Latinos and the California GOP: A Troubled Courtship

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LATINOS AND THE CALIFORNIA GOP: A TROUBLED COURTSHIP

SUBMITTED TO

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Introduction

At a conference of Republican leaders this year, Steve Munisteri discussed his chairmanship of the Texas GOP. Asking the audience whether anyone thought the Texas Latino population exceeded 10 percent, a few hands went up. Each dropped as he continued; 20, 30, 40 percent. As he revealed that the Hispanic share of Texan population was rapidly approaching 50 percent, his point was made.¹ Heading the strongest state Republican Party with the best record on winning Latino votes—Munisteri has cause for worry, and the lack of basic demographic and other information on the Latino population among Republicans leaders adds to it. If a minority population in a state as red as Texas prompts panic and a game-plan for the future, then Republicans in states like California, Arizona, and New Mexico should already be implementing a plan.

Republicans have displayed a glaring lack of knowledge on the topic of Latinos—as immigrants, Americans, and voters. With the inundation of reports and articles on the Latino population explosion, issues with demographic information pale in comparison to the dearth of sound political advice about approaching Latinos. From the Romney-minted phrase “self-deport” to the indignant attitude that as a naturally conservative and religious group, Latinos should identify with the GOP, individual Republicans seem to be stumbling on unfamiliar ground. But on a party level, there seems to be less will to even try. This has manifested in the habit of local parties to strategically ignore Hispanic neighborhoods with low turnout and Democratic tendencies and in states like California, to ignore entire urban Latino districts in favor of following the white party base’s migration to the exurbs.

Numbers to Chill a Red Heart

Over the next 17 years, the Hispanic electorate will double nationally. About 40 percent of the growth of the entire electorate will be driven by this group while the white population will drive about 23 percent of the growth. Of course, Latino-Americans do not vote at nearly the rates of white Americans. In 2012 nationally, 12.5 million Latinos voted and another 11.2 million were eligible but did not cast their votes. Most of the ineligible population—17.6 million Latinos—missed out because they were underage.²

The voting trends of this demographic group are the real cause for Republican worry. Latino voter registration with the Democratic Party has reached 70 percent nationally while that for Republicans has lingered at 22 percent. Of these registered voters, 61 percent felt that the Democratic Party had more concern for Latinos.³ National representation reflects these trends. Among congressional districts the average share of the Hispanic population in Republican districts is 11 percent while its 23 percent among Democratic districts. Just 40 of the 232 Republicans in the House come from districts that are more than 20 percent Hispanic, and just 16 from districts that are at least one-third Hispanic.⁴

At this crucial moment in an era of weakened political parties, the strongest messages and electoral victories for the Republican Party have been powered outside the

party itself. The Tea Party movement propelled several members into office without the blessing of the grand old establishment. Its associated members continue to keep the party on its toes, while governors with an independent streak take the spotlight as major Republican power figures and consistently outpoll national Republicans among their state’s Latinos. Rightfully, the RNC’s self-diagnostic 2013 Growth and Opportunity Project report acknowledged these state figures as a means of rehabilitating the party. Attached to the document came an announcement of a $10 million project to reach out to minorities nationwide—a small budget for a big task, but a move in the right direction. Refocusing on states and the party relationship with minorities will take more than money—it will take an understanding of the problems (which vary widely even within minority groups) and a willingness to change rhetoric, tactics, and perhaps even policy positions to draw out the minority groups so supportive of the Democratic Party. Nowhere is this task more daunting than in California—a majority-minority blue state with a dwindling white population touting a rough history with Latinos and an increasingly conservative state Republican Party.

**Purpose**

The Latino vote is by no means a lost cause for Republicans. A multitude of evidence from pollsters, politicians, and academics supports this idea. As one Latino academic put it, “If Republicans continue to present a welcoming image, develop a broader package of issues relevant to the Latino community, and then deliver on campaign promises, Republican could foreseeably attract more than 50 percent of Latino
According to De la Garza, the impediments to such a success are issues easily tractable by focusing on particular issues, making an effort to mobilize Latinos, and learning more about the Hispanic community.

The purpose of my research and of this thesis is to explore the relationship between Latino voters in California and the Republican Party and to draw conclusions about the most viable and proven means of attracting Latino votes to Republican candidates. To do this, I have collected an extensive array of news articles, papers, interviews, and books by political commentators, political consultants, and academics in economics, history, political science, and psychology. I rely most, where possible, on these last sources in an effort to consider only robust work. Much of the research (particularly in chapters two and three) is on Latinos as voters generally while some focuses specifically on California Latinos. Some of the research and certainly some of my conclusions are generalizable to Latino American voters in any state. The reason for my focus on California lies in its long, troubled, and unique relationship with Latinos, where the Republican Party has and for the foreseeable future will have significant problems winning minority support.

My research supports several claims, which are laid out here and discussed throughout the paper. The first is that the Republican Party waits now at a crucial moment of opportunity for failure or survival in California. The next is that there are multiples issues with which the GOP can make inroads with Hispanic communities. The

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research available leads me to conclude that it matters less what Republicans might say about these issues, and more how and where (and even in what language) they say it.

**Roadmap**

The first chapter reveals the critical nature of the present moment for California politicians to make adjustments for the sake of their party’s survival. The party has faded much in the same way historians describe the fading of California’s Golden Age. The chapter provides a history of the Republican Party in California—from its progressive roots to its most recent and sensational governor. I argue that as the California GOP becomes more conservative, it loses not just Hispanics but Independents. Due to some demographic changes in the geography, conservatives have managed to maintain a strong influence on the ballot initiative process and statewide races. A gap between the electorate and the population allows these victories to continue as low-propensity voters grow exponentially. Conversely, losses in the legislature more reflective of the population are certainly harmful, but not irreversible. The grand old ways are clearly failing in California. The state’s Republicans must develop a strategy which can afford them success with Latino voters. In order to do this, California GOP must strive to become a more informed party. The first chapter sets up the rest of the thesis for the exploration of the kind of information necessary to a correctly informed and nuanced approach to winning Latino votes.

The second chapter reveals that among the issues most important to Hispanics, there is no clear alignment with either the Republican or Democratic platforms. Nor is there clear unity within the diverse Hispanic community on many of these issues. I discuss the dynamic relationship between Latino ethnicity and party identification with
emphasis on racialization and religious concerns. My research reveals several nuances to the Latino vote crucial to crafting effective messaging including low levels of political information, differences among Latinos of various countries of origin, and a distinct Latino elite/voter divide. I then begin a discussion on policy issues, examining polling and research on Latino opinions on several key issues in U.S. politics. The purpose of the chapter is to highlight key characteristics of Latino voters and issues which provide the means of connecting with the Hispanic community through messaging.

Speaking to Latinos about policies is important, but ultimately, as I discuss in chapter three, Latinos are not issue voters. The chapter focuses on academic studies, sprinkled with illustrative anecdotes, pointing to the factors which change hearts and turn out votes. The first among these is shared ethnic identity which produces staggering rates of crossover voting among Latinos. I move on to discuss other important candidate traits including Spanish language ability and perceptions of likeability, concluding that symbolism in the campaign has important implications for Latino voters. The importance of all of these traits is heightened by the rise of candidate-centered elections. Finally the ways in which Republicans reach out to mobilize voters can significantly impact how Latinos vote. More resources must be directed towards “Get Out The Vote” efforts tailored to the Latino community.

Finally, chapter four turns to a case study of the Texas GOP in which I examine the application of the lessons gleaned from chapters two and three and also discuss the institutional differences between the two states which help explain large differences in the Hispanic voting patterns of each state. Latino-friendly policies and rhetoric, coupled with a strong state Republican Party which focuses on priming a pro-Latino image make
for a much more amicable and appealing political environment for the Tejano voter.

Lessons for the Republican Party of California include a revision of immigration policy, friendlier rhetoric towards Latinos and surrounding the immigration issue, and development of mobilization efforts currently beginning among Hispanic Republican Texans.

