and ethnic bloc voting. Dahl, for example, argued that ethnic voting is a product of social status; thus, as the ethnic group increased in social status, ethnic voting would decrease.[14] Dahl also asserted that the social and economic concerns "bind" the self-consciousness of ethnic members. Wolfinger, in contrast, argued that the effects of ethnicity were not easily diminished by changes in economic characteristics and that economic mobility (into the middle class) heightens ethnic consciousness and, "by implication," ethnic bloc voting. Wolfinger also noted that education, geographic dispersion (suburbia), intermarriage, and inter-group contacts, would likely reduce ethnic consciousness and ethnic bloc political behavior.

Dahl and Wolfinger point to the size, shared class identification, and geographic location and density of the ethnic communities as contributing factors to cohesive social and political behaviors. Huckfeldt also recog-nized the weight of class and status on political behavior but argued for the recognition that ethnicity, class, and social status also interact and vary. Seemingly, at times, class and social status carry more weight; in others, race and ethnicity may prevail.[15]

One variant of this aspect of the racial bloc politics literature is the racial threat framework.[16] Giles and Evans (1986, 470), for example, conceptualize racial and ethnic groups as vehicles pursuing interests and competing over control of economic, political, and social structures. Here, the competition among ethnic

and racial groups defines behaviors. In a metropolitan area, for example, that is changing from minority to majority and vice-versa, persistent racial and ethnic bloc voting behavior may be viewed as a threat to traditional political hegemonies and result in "blacklash" against racial and ethnic candidacies.[17]

On the other side of racial and ethnic bloc voting are examinations of deracialized electoral campaigns. Here, candidates and campaign strategies "de-emphasize racially divisive issues to garner crossover support from voters of other races" and mobilize "support from voters of the candidates racial group."[18] Several Latino mayoral elections are frequently cited as examples of successful deracialization campaigns, including Pena in Denver,[19] Cisneros and Garza in San Antonio,[20] and Villariogosa in Los Angeles.[21] De la Garza, perhaps unknowingly, cited the campaign's success in El Paso, when he wrote "Anglo Americans do not support Mexican Americans candidates who identify with the Mexican American people, but they will vote for Spanish-surnamed candidates who identify with 'all El Paso,' (i.e., with the Anglo sectors)."[22] The literature on the subject generally agrees that these elements are key to a successful, non-ethnic campaign:

- Consistent, non-threatening images
- Avoiding racially divisive issues
- Aggressive grassroots mobilization efforts
- Strategic targeting of white votes
- High-profile business and political elite endorsements
- Middle age
- Moderate political ideology
- De-emphasis of ethnicity[23]

Liu adds that deracialized campaigns assist in strategic voting decisions for non-ethnic minority voters.[24]

Many studies on racial and ethnic bloc voting offer qualified assessments of race and ethnicity as cues to voting behavior. Wolfinger, for example, writes, "*In the absence of other cues*, ethnicity guides voter decisions…and ethnic voting also seems to *be less important when some greater issue dominates* political perspectives" (emphasis added).[25] Hero adds that "*in the absence of compelling reasons*—such as strong issue agreement [and] candidate image—voters generally support candidates of their own racial-ethnic background (emphasis added).[26] These conditions have become points of departure for the final strand in this literature: spatial models of voting. These models typically suggest that voters consider the issue positions,

party loyalty, and candidate evaluations and choose the candidate closest to their own issue positions, loyalty, and values.[27] This model indicates that Mexican American voters condition their vote on available information and on their evaluation of the candidate, Mexican American or not.[28] Abranjano et al. offer crossover voting among Anglo and Latino voters in the 2001 Los Angeles mayoral election as evidence of the strength of the model.[29]

Perhaps the mixed results and emphases suggest that standards for evidence of racial and ethnic bloc voting are too high. Abranjano et al. also look at crossover voting as evidence that race and ethnicity are not the principal vote cues; they actually find a greater degree of crossover voting among higher income, better educated, and more liberal white voters.[30] On the one hand, they also verify polarized voting but only predominantly among Latinos. On the other hand, the use of simple bivariate analyses may overstate the impact.[31]

Is race and ethnicity simply a surrogate for difference in interests? And is racial and ethnic bloc voting simply symptomatic of a conflict of different interests? Perhaps so. Yet, it still matters. For the courts and the 1982 amendment to Section 2 of the Voting Rights, "all that mattered was that the level of bloc voting had the effects of denying minorities an equal opportunity to elect candidates of choice."[32] If context varies and matters, then we might expect and, in fact, see varying degrees and impacts of racial and ethnic bloc voting. Vanderleeuw et al. suggest that "the fact that election campaigns are strategically deracialized may be a sign of the continued importance of race in urban elections."[33]

Dahl argues that the social and economic class concerns of ethnic group members are the "ties that bind" the self-consciousness of ethnic groups. Wolfinger, on the other hand, contends that the effects of ethnicity are not easily diminished by changes in economic characteristics. Wolfinger also notes that education, geographic dispersion (into the suburbs), intermarriage, and inter-group contacts would likely reduce ethnic consciousness and ethnic bloc political behavior. He argues, in essence, that the racial-threat is diminished with these demographic and contextual variables.

Hypotheses: Ethnically Polarized Voting

Given the persistence of racial bloc voting, the continued use of deracialzied campaigns, and the impact of other contextual variables, we test competing approaches with three specific hypotheses.

H1. In an election with a co-ethnic candidate, as the percentage of Latinos in a precinct increases, so will the vote share for the co-ethnic candidate.

H2. As the percentage of Latinos in a precinct increases, turnout should also increase.

H3. Given the option, voters will prefer the co-ethnic candidate. Whites will have a stronger preference for the co-ethnic than Latinos.

These hypotheses test the persistence of ethnic bloc voting at the neighborhood or community level and the political empowerment framework. We expect that in Latino-heavy precincts individuals will vote in a cohesive fashion and turn out in large numbers to support their co-ethnic candidate. The converse should also hold true: in neighborhoods that are predominantly white, voters will be more inclined than Latinos to support the white candidate.