**Definitions**

Throughout my thesis I use the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” interchangeably. The former is a Census-constructed term which refers to a person who traces their heritage to a Spanish-speaking country. “Latino” evolved as a rejection of the term “Hispanic” for its historical implications among individuals from Central and South America or the Caribbean whose native language derives from Latin. The term “Chicano” refers to a Latino of Mexican origin. The term “Tejano,” I use to refer to Latinos residing in Texas.

**Implications**

In an era of increasingly candidate-centered elections, individual candidates have a significant degree of freedom to shape their image and to distinguish themselves from their party line. For California Republicans, the situation offers a way to beat the demographic odds facing the party in an embrace of Latino voters through their own efforts in connecting with and appealing to this community. The rise of independent political organizations can also facilitate this process by providing the resources to make meaningful, face-to-face contact with voters. The findings presented here can guide a new kind of campaign with a chance at winning over Hispanic voters.
The focus in my thesis on California may seem oddly specific. After all, a dozen states in the U.S. face similar demographic changes on a smaller (and more easily addressable) scale in political environments naturally more amenable to Republicans. Yet there has always been something unique about California—something which causes politicians to shake their heads and their fists and historians to wax poetic. The old saying haunts all: “As California goes, so goes the nation.” Perhaps at one time, a hopeful observation, it seems a gloomy omen now. Are deficits, crumbling infrastructure, failing schools, large and impoverished minority populations, and political polarization the future of the country? For Republicans, the idea that California is a bell-weather for the nation seems even more frightening, with its dominant, liberal Democratic Party, its huge public pension system, its costly welfare institutions, and its racially conscious majority-minority population. My focus on California, is therefore a means of getting to the heart of the dilemma facing Republicans across the country where it is the most challenging. If California truly reveals the future of the country, it is here that we must contrive a revival for the Grand Old Party.
Chapter One: The Republican Party in California

Experts on California’s social and political history sum up the state’s experience as a failed experiment, a harbinger of things to come for America, a “Paradise Lost,” and the sad resting place of countless American Dreams. They point to the paradox of a California, conceived in the wild western values of self-reliance and independence, yet which was made great with the help of war industries, public works, and tidal waves of federal and state funding. Historian Kevin Starr describes the sentiment: “There has always been something slightly bipolar about California. It was either utopia or dystopia, a dream or a nightmare, a hope or a broken promise and too infrequently anything in between.” More hopeful than his colleagues, Starr goes on to conclude that now is one of those rare times of middle ground in California—where its future hangs in delicate balance between its greatness and the social, political, and economic problems which promise to engulf it.

The image of a frozen moment for California also relates the situation of its Republican Party. With a vibrant history in the state and a tenuous future, the California GOP hangs in a similar moment of pause. As California’s status as a majority-minority state continues to develop, there is an increasing need for a crucial moment of self-reflection. This chapter examines the history of the Republican Party in California, from its progressive roots to its populist victories. The case outlined in the final sections of the chapter communicates that the current divergence between electorate and population in California provides a unique opportunity for Republicans to maintain their political power as they work over their approach with the Hispanic community.

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Progressivism and the California Dream

In contrast to the dreary outlook of historians, the politicians who have helped to shape the experience of California are guilty of much more optimistic rhetoric. In their typical fashion, Governor Reagan declared that California was the place to have it all. “California, with its climate, its resources and its wealth of young, aggressive, talented people, must never take second place. We can provide jobs for all our people who will work and we can have honest government at a price we can afford.”7 The history of political parties in California could be recounted by how they have related to this idealism and to its inherent progressivism—toting, expanding, defining, and affording it.

While the Progressive tradition shaped both early twentieth century parties in California, the state was mainly a Republican one until the 1960s. The mood of the era was set by the two administrations of Governor Hiram Johnson, who ran on a platform of kicking Southern Pacific Railroad out of California politics. A Republican who eschewed political establishment, Johnson worked with liberal Progressives to bring lasting progressive reforms to California. This collaboration characterized the era, when a shared set of values lent itself to cooperation among reform-minded politicians—both liberal and conservative. In 1946, Earl Warren won the nomination of both parties for the governorship. The shared values which bound the parties together for a time seemed mostly rooted in a ubiquitous distrust of anything large and established. As Kevin Starr writes, “The California Progressives distrusted big government, big corporations, and big labor.”8 The administrations of Earl Warren, Goodwin Knight, and Pat Brown seamlessly

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8 Starr, 324.
joined in what later generations regarded as a golden age of consensus “in which Democrats and Republicans alike had held a shared membership in the Party of California.”

This was the group that initiated the initiative, the referendum, and the recall—infusing California politics with a constitutionally protected populism that both parties came to regret and neither could shake. They were conservationists. They believed in public works and the potential for greatness in California. They fought party power with open primaries and mandated non-partisanship in local elections. They redistributed the jobs of bureaucrats to a system of appointed committees on water, power, harbors, etc.—a move which Starr asserts ironically rendered Californians apathetic to the workings of their government, as “a significant portion of the business of government was done by boards and districts that were nearly anonymous.” The post-WWII Progressives reigned over a time of great growth and prosperity, where the economy could afford the infrastructure, the school systems, the “multi-versity” University of California, and the public programs which promised to make California great.

But the good times could not roll forever. Faced with the social and economic problems which accompanied the 1960s, California’s politicians walked closer to their party lines. The Republican Party fell back and regrew along its populist and anti-government line, while left-liberals took over Democratic primaries.

During Reagan’s time in office, California faced decidedly less optimistic rhetoric from its politicians, who focused on the many problems challenging California’s greatness. A recession racked the state’s economy throughout the late 60s. Tumultuous

9 Ibid., 326.
10 Ibid., 332.
student protests against the Vietnam War alarmed the public. Population growth and environmental damage extended beyond the control of the boards meant to monitor them and required state action and funding. Reagan met these problems with some failure and some success. Despite some actions which alarmed his supporters (he signed into law a substantial increase in the state income tax, while the Parks department went about a massive campaign to buy up land it could not afford to develop), Reagan fulfilled many of the promises made with the campaign’s anti-government rhetoric.\footnote{Peter Schrag, \textit{Paradise Lost} (Los Angeles: UC Press, 2004).} The most significant was an overhaul of the welfare system which reduced the number of participants, but increased the aid going to each. He also provided property tax relief, though certainly not enough considering the tax revolt which followed. Reagan’s governorship marked a shift towards partisanship in part based on agenda, and in part based on his embrace of the Republican Party. Previous governors either were concerned with weakening the parties in true progressive fashion, or enjoyed significant consensus with the opposite party—as in the case of Earl Warren, who was nominated by both. The parties were now distinct, but still bound by a common anti-government strain.

Even Reagan’s successor, Jerry Brown, positioned himself in line with the anti-government strain, running “not as the voice of growth for progress, but as the clean government anti-politician heralding the era of limits and lowered expectations.”\footnote{Ibid., 52.} By the 1970s, both parties had learned that, while populism was still alive and well, the Progressive vision of a great and equitable California with the natural surroundings, schools, cities, roads, and social programs envied the world over, was becoming obscured.
by the debt, population growth, crime, mismanagement, and pollution which
accompanied its progressive efforts. The progressivism which built California lost its
glamour as a movement forged out of noble intent and became more like virulent
populism with an anti-government agenda.