There are several reasons we should expect Latinos to be more inclined to engage in crossover voting. In the first place, it is common practice for Latino voters, of any partisan position, to cast a ballot for white candidates. Crossover voting is the norm for Latinos, as they do not typically have the option of voting for a co-ethnic. The fact of the matter is that more elections than not, from national to local offices, are between several white candidates. Whites are also accustomed to ethnically homogenous ballot choices, but in this case the choices are co-ethnics. The presence of a candidate who is not of shared ethnicity is rare and threatens to weaken the group's descriptive representation and political power. Therefore, we hypothesize that Latino voters will be more likely to cast a crossover vote than white voters.

Because the mayoral election was non-partisan in nature and featured two Democratic candidates in the run-off, it is possible to sidestep the notion that the effect of ethnicity is mediated by partisanship. If ethnicity only influenced partisanship, rather than directly influencing candidate preference, there would be no difference between Latino votes for Castro and Latino votes for Hardberger.

Data and Methods[34]

We use both precinct and individual level data to proceed with our analysis of racially polarized voting. Precinct level data were obtained

from the Bexar County Elections Office for several elections to conduct our analysis. The 1991 San Antonio mayoral race between former city council Democrats Maria Berriozabal and Nelson Wolff is tested to establish a benchmark of the pattern of racially polarized voting and turnout in the city. The 2005 mayoral elections—both general and run-off—are subsequently tested in more detail for 1) the incidence and persistence of ethnically polarized voting, 2) the variation of turnout and 3) the effects of deracialized campaigns. First, at the precinct level, we explore the 1991 and 2005 election data. Here, the dependent variable is the percent of votes cast for the Latino candidate (Berriozabal in 1991 and Castro in 2005). The Bexar County Election datasets also include data that allows the measurement of percent Spanish-surnamed voters for 1991 and election results for both years. The Texas Secretary of State, Elections Division, maintains county data at the precinct level. From these data, the percent Spanish-surnamed registered and the percent voters age 65 and over by precinct in the November 2004 election are derived. We then match these data to the 2005 municipal election precincts. Data from the 2000 Census are used to create measures for the percent residents in a precinct that are Anglo, Latino and African American. The same data are used to estimate median income per precinct. The 2004 presidential election results are employed as indicators of partisanship. The precinct percentage vote cast for Kerry matched with city precincts is a proxy for party identification and strength. Collectively, these measures allow test for the effects of race, ethnicity, age, income and partisanship as control variables. Individual level data were obtained from Survey USA telephone polls that were conducted in May 2005 (3320 respondents, 4.5% margin of error) and June 2005 (4981 respondents and 4% margin of error). The June 2005 data is used in the analysis presented here for several reasons. The June sample size is larger and has more valid responses than the May dataset. The campaigns were nearing their end at the time the poll was conducted. Like many other elections, both candidates advertised heavily and directly against each other in the final weeks leading up to the run-off. In addition there was heavy, consistent radio, television, and print media attention to the election—including the Wolf Memo—as the campaign wrapped up. Obviously, any of the campaign or media effects on preferences that presented themselves after the May survey would not be reflected in those responses. For these reasons, the June sample is used in this study. The dependent variable is a dichotomous variable (0 = vote for Hardberger, 1 = vote for Castro) tested against independent variable measures for ethnicity, age, party

identification, ideology, and education. The survey data are recoded to reflect our research interests. Because our study focuses on Latino and white candidates and their co-ethnic group voter behavior, ethnicity is coded as a dichotomous variable where 0 = White, 1 = Latino. Black voters accounted for a total of only 73 valid responses and are not included in the individual level analysis presented here. Ideology and party are three point scales, 0 = liberal, 1 = moderate, 2 = conservative and 0 = Democrat, 1 = independent, 2 = Republican. Education is also constructed into a three point scale: Completed high school or less = 0, some college = 1, and completed undergraduate school and/or more = 2. Respondent age is coded into 11 groups ranging in value from 0 to 10: 0 = 18–25, 1 = 26–30, 2 = 31–35, 3 = 36–40, 4 = 41–45, 5 = 46–50, 6 = 51–55, 7 = 56–60, 8 = 61–65, 9 = 66–70, 10 = 71+. These detailed differentiations are made because age was such a big factor in this race. On election day, Castro was 30 years old and Hardberger was 70, making them the youngest and oldest candidates ever to vie for the office. Bivariate contingency tables, ordinary least squares, and logistic regression analyses are performed to test our data and hypotheses.

Analyses and Findings:
Precinct Level Analysis 1991 and 2005

In San Antonio's 1991 mayoral election, ethnic bloc voting was a dominant characteristic. Councilperson Berriozabal, a 10-year veteran on the city council, squared off against an equally experienced Anglo male counterpart from the council. Both candidates were well-known Democrats. Berriozabal represented a blue-collar, inner city district that included the downtown business district and portions of the predominantly Latino westside. Ideologically, she was left of center.[35] Candidate Wolff had four years on the council and represented a sprawling, wealthy, and largely white district reaching the northwest portion of the city. Ideologically, he was the conservative chamber of commerce candidate.[36]

In a large field of 11 candidates, with 5 of them considered viable, Berriozabal emerged with a plurality of 30.5% of the votes in the general mayoral election, surprising many political pundits. Wolff emerged from the field with 26.2% of the votes. In the run-off election, however, Berriozabal's election fortunes would turn and she would come up short 3% of the votes relative to Wolff's 51.5% majority. Examining the 1991

run-off election returns by precinct contextualizes the persistent of ethnic bloc voting in San Antonio. In election precincts with 66% Spanish-surnamed registrants or greater (n = 103), for example, 78% returned election margins of 66% or higher for Berriozabal. On the other hand, in election precincts where Spanish-surnamed registered voters were one-third or less (largely non-Latino precincts) of the registered voters in the precinct, 69.5% of the precincts returned votes for Berriozabal at one-third or less. Overall, the measure of association between precinct votes for the Latina candidate and Spanish-surnamed registration levels is strong and statistically significant (Tau-c = .78; prob = .000). The correlation between percent votes for the Latina candidate and percent Spanish-surnamed registrants at the precinct level was strong (.87). Moreover, the correlation between percent votes for the Latina candidate and voter turnout at the precinct level was moderate and negative (-.38). This correlation suggests that as turnout across the precincts increased, votes for the Latina candidate across the precincts decreased. Similarly, the correlation between voter turnout by precinct and percent Spanish-surnamed registrants is also negative and weaker (-.27). Here, as the percent Spanish-surnamed registrants in a precinct increased, the turnout across precincts declined. Table 1 reports the results of an OLS regression of the 1991 mayoral run-off election, again, using precinct level data. Percent votes for the Latina candidate is the dependent variable and percent turnout and Spanish-surnamed registrants are independent variables. Overall, 77% of the variance in the percent Berriozabal vote at the precinct level is explained in this model. Here, the influence of percent Spanish-surnamed registrants in the precincts is positive and strong (beta = .82) and percent turnout is negative and much less influential (-.16).