The Consequences of Democracy

One of the most important examples of bipartisan support for tax reform was
Proposition 13. The masterminds behind Proposition 13 had tried and failed on previous
occasions to pass various versions of a property tax limitation measure. Conservatives
Howard Jarvis and Paul Gann finally succeeded in 1978, at the tail end of a period of
massive inflation of real estate values in California exacerbated by assessment laws that
inflated residential property values significantly and amidst worries that people would not
be able to afford to pay the property taxes on their homes anymore. The campaign played
upon these fears, harping on the image of elderly Californian home-owners unable to pay
their property taxes.\(^{13}\) To its credit, the campaign was a truly grassroots movement,
relying on various groups including taxpayer and homeowners associations. Its
opposition, mainly funded by large banks and corporations, lacked the popular drive to
turn out voters against the measure.\(^ {14}\)

The measure, which won with two-thirds of the vote, rolled back property values
to their 1975 levels and restricted the increase in assessed value to two percent per year
until sale allowed reassessment. It also limited the property tax rate to one percent of the
value of the parcel. The measure made it almost impossible to pass new school bonds to
raise revenue for local governments. Proposition 13 immediately resulted in a nearly 60

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 142.
\(^{14}\) Ibid., 146-7.
percent decrease in the property taxes paid on the average California home. The effect fell mostly on local governments, which lost 7 billion dollars in revenue the first year.\textsuperscript{15} A 1999 study found that the real value of state per capita revenues in 1995 were 85 percent what they had been in 1978, before Prop 13 passed.\textsuperscript{16}

The most important outcome of the measure was perhaps the changed relationship between the state and local governments. Revenues steadily increased as more properties not covered by Prop 13 came on the market, but control of these funds switched from local school boards and cities to the state legislature. A law requiring a two-thirds majority of voters to pass local bond measures for new revenue rendered this source of funding almost impossible to realize. Inevitably, cities looked to other instruments to raise funds including regulatory fees and taxes, fines, penalties, and revenues from utility companies (which grew by 400 percent between 1978 and 1995).\textsuperscript{17} One alternative revenue source—the sales tax—gained significant attention as city planners gave preference to shopping centers over manufacturing and worked harder to lure companies that would bring consumers rather than jobs to the area. In the end Proposition 13 reduced the flexibility of local governments, cut their budgets, and locked local and state government in permanent conflict over revenues—the local bodies dependent on the state for revenue like never before.\textsuperscript{18}

The anti-tax mood infused a kind of energy into the California Republican Party that might be compared to the effect of the Tea Party in the 2010 elections. Scores of

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 1401.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{18} Starr, 336.
Republicans in 1978 ran as “Proposition 13 babies.” The 16 which were elected ousted the moderate Republican leader of the State Senate and set out to slash spending and taxes wherever possible. The *Lodi News-Sentinel* called the election of 1978 “a turning point” in California political history. “From that moment forward, nobody ever talked about expanding government services [but] how much would be cut from both spending and taxes.” Liberals in the Assembly even started calling themselves “grizzly bears” because they considered themselves an endangered species. Bucking the bipartisan progressive tradition from which the parties hailed, the tax revolt hailed from the anti-government commitment of an increasingly conservative California GOP. As Peter Schrag puts it: “those Propositon 13 babies [became] a new conservative GOP core in Sacramento.”

In affirmation of what the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Organization dubbed “The Boston Tea Party of California,” the tax revolt took off all over the country. Jarvis became an overnight celebrity, flying to D.C. and Europe to meet with leaders and demand their support for an agenda of tax-cutting and budget-slashing across governments. A slew of tax revolts ignited across the states and the year following Prop 13’s passage saw similar measures in seventeen states. By 1994, most states had enacted some sort of constitutional limits on local or state taxes or imposed spending limits. “It set the stage for the Reagan era and became both fact and symbol of a radical

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http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2245&dat=19950515&id=kMEzAAAAIBAJ&sjid=hDIHAAAAI BAJ&pg=6281,1975097
20. Shrag, 159.
22. Schrag, 159.
shift in governmental priorities, public attitudes, and social relationships that is as nearly fundamental in American politics as the changes brought by the New Deal.”

While the revolt faded, anti-tax populism lived on in California’s political institutions. In the tradition of anti-establishment politics, Californians decided on term limits for their state legislators in 1990 with Proposition 140—three two year terms for Assembly members and two four year terms for California Senate members. As with Proposition 13 and other trends in politics, California started a revolt against unlimited years in public office that spread across the country. The 1992 elections saw fourteen more states pass term limit measures. By the 1994 midterm elections, both the cause and rhetoric were taken up by conservatives around the nation and written into the Contract with America. Dan Greenberg observed in 1994 for the Heritage Foundation that, “The term limits movement shows signs of becoming in the 1990s what the tax revolt became in the 1970s: a popular movement which politicians ignore at their peril.”

The term limits experiment in California, though quite popular and the inspiration for similar laws, was not the savior of the legislature it was expected to be. Term limits failed to solve issues like entrenchment of interest groups and corruption among legislators, even as they created a host of new problems. A report by the Public Policy Institute of California concluded that, “new members after term limits behave a great deal like their precursors. […] Careerism remains a constant in California politics.” As the term limits took effect, the overall complexity of the policy-making process appeared to

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23 Ibid., 132.
stump the body full of relative freshmen and a serious lack of expertise took hold as senior policy-makers termed out. Legislation became less worked over and members relied more on the language of special interests. Even the Governor’s budget passed with few changes. Frequent changes in leadership and committee makeup meant a paucity of expertise in various policy areas. Some critics even claim that the result of Proposition 140 was to undo the efforts of Speaker Unruh in the 1960s to professionalize the legislature with a large and qualified professional staff and a year-round, full-time schedule which limited reliance on lobbyists for information. In 2012, term limits were extended to 12 years in service to either house—the first change to the law.

The claims that term limits would make the legislature more diverse and representative held true to some extent. The number of Hispanic legislators has increased as has the number of women, while the proportion of blacks (paralleling their population in California) has decreased. While career politicians still fill the seats of the legislature, one proponent of term limits notes that, “Ten years after term limits were put in place, no legislator elected under term limits has gone to prison.” Indeed, corruption in its fully prosecutable form seems to have declined. As to the effects on the parties, there is little evidence that term limits did more than increase hostile competition for leadership positions and attempts to punish the disloyal of the caucus (particularly on the part of Republicans). Schrag concludes that, “what began as the high drama of promised democratic reform ended as farce.”

The Republicans Lose It

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26 Schrag, 49.
28 Schrag, 245.
While term limits seemed the latest manifestation of California’s overzealous Progressive tradition, more fundamental shifts were taking effect in the early 1990s which promised to upend the political trends and traditions of the state.

The first of these shifts was an unfortunate result of the timing of the Cold War’s end. George H.W. Bush had won California in 1988 in the midst of the Cold War as billions of dollars in defense contracts poured into the state. Post-Cold War Pentagon cutbacks occurred just as California was experiencing a mild recession. The result was an economic crisis that left many without jobs and created a flight of blue collar workers from California in the 1990s. More importantly to Republicans, the old system from which they carved out victories for themselves in a majority-Democratic state, was crumbling.

Bush, Sr. was the last Republican presidential candidate to win California. The phenomenon of Democratic state legislative victories and Republican top-of-the-ticket wins slid in favor of Democrats on the presidential ballot. In part, the shift in national focus between the 1980s and 1990s from crime and taxes to social issues like abortion rights helped create a moderate public image that benefitted Democrats in California.29 Another contributor was certainly geography. In the 1980s, GOP strategists called the area swinging through the Central Valley and Inland Empire to hook up through San Diego and the OC “the fish-hook.” Large margins of victory in these areas along with a push from conservative Central Coast voters offset the liberal Bay Area in State-wide and Presidential elections. One critical component to the strategy, however, relied on LA neutralizing. Due to increasing diversity and cutbacks in aerospace jobs, the city began to

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look much more liberal (it had always been Democratic). With the former aerospace industry stronghold floundering, its conservative Democratic voters were either leaving the state, or were not as swayed in times of peace by Republican candidates.\(^\text{30}\)

While a bad economy and changing demography worked against them, California Republicans took a dubious route in firing up the electorate by choosing the issue of illegal immigration even though the Republican stance had popular support. The roots of the modern California Republican Party’s relationship with Hispanic voters could be traced back to this era in the early 1990s, when a series of propositions laid out what many Latinos regarded as a battle against their kind.

Proposition 187, the “Save Our State” initiative—was introduced in the midst of a recession and at the tail end of a surge in immigration to California. The measure required proof of residency for the children of illegal aliens to attend public school. It also denied public services to illegal immigrants. It was Governor Pete Wilson who rescued the bill from dying in the signature process by convincing the California GOP to fund its way to the ballot. Wilson’s record seemed to indicate that he was all for loose restrictions on the illegal immigrants who worked the farms of his contributors, but as polls showed strong support for the measure, Wilson welcomed the opportunity to define himself against his reelection opponent and lead a charge against President Bill Clinton in preparation for his abortive 1996 presidential campaign. In fact, Wilson made clear (at first to friends and colleagues, later to the public) that the initiative was merely meant as a message—that it would never stand in courts (as indeed it did not), and that it would never be enforced.

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 201.
Proposition 187 was merely the most inflammatory of the measures expressing sentiment against illegal aliens. A 1984 proposition instructed the governor to write the president and other officials to urge an end to laws requiring provision of voting materials in other languages. In 1986, Proposition 63 made English the “official language” of the state. The California Civil Rights Initiative of 1996 (Proposition 209) sought to end race preferential systems of admission to the UC schools. Gearing up for a presidential run, Wilson again saw a political opportunity, this time to drive a wedge between the blue collar labor and civil rights wings of the Democratic Party. Prop 209 passed handily, but without the advantage which the California GOP and Wilson believed it would bring to the election overall. For the era, 209 was the last of its kind. It may have been that the use of the issue died with the presidential campaign of Wilson, or that Republicans began to realize, as Shrag suggests, “that, at least for the long run, Wilson’s blatant style of race- and-immigration politics was a descending road to electoral oblivion.”

That oblivion manifested in a few ways. The number of immigrants in California who became citizens each year skyrocketed after the passage of Proposition 187. Though likely also affected by measures of the Clinton Administration which facilitated the process, the number more than tripled before the changes even took place in 1995 compared with 1993. Latino activists used the initiative to mobilize Latino voters all over the state and register new ones. An empirical study suggests that those California Latinos who were naturalized during the debate, passage, and immediate aftermath of Prop 187 were significantly more likely to turn out to vote than their counterparts with

31 Shrag, 238.
older citizenship. Clearly, the measure impacted the political development of Latino immigrants, particularly those who gained the right to vote at the time the issue gained ground. Less clear, is whether the measure impacted the overall balance of power among parties in California.

Conventional wisdom blames Governor Pete Wilson for what Prop 187 and its brethren did to the long term prospects of his party in California. That he won the battle for Prop 187 at the price of losing the war over Hispanic voters is nearly undisputed. However, if there was a positive effect for the Democratic Party directly tied to the measure, it seems to have worn off. In more recent years, the share of Latino voters registered as Democrats has declined from 65 percent in 2002 to 56 percent after 2006. But if the metrics are a tally of all registered voters, neither party appears to have won definitively. Democratic Party registration has not risen since 1994, while Republican Party registration has risen only slightly. The true winners are the uncommitted as their numbers grow with their political influence. But the Independents, once a group crucial to Republican victories, are no longer a reliable means of electoral victories. Republican performance among Independents in California has declined. The portion of Independents voting Republican in gubernatorial and senatorial races fell from over 50 percent in 1986 to around 30 percent in 2004.

To explain the drift of Independents, Morris P. Fiorina and Samuel J. Abrams point to the increasingly conservative nature of the California GOP, particularly on social and cultural issues. They conclude that the

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35 Douzet et al., 295-300.
36 Ibid., 206, 303.
Party, not the initiative, is to blame and that “Pete Wilson was convicted of a political crime to which he was at most a minor accessory.”  

**The California Republican**

In 2003, several crises came to a head, leading to the recall of Governor Gray Davis. Deregulation of the utilities industry, a paucity of hydroelectric power, and increased competition for power with growing cities like Las Vegas, Portland, and Seattle, led to a dramatic increase in the price of electricity. The cost exacerbated a revenue shortfall brought on by the collapse of the dot-com bubble as state revenues fell by 40 percent over the subsequent two years.  

Both parties in California had grown accustomed to large and increasing budgets, spurred by a growth economy, and “Everyone, Democrats and Republicans alike seemed happy at the pork barrel.” With a $38 billion revenue shortfall in 2003, the shock of the early 2000s upended the political trends and priorities of both parties and Californians.

The recall—in process and reality—reflected California’s anti-government mood of the moment and its populist tradition. There was general agreement that, as Peter Schrag phrases it, “the recall wasn’t just about Davis, hated as he was, but was, at bottom, a revolt against the system.” The 1911 recall provision was unique in several ways generous to the average Californian displeased with the governor. It allowed a recall based purely on unpopularity, with no need for proof of crime or malfeasance. The signature threshold was relatively low with a generous 160 days for circulation of the petition. Furthermore it called for the simultaneous election of a new governor to be

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37 Ibid., 302.
38 Starr, 339.
39 Ibid., 340.
40 Peter Schrag, *California: America’s High-Stakes Experiment* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2006), 182.
decided on the same ballot as the recall of the old. The minimal requirements to run in the recall (a form and a small filing fee) and the lack of primaries in this special election meant a colorful spread of 165 candidates entered without party endorsement.\textsuperscript{41}

These are the circumstances under which Arnold Schwarzenegger, the naturalized Austrian, bodybuilder, and movie star won the Governorship with almost 49 percent of the vote. Without a primary to nominate a truly conservative Republican, Schwarzenegger brandished his moderate agenda fearlessly, upending costly establishment practices and cutting programs and pay for entrenched interests through the legislature, ballot initiatives, and executive action. His first term met significant compromises from both Democrats and Republicans. He set about trying to bring revenues and expenditures closer in line, getting Democrats to agree to a budget without tax increases, but with $15 billion in borrowing. He set up a review of state programs and met personally with various groups of employees, convincing even the strongest unions to accept pay cuts.\textsuperscript{42}

Schwarzenegger plowed through the second half of his term on more acrimonious terms with all sides. This was the era of the “girlie men” incident and “starve the beast” rhetoric. The governor campaigned in the districts of those who opposed his agenda. Education advocates clamored for him to uphold an agreement to restore pay when revenues went up (as they had). Other groups with similar complaints were attacked as special interests.

To continue the spirit of the recall in which he was elected (and to avoid the problems of a Democratic legislature), Schwarzenegger stepped up his use of the ballot

\textsuperscript{41} Douzet et al., 217
\textsuperscript{42} Starr, 142.
initiative to enact his agenda. In an unprecedented series of moves, he used initiatives and even the threat of a ballot initiative to have his way with the state budget, various unions, and the legislature. In response, various unions and consumer groups organized under the name Alliance for a Better California, to support their own agenda of ballot initiatives. Every one of the Governor’s initiatives was ultimately rejected—from the spending cap to the proposal to take redistricting powers away from the legislature to parental notifications of abortions. The exercise in “hybrid democracy” had failed. Schwarzenegger was forced to sheepishly return to the more collaborative rhetoric of “post-partisanship” and a search for common ground.

But to some he appeared to go past middle ground. One of Schwarzenegger’s new “post-partisan” proposals called for health coverage of all the state’s uninsured persons including illegal immigrant minors. He and the Democratic legislature passed a bill to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increased the state minimum wage, and poured money into infrastructure. To add insult to his injury against his party, he named a married lesbian who had served under Davis as his chief of staff. As for his Republican colleagues, there was, as Peter Schrag put it, “mounting anger among the state’s Republicans, many of whom regarded the post-partisan Schwarzenegger as nothing but a flaming Democrat in disguise.”