Others have demonstrated the presence of a Latino candidate increased turnout in Latino-heavy precincts in various cities.[37] We do not find this to be the case in San Antonio. While Berriozabal did win Latino-heavy precincts, turnout was not particularly high in these areas compared to the rest of the city. Two-thirds of Latino-heavy precincts (60% and above) had turnout rates that peaked at 26%. On the other hand, 60% of all Anglo dominant precincts had turnout rates of 32% and above. It is important to note that San Antonio has notoriously low voter turnout rates in municipal elections. In fact, this overall turnout of 30% is relatively high by this city's standards.[38]

Table 1: Regression of 1991 San Antonio Mayoral Run-off Election

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	.311	.023		13.742	.000
Percent turnout 2	-.317	.056	-.159	-5.619	.000
Percent Spanish surname 2	.594	.020	.825	29.236	.000

Dependent Variable: PctBerzbl; Adjusted R Square = .77

Similar to the 1991 mayoral run-off, the 2005 mayoral run-off race reveals a consistent and persistent ethnic bloc voting at the precinct level (tau-c = .72). Here, in precincts with a high percent of Spanish-surnamed registrants (.66 or higher; n = 142), candidate Castro won nearly nine in ten (89.4%) with 66% or higher of the precinct votes. The opposite is also true. In lower Latino-registered precincts (.33 or less), 7 in 10 of the precincts returned Castro votes at one-third or less. Examining the correlations among various measures reveals interesting associations. Here, for example, percent Castro votes in the run-off at the precinct level is strongly associated with total Spanish-surnamed registrants in the precinct (.80) but nonexistent with percent African-Americans in the precinct (.02). Income (median income in the precinct) is negatively correlated (-.55) with percent Castro votes, while percent votes cast for Democratic presidential candidate Kerry in November 2004 election at the precinct level is strong and positively associated (.70) with percent votes cast for Castro at the precinct level. Finally, the correlation between percent Castro in the run-off and percent voter turnout is moderate and negatively associated (-.30); for every increase in percent turnout at the precinct level, the percent Castro vote decreased.

Table 2 reports results from a multiple regression using percent votes cast for Castro in the run-off election at the precinct level as a dependent variable and percent registered voters 65 years of age or older, percent Spanish-surnamed, percent African American and percent voter turnout all at the precinct level. Again, percent Spanish-surnamed registrants had the most influential effect (beta = .90). Percent African Americans in the precinct is weak but positive (.25), while percent registrants 65 and older in a precinct is small and negative (beta = -.07). In this model, increasing voter turnout

in the run-off as a percent of total registered in the precinct had no impact on the percent of votes Castro received in the run-off at the precinct level.

Table 2: Regression of 2005 San Antonio Mayoral Run-off Election

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	.068	.021		3.303	.000
Percent registered age 65 plus	-.002	.001	-.072	-2.833	.005
Percent Spanish registered	.910	.025	.900	36.586	.000
Percent African Americans	.608	.059	.251	10.362	.000
Percent turnout run-off	.003	.067	.001	.052	.959

Dependent Variable: Pct Castro Run-off; Adjusted R Square=. 75

Substituting an interaction variable (DSPANSURN) for Democrat precinct (measured by percent of votes Democrat Kerry received in the November 2004) and percent Spanish-surnamed registration for only Spanish-surnamed registered in the precinct did not alter the strength of the model or change the direction or contribution of the independent variables in the model.[39] Here, the overlap between Spanish-surnamed registered voters and Democrats at the precinct are virtually indistinguishable.

Adding an interaction term for median income and percent Spanish-surnamed registered in the precinct (ISPANSURN), on the one hand, while decreasing the explanatory strength of the model (adjusted R-square = .40), the relative influences of percent African American, and percent registered voters 65 and over increased (see Table 3). In addition, percent turnout in the run-off is significant and negative (-.25). While the interaction term was still the most influential, its relative weight decreased compared to the model where percent Spanish-surnamed registration was used alone. Interestingly, however, the interaction variable for median income and percent Spanish-surnamed remained strong overall and positive. So, at precinct level, as

the median income and number of Spanish-surnamed registered voters increased, the percent Castro votes increased by .61 standard units. We interpret this to mean that the influence of ethnicity declines but is not neutralized or decreased by increased median income at the precinct level.[40] These results address the issue of class or ethnicity and its interactive effects.

Table 3: Regression of 2005 San Antonio Mayoral Run-off Election

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	.068	.021		3.03	.000
Percent registered age 65 plus	.007	.001	.245	6.291	.000
Interaction median income Spanish surname registrants	.007	.001	.245	6.291	.000
Percent African Americans	.447	.093	.185	4.817	.000
Percent turnout run-offs	-.612	.099	-.248	-6.206	.000

Dependent Variable: Pct Castro Run-off; Adjusted R Square = .40

2005: Individual Level Analysis

The 2005 election began as a three-man race between Julian Castro, Phil Hardberger, and Carroll Schubert. Castro and Hardberger moved on to the run-off, winning 42% and 30% of the vote. Schubert, a four-year council veteran and active Republican, was eliminated from the race. Winning only 26% of the total vote, he finished in third place. It is important to note, however, that a mere 17.7% of eligible voters cast ballots in the May race. Shortly after the general election, Schubert endorsed Hardberger; his business community supporters and their dollars followed. All of the Schubert supporters surveyed—exactly 100%—indicated they would turn out to vote again in the June run-off. An overwhelming 90% of Schubert voters indicated they would support Hardberger; 77% of Schubert supporters are white. Recall that turnout in this election was highest in precincts where

Latinos comprise less than one third of the population and lowest in precincts where Latinos are a majority of registered voters.