Such anger might be justified over what seems to many a cruel joke in labeling Schwarzenegger a “Republican,” but the real cause for worry is that it was only by an accident of stardom, recall, and lack of primaries that this Republican was elected—the first (and for the foreseeable future only) elected since Wilson’s memorable

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43 Schrag, *California: America’s High Stakes Experiment*
44 Ibid., xii
governorship. No rising stars sit in the lineup of California Republicans. Under the political realignment of California, there are no districts or institutions from which they might rise. In a state full of growing minorities who vote Democratic and where Republicans have lost several former strongholds in the state, Republican success is increasingly limited to a few regions. Yet the realignment is not all bad news for Republicans, who may have the opportunity to emerge stronger.

The Modern Political Geography of California

An emerging East/West, Coastal/Inland divide splits California into two areas of increasing ideological homogeneity. Spurred on by white-flight from coastal urban areas, the rural eastern areas and the inland exurbs of the state have become increasingly white and conservative. Even coastal Republicans tend to moderation compared to their more socially conservative counterparts further east. These are the areas where the California GOP finds its voters, and where realignment of the San Joaquin Valley with Republican identification has helped soften the takeover by Democratic politicians, of former Republican strongholds in Southern California. The Valley, with its long line of conservative Democrats stretching back to its Depression-era Okie settlers, began to shift party identification in the 80s and 90s. The Republican orientation extends to registered Democrats in the Valley who increasingly cross party lines to vote Republican in top-of-ticket races. As Miller and Douzet put it, “Republican strength has moved East.” The trends also signify a divergence in the more white and conservative electorate from the more diverse population which turns out at lower rates. The result is a racially diverse and Democratic legislature elected by urban districts (where turnout is low) in a state

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45 Douzet et al, 65.
46 Ibid., 36.
which can vote quite conservatively on initiatives and statewide offices due to high turnout in inland areas.

The geographical realignment for the GOP is a temporary solution to the disappearance of its white, middle and upper class conservative base in a majority-minority state. Even as it tries to fight the quip that “demography is destiny,” the California GOP faces up to the reality that in their new stronghold in the San Joaquin Valley, two-thirds of population growth is driven by Latinos. For this reason, the California Republicans must be optimistic and informed about the Latino vote in their state.

A More Informed Party

Without an electoral college win since the 80s and dominated by a Democratic legislature, conservative political pundits seem to write off California. The Progressive tradition in the state which captured both parties early in the twentieth century, seemed to devolve into a sort of anti-government populism which, while popular, could not support the demands of progressive ideals. The 1990s topped off the situation with a recession, the loss of defense-related jobs, a shift in middle-class priorities, and a short-lived anti-illegal immigrant crusade to the benefit of the Democratic Party. But the strong historical presence of Republicans in the state is far from dead. Changing political geographies show a shift in Republican power to the eastern part of the state. Increasing minority populations are accompanied by low turnout among these groups creating a unique, but surely temporary divergence between the population and the electorate in California which favors Republicans in statewide races and ballot initiatives. The divergence in

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47 Ibid., 185.
electorate and population can preserve the political representation of conservative interests for a time, but eventually Latino voting will catch up. California Republicans must learn precisely what the remainder of this thesis attempts to examine—namely how Latinos think about political issues and how they respond to candidates who solicit their votes.
Chapter Two: Latino Voting Issues

Republican bickering over the Hispanic vote in the wake of the 2012 election was ubiquitous. Most pundits ascribed historic Latino attachment to the Democratic Party to the issue of illegal immigration. "They should be a natural Republican constituency: striving immigrant community, religious, Catholic, family-oriented and socially conservative (on abortion, for example)," wrote Charles Krauthammer." The principal reason they go Democratic is the issue of illegal immigrants." Following these declarations a general outcry rose among the conservative talking heads calls for reasonable immigration reform—the kind led by Senator Marco Rubio.

Other conservatives conceded that more may be at play than illegal immigration. Charles Murray countered Krauthammer’s “natural Republicans” claim by noting that Hispanics “aren't more religious than everyone else ... aren't married more than everyone else ... aren't more conservative than everyone else”—a statement supported by the most recent polls and demographic data.48 Bill O’Reilly agreed but explained away the Hispanic vote with material wealth: “…they want stuff. You are going to see a tremendous Hispanic vote for President Obama...People feel that they are entitled to things.”49

Setting aside the rhetoric and fact in these opinions, I explore the relationship between Latino voters and American political issues with the most reliable data available.

This chapter begins with overviews of the diversity of American Latinos and their

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partisanship. It then delves into important issues, as identified by Hispanics when polled and comments on the potential for Republicans to connect with the Hispanic community on these points.

**Ethnicity, Partisanship, and Ideology**

While ideology remains fairly split, around 59 percent of California Latinos identify with the Democratic Party, 18 percent with the Republican Party, and 23 percent as Independents. Compared to Gallup’s national numbers of Hispanic registered voters, Democratic Party registration is 15 points higher, Republican Party registration is 2 points higher, and independent registration is substantially lower. The generational trend in California towards younger voters identifying as Independent applies to Latino voters as well. Among Latinos who registered to vote before 1994, 15 percent registered as nonpartisan. Between 1994 and 2000, 23 percent of new Latino registrants were nonpartisan. New registrants were also less likely to register as Republicans. The trends in Hispanic registration have largely followed those of the whole state, with the exception of Republican identification which has held steady. Identification among all California voters as a Democrat has declined slightly and Independent identification has soared in the past few decades.

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53 Note that Gallup figures are initial responses. When pressed to identify a “lean Democrat/Republican” label, registered Hispanics respond 60 percent Democrat, 10 percent Independent, and 27 percent Republican. The Field Poll also uses registered voters, but does not press for labels.
The shift in partisanship by generation corresponds with documented changes in political beliefs and engagement based on distance from the immigrant generation. The rise in Independents coincides with overall low levels of trust in government and the belief that government is run by a few big interests, which increases in second and later generation Latino immigrants. On specific policy issues too, there seems to be much change between first and second and later generations of immigrants and between citizen and non-citizen Latinos. Later generations of Latinos maintain a more racialized perspective—they perceive greater amounts of unfair treatment by police and discrimination in general. They are also more likely to engage in civic activities, which makes them an important subgroup for campaigns to consider.

Religious affiliation also has a significant effect on the partisanship of California Latinos. Across religious affiliations, individuals support the Democratic Party at higher rates. About a quarter of Latinos are Evangelical Christians and 55 percent are Catholic. For those who have been in the U.S. longer, the connection between the Catholic Church and the Democratic Party becomes stronger, as does the connection between Evangelicalism and the Republican Party. But with increased time in the U.S., Latinos tend to lose their Catholic faith. The trends lead Ariane Zambiras to conclude that “a growth in Latino immigration is likely to favor Democratic registration rates, but a growth in the birth rate of Latinos who are already living in California is likely to favor allegiance to the Republican Party.” The conclusion is simplistic, to be sure, but an

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54 *Latinos in the New Millenium*, 123
55 Ibid., 151-161
56 Douzet et al, 90.
57 Ibid., 91.
58 Ibid., 92.
interesting observation regarding the interplay of immigrant generation, religion, and party identification. Religious affiliation also seems to affect perception of policy issues. Evangelical Latinos are much more likely to cite “crime,” “immigration,” and “family values” as their most important policy issue, while Catholic Latinos are more likely to list the economy and jobs. When Latinos were asked last year if religious beliefs would shape their votes, 40 percent said their beliefs would impact their vote while 53 percent said it would have no impact.

**Diversity and Political Information**

The most important quality to understand about Latino voters is that they are not (nor have they ever been in California) a voting bloc. Comparisons between the black vote and the Hispanic vote fail to appreciate the diversity in immigrant status, national origin, attachment to homeland, English-speaking abilities, ideology, and attitude toward the U.S. which simply does not exist among black voters in the U.S. As a result of these differences and more, Latinos in the U.S. maintain quite varied stances on important policy issues and their party identification is certainly neither uniform nor set in stone.

In the U.S. Latinos are more likely to be poor, less educated, and to come from single-parent and female-headed households than the average American. This holds true across Latino subgroups and shapes political priorities, however certain issues play a larger role for immigrants of particular Latin American countries. The largest group of Latino-Americans—Mexican-Americans, for example, tends to live in areas of high Latino concentration in the West and Southwest, where union and civil rights issues have

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59 Ibid., 93.
60 Matt Barreto, Latino Decisions
inspired Latino political participation.\textsuperscript{61} The next largest group, Cuban-Americans, emphasizes the importance of U.S.-Cuba relations, in favor of a hard line against the communist government.\textsuperscript{62} The third largest group is Puerto Ricans, whose numbers tend to aggregate in cities like New York and Los Angeles. This group assigns greater importance to urban issues such as crime and poverty.\textsuperscript{63} The fastest growing group of Latino immigrants is that of Central and South Americans. For these individuals—often fleeing political turmoil in their home countries—the lack of political refugee status (like that granted to Cuban immigrants) constitutes an important theme in immigration reform.\textsuperscript{64}

The examination of issue preferences in this chapter should helpfully inform campaign messaging emphasizing areas of common ground with Latinos, but it is important to understand the limits of this approach. Latinos, like many Americans are not issue voters. As I discuss in the next chapter, when choosing candidates and even parties, policy preferences do not seem to play into the decisions significantly, rendering ideology a poor predictor of party identification for Latinos.\textsuperscript{65} The issue is not surprising given Latino scores in political information which are lower than those of both black Americans and non-Hispanic white Americans.\textsuperscript{66} One study found that a quarter of Latinos incorrectly identified the Democratic Party as the more conservative of the two parties. The only subgroup able to answer a majority of political knowledge questions

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 63.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 59.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 65.
correctly consisted of Cuban-Americans.67 However, the trend in political knowledge attenuates among California Latinos. In a 2003 study, Pantoja and Segura found that naturalized California Latinos were significantly more knowledgeable than native-born California Latinos and both native-born and immigrant Texas Latinos. The scholars attribute the higher levels of political information to necessity: “Immigrants in California have been motivated by hostile circumstances to overcome this disadvantage and accumulate information for the purpose of political self-defense.”68 The history in chapter one supports this conclusion, and the figures in the introduction illuminate why demographically this politicization is so important for the future of California politics.

**The Latino Elite/Latino Voter Divide**

As a voting group with particularly low levels of political participation and information, that a class of Latino “elites” should arise, with the self-conscious burden of advocating for their less educated co-ethnics is unsurprising. However, the discrepancy between these advocates and the average Latino both in personal beliefs and understanding of the Latino condition does surprise. A 2001 survey of Latino elected officials revealed that 65 percent identify with the Democratic Party, and 5 percent identify with Republicans, compared with Latinos overall, 43 percent of whom identified with the Democratic Party in 2006 while 13 percent identified with the Republican Party. They are also significantly more educated than Latinos overall—57 percent hold a bachelors or advanced degree.69

While newspapers hail the “sleeping giant” in politics with all the fanfare of a coming revolution along with the experts officials in organizations such as the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO), La Raza, or the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF), academic researchers consistently point out that political elites have done little to mobilize Latino voters and that Latino voter registration has not kept pace with population growth.\footnote{Kenski and Tissinger}

Mobilization for this group is no easy task. Peter Skerry describes the dilemma in his book, *Mexican-Americans*:

“[The activist,] citing the typical response when he urges his neighbors to join the community organization in which he is active: ‘Why should I join your organization? Where I came from I had no toilets, no streets, and no sidewalks. Here I have a nice house and all those things. Es paraíso.’ If there is anger among Mexicans in Los Angeles, it is to be found among Chicano activists. Stymied by the complacency of the barrio, these typically well-educated individuals are also resentful of the price they feel they have paid for social and economic advancement in this Anglo-dominated society.”\footnote{Skerry, 74.}

The difficulty in mobilizing voters leads many Latino elites to focus on symbolic wins for their ethnic group and occasionally fiery rhetoric. Citing one such symbolic effort, Peter Skerry notes in his book *Mexican-Americans*, that “elective posts have become one of the goods that Mexican-American leaders can deliver to their people.”\footnote{Skerry, 114.}
Some elites even try to contest the research which casts a somewhat negative light on Latinos as voters. In *Latino Political Power*, Kim Geron claims that “issues appear to play a strong role among Latino voter.”73 His evidence is overwhelming unity of Latinos on two public policies which the national parties tend to ignore—bilingual education and a pathway to citizenship for undocumented workers. The lowest levels of political information of any voting group in addition to research discussed in the next chapter revealing that co-ethnic voting and campaign symbolism play more important roles in Latino voting decisions than issues, should silence these persistent claims by Latino elites of a rational voter—a theory that has been long discredited in the field of political science. As we turn to examining opinions on issues, it is important to keep in mind this distinction between voters and activists or elites.

**Issues**

**It’s the Economy, Stupid**

The old Clinton campaign quip holds considerable weight here. Half of Latinos cite the economy/jobs as their top issue. This consistently beats out all other issues over time and across polls. Latinos face some of the worst economic conditions in the country. Median Latino household income in California was $20,000 in 2010.74 The unemployment rate nationally is around 11 percent.75 Demographically, the average Latino is more likely to be economically disadvantaged; the median age in California is 27, and 30 percent of California Hispanics under 18 live in poverty while the number is

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73 Geron, 106.  
74 “Demographic Profile of Hispanics in California, 2010” Pew Hispanic Center  
http://www.pewhispanic.org/states/?stateid=CA  
75 Department of Labor, “The Latino Labor Force in Recovery,”  
http://www.dol.gov/_sec/media/reports/hispaniclaborforce/
19 percent for adults Latinos. Nationally, of births to Hispanic mothers, 53 percent occurred outside of marriage. In 2008, only 12 percent of the adult Latino population had a bachelor’s degree. These figures mean that Latinos are particularly susceptible to economic hardships.

The idea that these condition lead to strong support for welfare and therefore Democratic candidates from this economically at-risk group is compelling. Furthermore, the most conventional Republican rebuttal about Latino small business owners is irrelevant. Small business issues certainly resonate with some Latinos, but only 2 percent of Latinos in the labor force are small business owners. The issue is tricky, but by no means impossible, emphasis should be placed on job creation as unemployment has worsened considerably under a Democratic administration. In addition, politically infeasible on a national level, but consistent with small government principles would be an attack on tariffs on Mexican agricultural products and on U.S. agricultural subsidies, both of which contribute to low real wages of agricultural workers and higher unemployment in Mexico—the largest source of Latinos in California. The unconventional approach would place small government principles squarely in line with the economic interests of Latino immigrants and their families.

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76 “Demographic Profile of Hispanics in California, 2010”
**Education**

Well over 90 percent of Latino children attend public schools.\(^{80}\) About 15 percent of these dropout—a rate that has fallen in recent years but which remains three times that of white children and almost twice that of black Americans.\(^{81}\) With good reason, education never falls below number 2 or 3 on polling lists of the most important issues facing Latino voters.

The numbers on Latinos and education tell a story of contrasts in hopes and realities. Latino parents generally have quite high aspirations for their children’s educational achievement. Among Latino parents, 56 percent indicate that they would like to see their child earn a graduate or professional degree.\(^{82}\) Their expectations, however, linger behind their hopes as 40 percent expect their children to attain this educational level.\(^{83}\) These lowered expectations are met by the even more dismal reality that almost 40 percent of Latino Americans living in the U.S. have never completed high school. The majority of Latino parents give their local schools a grade of A or B. In 1997 *Education Week* gave California public schools severe ratings including a grade of D- in school resources and school climate.\(^{84}\) The fact that Latino children in California often attend the most underfunded of these failing schools indicates an even worse situation for them.