Table 4: General Election

	Castro	Hardberger	Schubert
Total	42%	30%	26%
Ethnicity			
Latino	72%	16%	9%
White	20%	44%	35%
Tau-C	.51		
Prob.	.000		

The initial May race produced the ethnically polarized outcomes we expected. Among whites, 79% cast their ballot for a co-ethnic; 35% voted Schubert; and 44% voted Hardberger. Castro won only 20% of the white vote. In the initial May race, 72% of Latinos voted for Castro; 16% voted Hardberger; and 9% Schubert. Typically run-off elections have a lower turnout than the general election. The opposite is true here. Turnout increased by 15,760 votes, an overall total of 1%, but a 14% increase of the voting population in the previous race. The increase in turnout is significant in several ways. Schubert voters, who are overwhelmingly Republican and conservative, did indeed return to the polls to support a candidate with a well established association with liberal causes and Democratic party politics.[41] Not only did the Schubert voters come back to vote, but also an additional 15,000 voters who had not participated in the election just one month before bringing the total turnout to 18.8%. All of that said, turnout in the run off was still quite low. In terms of ethnicity and turnout, over half of Latino supermajority precincts (66% above) turned out to vote at a rate of 16% or less. In two-thirds of the precincts where Latinos comprised less than 25% of the registered voters, turnout was at 17% and above. An important question to consider is where turnout increased. Turnout increased in Latino majority precincts, but they did not match the increase in white voter turnout that also occurred.

With respect to candidate preferences, the pattern again is clear: voters continue to prefer candidates who share their ethnicity. As hypothesized,

this preference is more pronounced for white voters. In the two-man race, 73% of Latino voters supported Castro, and 79% of whites supported Hardberger. What is particularly striking is the overwhelming conservative and Republican levels of support for Hardberger given his clear patterns of solidly Democrat and liberal identification.[42] Many liberal establishment voices endorsed and contributed to Hardberger; among them were high profile Democrats including former Congressman Ciro Rodriguez, union advocates Jaime Martinez and Rosa Rosales, State Senator Leticia Van de Putte and Congressman Charles Gonzalez.

Table 5: San Antonio Mayor Run-off

	Castro	Hardberger
Ethnicity		
Latino	73%	27%
White	21%	79%
Ideology		
Liberal	67%	33%
Moderate	50%	50%
Conservative	30%	70%
Party		
Democrat	68%	32%
Independent	42%	58%
Republican	20%	80%
Education		
Up to HS	62%	39%
Some College	45%	55%
BA and +	38%	62%
p = .000		

In terms of crossover votes, Latinos are more likely to engage in crossover voting than Anglos in several contexts. Latino moderates, conservatives, independents, Republicans, college attendees and graduates all have

significantly higher rates of voting for the candidate who is not of shared ethnicity. While it is true that high percentages of white liberals and white Democrats report voting for Castro, it is important to recall that their actual numbers are quite small in the local electorate. Despite Castro's efforts to avoid running an ethnic campaign, and directing focus instead on his council experience, educational credentials and ideas, voters still picked up on ethnic cues.

Table 6: 2005 Run-off Crossover Votes

	White Crossover Votes	Latino Crossover Votes
Total	21%	27%
Ideology		
Liberal	49%	22%
Moderate	24%	26%
Conservative	11%	34%
Party		
Democrat	44%	21%
Independent	23%	29%
Republican	10%	46%
Education		
HS	26%	19%
Some College	20%	31%
College Grad/+	20%	30%
p = .000		

Two final tables illustrate the degree to which ethnicity predicted candidate choice in the 2005 race. We include partisanship, ideology, age, and education as control variables. The outcomes are significant, consistent, and clear. This model improves the baseline 55% cases correctly predicted to 76% of cases correctly predicted. Latino ethnicity is a positive and significant predictor of a vote for Castro. Those who identify as conservative and Republican are significantly less likely to support Castro. Older voters and more educated voters also preferred Hardberger, but not significantly in this model. This is a noteworthy outcome given the attention to candidate age in this race.

Table 7: Logit Estimates: Probability of Castro Support

All Voters		
Variable	B.	S.E.
Constant	0.2	0.21
Latino	1.89**	0.16
Conservative	-.34**	0.10
Republican	-0.64**	0.12
Education	-.16	0.10
Age	-0.02	0.03
Baseline	56.4%	
% Correctly Predicted	76.4%	
N.	1800	

To further test the extent to which ethnicity is driving vote choice, we bifurcate the logit model by ethnic group. Table 8 presents very interesting findings. Among white voters, Republicans, conservatives, and older voters are all more likely to cast a vote for Hardberger. However, the model's overall prediction hardly improves from 79.4% to 79.7%. This tells us that while those variables are significant, race is driving voter preferences, so much so that 79% of the white votes were predicted along this variable alone. Among Latino voters, only Republican partisanship is negatively and significantly associated with lesser support of Castro. Again, age was a non-issue among these voters. Yet again we find that ethnicity alone correctly predicted 73% of the cases, our contextual variables only improved prediction by .4%.

Table 8: Logit Estimates: Probability of Castro Support

	White Voters		Latino Voters	
Variable	B.	S.E.	B.	S.E.
Constant	1.4**	.43	1.33**	30
Conservative	-.49**	.18	-0.20	.17
Republican	-.76**	.15	-0.49**	.13
Education	-.22	.15	-0.16	.13
Age	-.14	.04	.08	.04
Baseline	79.4%		73%	
% Correctly Predicted	79.7%		73.4%	
N.	611		477	

Campaign observers expected a degree of ethnic polarization at the polls. Some estimated that Castro would need about 20% of the white vote in order to win. Our data illustrate that he carried 21% of the white vote and 73% of the Latino vote. Turnout in white precincts was significantly higher than in Latino precincts, thus Hardberger wins.