The contrasts extend to the hopes of Latino elites who push for bilingual education programs that receive mixed reviews from Latino parents who want their children to learn English. Polling throughout the last two decades has produced numbers

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\(^{80}\) *Latinos in the New Millenium*, 388.


\(^{82}\) *Latinos in the New Millenium*, 388.

\(^{83}\) Ibid., 392.

\(^{84}\) Peter Schrag, *Paradise Lost* (Los Angeles: UC Press, 2004)
for and against bilingual education in numerous instances. Given the variety of wordings, varying provision of surveys in foreign languages, and unknown legal status of many parents of children eligible for bilingual education programs, the information is difficult to obtain. The polling also produces puzzling results like the one reflected in this *L.A. Times* headline: “Bilingual Classes Get Support in Poll: Survey of Latino parents reports that 68% favor the programs. But 49% of respondents also approve of a ballot measure to outlaw them.”

Professor Adrian Pantoja, of *Latino Decisions*, says that Latino parents are reluctant to enroll their children in bilingual education programs: “They see English as the language of success.” He also notes that these programs come from educators and Latino elites, but that conservative rhetoric blames parents for the programs.

A majority of first generation immigrants indicate that their children use English as a Second Language programs, but surprisingly 37 percent of second generation immigrants indicate that their children are enrolled in such a program. The possibility that over a third of the children of Latinos who were raised in the U.S. themselves would need a bilingual education program should be greeted with skepticism given that 95 percent of U.S. born Latinos speak English. Rather, it aids the argument that expensive and controversial bilingual education programs may be either unnecessary or overused.

Latino-specific polling on other educational issues like teachers unions and testing is rare. However, support for charter schools is strong among California Latino parents— even stronger than among other demographics. Around 56 percent would consider

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86 Adrian Pantoja, interview with the author, November 15, 2012
87 *Latinos in the New Millenium*
sending a child to a charter school.\textsuperscript{88} This support opens up another opportunity (less controversial than bilingual education) for California Republicans to find common ground in achieving the educational aspirations of Latino parents for their children.

**Immigration**

Immigration policy has rarely topped the list of the most important issues to Latinos, but it has certainly inspired the most political activism as a Latino issue, especially in California. The first instance, Prop 187, began a pattern among Latinos in which sensitivity towards and activism surrounding the issue of immigration flares surrounding high-profile incidents. The 1994 proposition preceded the registration of a million more Hispanic voters in California. Similarly, the 2000 Elián Gonzalez controversy caused ripples in the 2000 presidential elections—after the 7 year old boy, whose mother had died in an ill-fated attempt to escape Cuba which brought him to the U.S., was seized by the federal government from his Florida relatives. Unsurprisingly, the party with a history of support of Cuban immigration and naturalization benefitted with Latinos in Florida—four out of five of whom said the incident made them more likely to support Bush.\textsuperscript{89} The issue flared again in California surrounding the DREAM Act, the first part of which Governor Jerry Brown signed into law in June 2011. The same month when Latino Decisions conducted their monthly poll, in answer to the question “What are the most important issues facing the Latino community that you think Congress and the President should address?”—“immigration” peaked at 56 percent of California Latino

respondents. Six months later it was back down to 49 percent as the issue passed from the news cycle.90 91

This most recent flare in attention to immigration has held steady in California as the Congress turns towards considering national immigration reform. Among Latinos nation-wide, immigration has historically ranked just under jobs, economy, crime, and education as an important policy issue. A series of Impre-Media/Latino Decisions polls shows that over the past two years, the issue has topped California Latinos’ priorities for Congress and the President to address, second only to the economic situation. Gabriel Sanchez of Latino Decisions addressed the topic in an NPR interview:92

It's important to note that immigration policy has become salient to Latino voters relatively recently. If we were talking in 2000 to 2005, we would not have seen immigration policy even in the top five of most important policy issues for Latino voters. And back in that era, you saw a lot of variation on support for immigration across generational status, national origin group, income level.

Not so much these days. I think as a lot of the state policies and the federal policies that have been discussed are framed, at least in the minds of Latinos, to be anti-Latino in nature. Latinos have really pushed immigration more to the forefront among the policies that they care about. And you've seen more of a consensus among Latino voters

and a shift to the left in terms of their overall policy attitudes on immigration.

Many Republicans nationally have taken a more liberal stance on the issue since it took the national spotlight in early 2013 with the promise of comprehensive reform. The eagerness to revise previous stances seems to stem from acceptance of a direct link between more progressive and relaxed immigration reforms and attracting the Hispanic vote. Efforts at federal immigration reform by Republicans in early 2013 are widely attributed to Romney’s dismal performance with Hispanic voters. Senator McCain (R-AZ) cited a need to adapt stances on immigration to “lure Hispanic voters” and Senator Robert Menendez (D-NY) echoed that “Republicans need it.”

Yet it is not at all clear that embracing immigration reform will let the Republican Party cut itself a bigger piece of the ethnic pie. A 2012 Latino Decisions poll found that faced with two varying forms of a DREAM Act, 82 percent of Latinos supported that of Democratic Senator Durbin over that of Republican Senator Marco Rubio. A recent study by University of Texas professor George Hawley, examining congressional elections in 2006 found that pro-immigration Republicans were no more likely to gain the popular support of Latinos in their district than other Republicans. This data supports

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94 Ibid.
the stance of various conservative media outlets and pundits who have “held out” as their politicians adapt their positions on immigration. The *National Review* writes:

> Take away the Spanish surname and Latino voters look a great deal like many other Democratic constituencies. Low-income households headed by single mothers and dependent upon some form of welfare are not looking for an excuse to join forces with Paul Ryan and Pat Toomey […] the idea that amnesty is going to put Latinos squarely in the GOP tent is a fantasy.  

Yet another Latino decision poll finds that when asked “if they would be more or less likely to vote Republican if the GOP took a leadership role in passing comprehensive immigration reform with a path to citizenship […] 44% [of Latinos] say they are more likely to vote Republican.” Furthermore, crossover rates by party are high indicating that Latinos of any party are very willing to vote for members of the other party based on this issue. While the extent to which a more liberal stance on immigration can help the Republican Party remains unclear, it certainly will not harm their performance among Hispanics. While these predictions are speculative, a consensus exists that the messaging of any stance on immigration must be more amicable.

Rhetoric on the issue has seen much evolution by the Republican Party nationally and in California especially. Since Governor Pete Wilson’s enthusiastic support of a measure which he publicly acknowledged as unconstitutional and which was

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blocked by courts and never enacted, campaign strategists in California have decided that the issue is not worth the cost of Hispanic and moderate white votes.\textsuperscript{99} The biggest changes from Republicans have been made with the language used to address illegal immigration. The RNC, in its self-diagnostic report on the 2012 election wrote, “Throughout our discussions with various Hispanic groups, they told us this: Message matters. Too often Republican elected officials spoke about issues important to the Hispanic community using a tone that undermined the GOP brand within Hispanic communities.”\textsuperscript{100} One of the largest proponents of the changing tide in the Republican Party, Governor Susana Martínez of New Mexico, has called for an end to the use of words like “amnesty.” In criticizing the approach of the Romney campaign, she exclaimed, “‘Self-deport?’ What the heck does that mean?”\textsuperscript{101} Martínez’s emphasis on particular phrases underscores the important symbolic power of even rhetorical support for the Latino community.

In many cases, speech on immigration (especially by state officials with no stake in INS, ICE, or federal immigration law) is merely symbolic. An article in \textit{The Economist} paraphrases the director of civic engagement at the National Council of La Raza: “Immigration may not be a policy priority for Latino voters […] but the way candidates talk about it can be a proxy for how they regard the community.”\textsuperscript{102} The GOP now embraces this concept as a challenge. In the 2013 “Growth and Opportunities” report

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\footnotetext{99}{Kenski and Tisinger, 192.}
which followed Mitt Romney’s defeat, the RNC acknowledged, “our Party's position on immigration has become a litmus test, measuring whether we are meeting them with a welcome mat or a closed door.”