Conclusions

Our findings present strong evidence that racial cues are significant determinants of vote choice for both Anglos and Latinos. In the city of San Antonio, there is a degree of turnout mobilization present for both ethnic groups as well. We are interested in a longitudinal approach to studying the effects of ethnicity on vote choices in urban elections. To this point, the literature our paper included has focused on cross-section analysis of particular elections. To this end, we are interested in examining the electoral dynamics of several San Antonio mayoral races, in the presence and absence of minority candidates, in more detail.

It is worthwhile to contrast the findings in San Antonio with those in other cities with large Latino populations. In the cases of Los Angeles, Denver, and Miami the presence of a Latino candidate increased turnout in Latino majority precincts such that they exceeded many white majority areas. Additionally, the Latino population in these cities was far more cohesive than the white population in their support for a co-ethnic candidate. Turnout in both the 1991 and 2005 elections examined here remained quite low across groups in the city: 30% in 1991, and 18% in 2005. We also find that Latino voters were not as cohesive as white voters or Latino voters in other cities. In terms of partisan identification, ideology, and vote choices, Latinos are less cohesive than whites.

Despite significant ideological and partisan differences among white voters, they are a larger and more cohesive voting bloc than Latinos. In the elections we evaluate we find wide variance among white voters in terms of their ideology and partisanship. Yet, their votes in this race are overwhelmingly in support of the same candidate with strong ties to the Democratic party. San Antonio voters of any ethnicity have not demonstrated a strong interest in local politics regardless of the presence or absence of a minority candidate. San Antonio voters illustrate that Latino political behavior cannot be generalized from the city politics of Los Angeles, Denver, or Miami. Unique political and demographic dynamics shape local politics.

We have made the case that voter behavior in 1991 and 2005 San Antonio mayoral races is very different from that examined recently in Los Angeles, Miami, Houston, and Denver. That said, there is one consistency among these cities that merits at least an acknowledgement here: turnout in Latino precincts spiked in all of these cities, San Antonio included, when the first Latino mayoral candidate in serious contention for the seat ran for office. It could be that the sense of a drought in terms of descriptive representation pushes Latinos to the polls. Therefore, we do not observe the same enthusiasm for co-ethnic voting and turnout among Latinos after the "first one" has been elected. This simple observation is ripe for further study.

San Antonio is of particular interest for several reasons. The Latino population possesses particular demographics that mirror Latino voters in several pockets of the United States: largely Mexican American, many US born and a large presence in the population. The racial politics of San Antonio and Texas are also of importance to those examining cities directly affected by the Voting Rights Act. Our findings indicate that racially polarized voting is not only significant and but also a steady pattern in one of America's largest Latino cities.

Appendix A: 2005

SA Voter Profile	Latino	Anglo
Ideology		
Liberal	20%	12%
Moderate	49%	43%
Conservative	31%	45%
Party		
Democrat	58%	24%
Independent	18%	24%
Republican	24%	52%
Education		
Up to HS	43%	23%
Some College	30%	30%
BA and +	28%	48%

Endnotes

1. Rebecca Rodriguez. 2005b. "Politics Did Make Strange Bedfellows." *San Antonio Express-News,* June 9.

2. United States Bureau of the Census. 2003. *American Community Survey: Counties with the United States, Percent of People Who are Foreign Born.* (www.factfinder.census.gov). San Antonio's population is only 14% foreign born compared to 27% in Houston, 40% in Los Angelesand 58% in Miami.

3. Matt Barreto, Mario Villarreal, and Nathan Woods. 2005. "Metropolitan Latino Political Behavior: Voter Turnout and Candidate Preference in Los Angeles," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 27: 71–91; Karen Kaufmann. 2003. "Black and Latino Voters in Denver: Responses to Each Other's Political Leadership," *Political Science Quarterly* 118: 107–126; Rodney E. Hero. 1992. *Latinos and the U.S. Political System—Two-Tiered Pluralism* Temple University Press; Rudolph De la Garza. 1974. "Voting Patterns in "Bi-Cultural El Paso": A Contextual Analysis of Mexican American Voting Behavior," In *La Causa Politica: A Chicano Reader*, edited by F. Chris Garcia, University of Notre Dame Press. Notre Dame, Indiana.

4. In 1990 the city's voters adopted the strictest term limits in municipal government among America's larger cities. The mayor and city council members could serve a maximum of four years over two, two-year terms. These term limits for the mayor and council were extended in 2008 to four, two-year terms.

5. Roberto R. Brischetto. 1988. "The Political Empowerment of Texas Mexicans 1974–1988," Southwest Voter Research Institute; De la Garza. 1974; Robert Huckfeldt. 1986. *Politics in Context: Assimilation and Conflict in Urban Affairs.* New York: Agathon Press, Inc.; Raymond E. Wolfinger. 1965. "The Development and Persistence of Ethnic Voting," *American Political Science Review* 59: 896–908; Barreto, et al. 2005; Michael W. Giles and Kaenan Hertz. 1994. "Racial Threat and Partisan Identification," *American Political Science Review* 88: 317–326; Michael W. Giles and Arthur Evans. 1986. "The Power Approach to Intergroup Hostility," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 30: 469–486.

6. Sharon D. Wright Austin and Richard T. Middleton, IV. 2004. "The Limitations of the Deracialization Concept in the 2001 Los Angeles Mayoral Election," *Political Research* 57: 283–293; Raphael J. Sonenshein and Susan H. Pickus. 2005. "Latino Incorporation Reaches the Urban Summit: How Antonio Villaraigosa Won the 2005 Los Angeles Mayor's Race," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 38: 713–721; Raphael J. Sonenshein and Susan H. Pickus. 2002. "The Dynamics of Latino Incorporation: The 2001 Los Angeles Mayoral Election

as Seen in *Los Angeles Times* Polls," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35: 67–74; Daron R. Shaw. 1997. "Estimating Racially Polarized Voting: A View From the States," *Political Research Quarterly* 50: 49–70.

7. Marisa A. Abrajano, Jonathan Nagler, and R. Michael Alvarez. 2005. "A Natural Experiment of Race-Based and Issue Voting: The 2001 City of Los Angeles Elections," *Political Research Quarterly* 58: 203–218; James Vanderleeuw, Baodong Liu, and Gregory Marsh. 2004. "Applying Black Threat Theory, Urban Regime Theory, and Deracialization: the Memphis Mayoral Elections of 1991, 1995, and 1999,"*Journal of Urban Affairs* 26: 505–519; Kevin A. Hill, Dario V. Moreno, and Lourdes Cue, 2001. "Racial and Partisan Voting in a Tri-Ethnic City: The 1996 Dade County Mayoral Election," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23: 291–307; S. Graves and J. Lee, 2000. "Ethnic Underpinnings of Voter Preference: Latinos and the 1996 Senate Elections in Texas," *Social Science Quarterly* 87: 227-36; Baodong Liu, 2005. "Whites as a Minority and the New Biracial Coalition in New Orleans and Memphis,"*PS: Political Science and Politics* 39: 69–76. Others include status Robert Dahl, 1965. *Who Governs?* Yale University Press; Hill et al., 2001, agree with a spatial model approach but argue that it is not issue positions but ethnicity or partisanship.

8. Hero. 1992, 123.

9. Kaufman. 2003.

10. David Lublin. 1997. *The Paradox of Representation: Racial Gerrymandering and Minority Interests in Congress.* Princeton: Princeton University Press; Bernard Grofman. 1991. "Multivariate Methods and the Analysis of Racially Polarized Voting: Pitfalls in the Use of Social Science by the Courts," *Social Science Quarterly* 72: 826–833.

11. Barreto et al. 2005; Sonenshein and Pickus. 2005 and 2002; Hill et al., 2001; Huckfeldt. 1986; De la Garza. 1974; Brischetto. 1988.

12. Brischetto. 1986, 11.

13. Hill et al. 2001, 306.

14. Dahl. 1961, 34–36.

15. Huckfeldt. 1986, 83; In Kurt Schlichting, Peter Tuckel, and Richard Maisel. 1998. "Racial Segregation and Voter Turnout in Urban America," *American Politics Quarterly* 26: 218–236, the suggestion is made that interactive effects between economic status and neighborhood or community density influence turnout. So high ethnic or racial density communities or neighborhoods by themselves do not lead to higher turnout rates.

16. Giles and Hertz. 1994; Giles and Evans. 1986, 470.

17. Giles and Hertz. 1994, 317; Shaw. 1997.

18. Austin et al. 2004, 283; Joseph McCormick II and Charles E. Jones. 1993. "The Conceptualization of Deracialization," In *Dilemmas of Black Politics: Issues of Leadership and Strategy*, edited by Georgia A. Persons, New York: Harper-Collins College Publishers; Vanderleeuw et al. 2004; Deracialize campaigns stand in contrast to traditional insurgent campaign strategies primarily appealed to a particularly racial or ethnic group. Here, African-American candidates, for example, might promise to reform the city government structure to provide economic opportunities for African-Americans and other minority groups (Austin et al. 2004, 284) Cleveland's Carl Stokes, Gary Indiana's Richard Hatcher; Atlanta's Maynard Jackson are examples.

19. Hero. 1992.

20. Austin. 2004.

21. Sonenshein and Pickus. 2002 and 2005.

22. De La Garza. 1974, 261.

23. Hero. 1992, 118; Austin et al. 2004; McCormick et al., 1993, 76.

24. Favoring the racial candidate is more effective than is voting for a white candidate who has little chanceof being elected (Liu 2005).

25. Wolfinger. 1965, 908.

26. Hero. 1992, 118; Barreto et al. write "*given the right set of circumstances*, Latinos are more likely to turnout, to turnout at rates higher than those of non-Latinos, and to support co-ethnic candidates" (2005, emphasis added); Brischetto writes it "simply reflects *different perceived self interests* on the part of Anglo and *Chicano voters*"(1988, emphasis added).

27. Abranjano et al. 2005; Bruce E. Cain and D. Roderick Kiewiet. 1984. "Ethnicity and Electoral Choice: Mexican American Voting Behavior in the California 30th Congressional District," *Social Science Quarterly* 65: 315–327.

28. Huckfeldt. 1986.

29. Abranjano, et al. 2005, 208, 212.

30. Ibid.

31. Hill et al. 2001.

32. Grofman. 1991, 828.

33. Vanderleeuwet al. 2004, 515.

34. Ecological issues because the unit of analysis is the precinct, these findings must be interpreted at the precinct level not the individual voter. We do not attempt to correct this shortcoming with methods developed others like King (1997).

35. Rosales. 2000.

36. Wolff. 1997.

37. Hero. 1992; Barreto et al. 2005; Hill et al. 2001.

38. Rosales. 2000; Wolff. 1997.
39. Not included in this paper but available by request.
40. Using an interactive term for median income and percent of registered voters who are non-Spanish surnamed (INONSPANSURN) only modestly changed the strength of the model relative to the interactive term for income and percent Spanish-surnamed registrants. In this model, INONSPANSURN had a negative and the greatest influence; only percent 65 and older was also significant.
41. Rodriguez. 2005a.
42. Rodriguez. 2005b.

Conclusion:

Latino Urban Agency in the 21st Century

THE FOCUS OF THIS VOLUME HAS BEEN ON CITIES WHERE LATINOS HAVE, throughout the twentieth century, busied themselves in establishing their cultural, social, economic, and political roots. Indeed, Latinos have, especially after WWII, engaged in politics in their respective urban spaces, struggling to shape those spaces to their needs. Continuing into the twenty-first century, this process is now occurring in innumerable smaller urban areas as the Latino diaspora spreads across the United States.

This particularly local and provincial process made these communities both invisible and diverse. Ironically, because of their different historical legacy, as opposed to European immigrants, Latinos have remained insulated and invisible to mainstream America, which continues to see Latinos as migrant workers or simply as immigrants.[1] The diversity springs from the varied and diverse circumstances they found themselves in from East Los Angeles to the Mission District in San Francisco, to Chicago, to Miami, to the West side of San Antonio and many other urban realities. Added to these multiple circumstances, the multiple national origins that make up the Latino community creates one of the most diverse and yet identifiable communities in America. Moreover, it has been difficult to generalize about Latino politics because Latinos, as pointed out above, may arguably be the most heterogeneous, or diverse, of all other cognizable ethnic or racial groups in the United States. Today, Latinos come from about two dozen different nations, each of which has its own history, economy, and social

and political systems. Each group has had different patterns of migration and encountered different experiences in the United States. Furthermore, national origins and generations are major lines of diversity among the Latino community. As the global economy engulfs the hemisphere, this diaspora of Latinos across North America has not only continued but intensified in its diversity.

While there is considerable disagreement as to whether there is a single Latino "community" in the United States, the reality of a Latino community is constantly validated as the government, the economic sector, and the media continue to refer to and take action with regard to a group called Latino or Hispanic. Also contributing to the unity of these groups are the combined efforts and activities in politics, as well as generally increasing levels of interaction among them and a heightened awareness of each other. Stated one way, it seems that politics is shaping the contours of what one identifies as Latino.

However, this volume began with the premise that one cannot begin to understand Latino politics without going to its urban roots. The aim of this book, then, has been to explain the multiple and overlapping forms of Latino urban agency in five major cities in the United States: Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Miami, and San Antonio. Stated another way, the essays in this volume explore the struggle of Latinos to overcome barriers to full participation and political incorporation. Indeed, through this discussion of struggle, we can see how the Latino community has had to improvise in order to gain inclusion. While not all of the case studies have a happy ending, they tell a story of process, a process that ultimately goes beyond this volume.

Our goal in this anthology is to begin the first steps towards a more systematic approach to understanding what we consider the roots of Latino community in the current state of the global economy. Utilizing the various manifestations of urban agency, the volume focuses on the political activities that have occurred in the local communities where the most significant numbers of Latinos reside; this is where much of the action has taken place and will continue to do so. Certainly this can be seen in the large metropolitan areas, which have large populations of Latinos. As Latinos increasingly disperse throughout the United States in significant numbers, more political activity will occur at the local level as Latinos press for increased representation and responsiveness to their policy needs. Latinos will be even more involved as influential players in the debates over these policies, and their inclusion will mean that the

policies that do emerge will be more representative of the population of this country.

It would be difficult for Latinos to change the American political system (the basis of most xenophobic fears), including its entire apparatus—its philosophies, its institutions, its operating principles, its organizations, and its processes—and there is little evidence that this is desired by Latinos. Indeed, there is also little evidence that radical changes of any sort will occur in US politics simply due to the increase in participation by Latinos, women, or any other group. Moreover, the incorporation of people who are often distinctive in their appearance (and perhaps also in various aspects of their behavior) could lay the basis for an open system, making it more accessible to a wider spectrum of citizens of the United States. Regardless of outcome, we are witnessing a more culturally inclusive process where different cultural groups, as well as a greater range of other demographic characteristics, such as gender, economic class, and occupation are having an impact on the system. As this process becomes more evident, the public agenda will reflect additional policy issues related to Latino culture and to immigration from Latin America. The most significant question that this volume does not, could not, address but is of profound significance is that of class. If class, as Rodolfo Rosales points in his study of San Antonio, is the door to political inclusion, will it limit the potential of Latino urban agency as defined in this volume? [2]

What we have suggested is that Latino influence can best be measured at the local level through what we call Latino urban agency; that is, the power of community to develop and achieve creative goals, including social and political change, within their social environment. We begin our examination with Ralph Armbruster-Sandoval's study of Latinos in Los Angeles. Armbruster-Sandoval examines the past history of the multi-racial coalitions of the Left, a tradition that continues in the 1990s and beyond. He suggests that Latino agency can manifest itself in four different forms: community leadership; a grassroots movement manifesting itself in cultural production; the intersection of labor organizing with Latino politics; and building coalitions with members of other racial and ethnic groups.

Richard DeLeon's "The Rebirth of Latino Urban Agency in San Francisco," Chapter Three, examined the Latinos of Mission District in San Francisco. In the Mission District the Latino community finds itself not as an isolated community but as a community immersed in reality with other communities who find themselves facing the same destruction of community by "progress." As DeLeon has pointed out in his book, *Left Coast City*,[3] San

Francisco in general, including the Mission District has been a story of communities that have successfully put development under siege. The story of the Mission District is a more detailed analysis of this conflict between development and community. While not ignoring or omitting the Latino community from his analysis, DeLeon has placed the Latino community's politics in the broader context of geography and urban history. His story is of the most successful process of political incorporation of the Latino community into the larger urban picture.

Melissa R. Michelson's "The Fight for School Equity in Chicago's Latino Neighborhoods," Chapter Four, examines Latino urban agency through leadership and in the electoral context, specifically redistricting. She finds that Latino urban agency in Chicago hinges on the ability of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans to answer the ethnic cue mentioned in Manzano and Vega's chapter by looking to certain leaders for guidance and mobilizing for inclusion through redistricting and supporting specific candidates. Because of Chicago's industrial base it has been a major "port of entry" for Mexican immigrants throughout the twentieth century. Hence, it seems culture is carried directly from the small towns in Mexico to Chicago's neighborhoods while in San Antonio; there is more of an integration of cultures, Tejano and Mexicano. Thus, culture drives the politics in a much more profound manner in Chicago than in San Antonio, resulting in increased importance of ethnic cues in Chicago.

Montforti, Flores, and Moreno's chapter on "Manny Diaz and the Rise and Fall of the Miami Renaissance," discusses Mayor Diaz's leadership and his ability to craft a political machine made up of minority developers to change the face of Miami's urban landscape. Similar to DeLeon's chapter, we see how Latino people construct their "political agency" in the process of engaging a city in the midst of change.

In "I Don't See Color, I Just Vote for the Best Candidate," Manzano and Vega examine the way in which Latinos and whites negotiated political power in the electoral arena. The authors argue that ethnic group identity is salient in the electoral process. Manzano and Vega's particular argument is that electoral contexts, specifically campaign mobilization, are the trigger for calling forth ethnic group identity. They conclude that Latino candidates, despite living in an urban city where minority presence does not directly translate into political empowerment of the group, face barriers with ethnic groups who display dissimilar backgrounds from them. An ethnic electoral cue is a necessary but not sufficient condition for an application of an ethnic group identity to a political choice. An underlying

dynamic in their study is that ethnic bloc voting seems to work against the Latino community in San Antonio because of their dominance in numbers and concomitant lack of political and economic resources.

In this anthology we have suggested that Latino political influence can best be measured in urban cities (i.e. in cities where Latinos have mobilized to gain political incorporation in different ways). As each of the case studies suggest, regardless of the urban regime, Latino urban agency manifests itself in many forms; that is, through leadership, grassroots (collective) organizing, through coalition building, legal challenges, networks, lobbying, appointments, and in mobilizing the electorate. Further, with the demographic changes that are occurring in dramatic fashion and a presidential election where Latinos are playing an important role, a national presence is inevitable. The question then is in what form national political presence will manifest itself. It is a major premise in this anthology that the roots of the emerging presence are to be found in the urban areas.

The objective, then, in this volume has been to show how Latinos have mobilized to gain political incorporation in their respective communities. One of the major outcomes has been that the diversity of political and cultural experiences found in the contributions to this volume would seem to undermine any clear path to a national political agenda (i.e., a Latino Agenda). While there are some similarities to the experiences of the European immigrant groups in the nineteenth century, the major differences are the pervasive role of race and the profound proximity of Mexico and the rest of Latin America. Perhaps, Samuel Huntington in a perverse sense is correct about the "Mexican Problem."[4] While assimilation and acculturation certainly has occurred and is occurring, today, it is a two way street.

First, there is the common language tie of most Latino communities that is indeed impacting schools and their curriculums and as Michelson shows, is impacting politics. Second, there is the collective behavior born out of the indigenous cultures that however much subjugated have provided a cultural base in the experience of most Latinas and Latinos. Certainly this is borne out in the various studies presented here. While, the historical status of Latinos, in particular Mexicans in the Southwest, as incorporated citizens of a territory taken in the war with Mexico, has complicated the definition of Latinos in general, in the twenty-first century, this historical factor is lost on most. Indeed, even the concept of immigrant is blurred as Latino communities continue to grow in the urban areas and as they continue to gain political incorporation.

In conclusion, what we have found in the various essays in this volume is that the national political status of the Latino community, which seems inevitable today, will certainly be defined in ways that are different from most other groups that have gained a national presence, including the African American community and the various ethnic groups in this nation's political history. These essays provide a window to the incredible change occurring on the ground. What does this say about Latino politics? What can we project about Latinos in American politics? At worst, it forebodes a hopelessly fragmented political base, unmanageable in political terms. At best, it represents the best of the American ideal of diversity and democracy. This view would follow the Alexis de Tocqueville view that democracy works best through associational activity at the local level.[5] What we do know is the diversity found on the ground combined with some lasting common characteristics, historical, cultural, and linguistic, complicates any effort to predict the future of Latino politics.

What we set out to do, however, and feel we have successfully done, is analyze the roots of the Latino political presence (agency) in the United States. To that objective we invited and received five diverse, but excellent pictures of that agency in five major US cities. This by no means captures the very complex and tumultuous entry of Latinos into US politics, but the different contributions do present excellent analyses of how the various Latino communities have mobilized and impacted their political environment. How will this translate into a national politics for the Latino community? Some questions that we can raise are what kinds of issues will serve as mobilizing issues for the Latino community? Will it be immigration? Will it be education? Or will this translate via the social issues confronting the various Latino communities into a broader agenda reflecting other groups in society with a common concern for a social agenda, (e.g., the African American community, the various white, working-class communities, the very diverse Asian communities, etc). Certainly social issues will be paramount in mobilizing the various communities.

Finally, given the election of the first African American President of the United States, the economic conditions that the United States is currently facing, and the social conditions that it will most certainly leave in its wake, the social agenda that will most certainly emerge from this process may be the historical juncture where a broader politics brings together the various ethnic, racial, and working class communities in changing the old political equation in electoral politics of white, then black, and sometimes "other." But while there is an emerging successful Latino Middle Class intensely

involved in its own individualistic success, a social agenda will most certainly emerge as the various Latino urban communities continue to struggle for incorporation which is based on social issues. What we can project is that because of the profound roots of Latino politics in community, and to the dismay of many xenophobes, Latino politics is changing and will change the political expectations that we have of government from the local to the state to the national. There is an old joke that if you put ten Latinos in a room you will come out with ten organizations. The hidden truth in that joke is that the collective approach by Latinos that is implied by political incorporation is that Latinos will certainly play a major role in the twenty-first century global environment in addressing the disastrous impact that global forces have had on all communities.

Endnotes

1. Indeed, the invisibility goes back to the 1960s when Octavio Romano V, among other pioneering Chicano intellectuals, challenged the Social Science treatment of Chicanos in the following manner: "Suppose that you are a traveler from outer space. You land on Earth. Everything has been devastated by a final war. You wander about…(and) you find a trap door leading into the ground…(where) you find an underground library. Curious, you pull a book down from the shelf. The book you select is about Mexican-Americans, written by a social scientist. You begin to read. Interesting. Strange. Intrigued, you read more about Mexican-Americans, more books by social scientists. By the time you finish reading these books you have come to two conclusions: Earthlings used social science to 'explain' history, and Mexican-Americans had virtually no history to speak of, trapped as they were in their isolated Traditional Culture, an ahistorical process to begin with." The original quote comes from Romano's article "The Anthropology and Sociology of the Mexican-Americans: The Distortion of Mexican-American History." Written in 1968 in *El Grito: A Journal of Mexican American Thought*, and quoted by Salomon R. Baldenegro in "Scholar Gave Chicano Movement Intellectual Footing,"*Tucson Citizen,* March 18, 2005. Romano goes on to challenge the narrow definition of who a Chicana/Chicano is by arguing that Chicanos were more than migrant workers.
2. Rodolfo Rosales. 2000. *Illusion of Inclusion*. Austin, Texas: UT Press.
3. Richard DeLeon. 1992. *Left Coast City*. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas.

4. Samuel Huntington. 2004. "The Hispanic Challenge," *Foreign Policy* (March/April): 30–45.
5. James Schleifer. 1980. *The Making of Tocqueville's Democracy in America.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

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