The rhetoric and stances of national politicians are not the only malleable pieces of the puzzle. Feelings about immigration are certainly not static within the Hispanic community. A 2011 poll showed that more Latinos believe that recent immigration has made life in California worse than think it has made life better. The 2006 Latino National Survey similarly asked subjects to agree with one of two statements: ‘Immigrants today strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents’ or ‘Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing, and health care.’ As might be expected, less than 10 percent of Latinos agreed with the second statement. However, that number was 17 percent among second and later generation immigrants. As the U.S. Hispanic population transitions to a more native-born heavy composition, evolution of attitudes on this issue may yield a tempering of the call for sweeping amnesty. While Latinos in California may currently support citizenship for all, the blanket embrace of illegal immigrants must be met with the reality of increased drug-trade related crime near the border, high Latino unemployment, and competition for jobs in youth-favoring, low-wage industries.

The fact remains that a majority of Latino adults in the U.S. and California were born outside of the country and a majority of these support blanket amnesty. While few

103 RNC, 17.
105 Latinos in the New Millenium, 358
106 Ibid.
voters in California call for mass deportation, a majority support what might be more politically correctly termed “a path to citizenship.” This label garners support from about 69 percent of Independents, an important demographic for the Republican Party in California. (Not even a quarter of registered California Republicans support deportation, while 24 percent indicated support for work permits for illegal aliens and 47 percent supported a path to citizenship.) Among many Latinos, support for more liberal immigration policies remains independent of partisanship. Gabriel Sanchez of Latino Decisions explains, “we ask specifically in our election eve poll if the Republican Party took the lead on comprehensive immigration reform, including—and this is important—a path to citizenship status, would it make them more likely to vote Republican? Almost a third of our sample said that it would. So I think the Republican Party has a lot to gain, particularly with that path to citizenship issue. I think it's a winner for them.” I again emphasize this issue because crossover voting is an important phenomenon concerning the Latino vote, as I discuss in my next chapter. Crossover voting based on this particular issue, along with the votes of Independents together are critical to the future of the Republican Party in California and inform some optimism assuming some modest adjustments to rhetoric and policy positions.

108 DiCamillo and Field.
Healthcare

An overwhelming 67 percent of California Latinos approved of the Affordable Care Act in the wake of its affirmation by the Supreme Court.\textsuperscript{110} The level of support follows from a group which has indicated in increasing numbers (39 percent in 2012), financial difficulty in paying for healthcare costs.\textsuperscript{111} The bill would certainly benefit large numbers of Hispanics, an estimated 30 percent of whom, did not have health insurance in 2006.\textsuperscript{112} The Republican Party certainly recognizes this; RNC spokeswoman Alexandra Francesci said, "We're going to do a better job explaining why this law is negatively affecting all Americans, including the Hispanic community."\textsuperscript{113} The chances of successfully doing so remain slim according to academics and polls.\textsuperscript{114}

As far as state health policy is concerned, California Latinos are populists with a firm belief in government-provided healthcare. A post 2004 election survey by the Public Policy Institute of California found that 71 percent indicated that voters, rather than the governor and legislators should make health policy in California. The election included five health policy related ballot initiatives—all somehow seeking to increase funding to various public health services or expand coverage. Those which passed increased funding for mental health services, stem-cell research, and children’s hospitals. Measures mandating health insurance coverage of employees of medium and large businesses and funding emergency medical services failed. A majority of Latino voters claimed to have followed the issues fairly closely and supported all but the one funding emergency

\textsuperscript{110} DiCamillo and Field.\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.\textsuperscript{112} Latinos in the New Millenium, 349.\textsuperscript{113} Noam Levy, “Healthcare an Obstacle as Republicans Court Latinos,” March 31, 2013 http://www.latimes.com/health/la-na-latinos-healthcare-20130401,0,4843950.story\textsuperscript{114} Ibid
medical services by significant margins. The same survey also found a strong preference for universal healthcare among California Latinos and agreement with statements that government spending on certain health services and research was not sufficient.\textsuperscript{115}

California Republicans must either let the issue slip to the background in favor of immigration reform and the economy, or as Ms. Francesci suggests, convince the Latino population of the ACA’s demerits.

\textbf{Foreign Policy}

To U.S. Latinos, foreign policy is something of a non-issue. Scholarly work on the attitudes of Latinos towards U.S. foreign policy shows that there is little interest in the subject and to the extent that it exists, it is shaped by domestic policy concerns. While many take advantage of extensive and growing outreach programs by foreign consulates in the U.S., American immigrants of Cuban, Mexican, and Puerto Rican origin have a more favorable orientation towards the U.S. than their home countries. This perhaps explains how during the War in Iraq, policy priorities were still in line with those of most Americans. In 2006, Latinos, along with other Americans cited the war as the most pressing policy issue, followed by the economy and immigration.\textsuperscript{116} Hispanic leaders found that they consistently place domestic issues over foreign policy issues. They seem to favor the current U.S. involvement in Latin America and maintain positive views of NAFTA. These leaders believe, generically in line with the State Department, that foreign policy should rest on trade, democracy, and human rights.

\textsuperscript{115} Mark Baldassare et al., “Making Health Policy at the Ballot Box: Californians and the November 2004 Election,” \textit{Public Policy Institute of California} February 23, 2005 http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/op/OP_205MBOP.pdf

\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Latinos in the New Millenium
Race

As ties to countries of origin become more distant, the ethnicity tying Latinos in the U.S. ascends the list of political and social concerns. With second and later generation Latinos, racialization increases, as does self-identification as a ‘Latino.’ Perceived discrimination and perceived unfair treatment by police also tends to rise in later generations.\textsuperscript{117} These have also proven to be robust predictors of partisan attachment, with higher levels of perceived discrimination associated with the more Democratic attachment.\textsuperscript{118} Summing up the general findings, the 2006 Latino National Survey revealed that second and later generations report that they believe Latinos are less welcome in the U.S. compared with first generation immigrants.\textsuperscript{119}

A study of registered voters polled in 1996 just before the passage of Prop 209, outlawing affirmative action by the state, offers an interesting view of Latinos at that point. Among respondents of all ethnicities (including Latino), illegal immigrants were the only demographic viewed to have a negative effect on the community. In mixed race and homogenous neighborhoods alike, voters of all ethnicities responded either neutrally or positively to questions regarding ethnic diversity in their own neighborhood. Furthermore, across ethnic groups, views on Prop 209 appeared to be motivated by partisanship and political information on the measure rather than racial context.\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{117} Latinos in the New Millenium, 153, 162.
\textsuperscript{119} Latinos in the New Millenium, 181.
Values

Senator Ted Cruz has suggested that values are an untapped means of connecting with the Latino community: “I think the values in the Hispanic community are fundamentally conservative […] But you’ve got to have candidates that connect with that community in a real and genuine way and communicate that the values between the candidate and the community are one and the same.” ¹²¹

But if polling on the amorphous category “values” is to be believed—then as far as they extend to moral issues, the Republican Party has less room to work with here than commonly believed. A November 2011 poll read the following statements to Latino subjects: “1) Politics is more about economic issues such as jobs, taxes, gas prices, and the minimum wage; 2) Politics is more about moral issues such as abortion, family values, and same-sex marriage.” 74 percent of California Latinos agreed with first statement and 16 percent agreed with the second statement.¹²² Yet when it comes to specific “values” issues, Latinos often align with Republican views more closely, though the alignment is certainly not overwhelming and is fraught with political misinformation.

California Latinos show lower levels of support for abortion, compared with Latinos in other states. A third believe that it should be legal in all or most circumstances while a majority favor more restrictive laws with 42 percent believing it should be legal only to save the life of the woman and 18 percent holding that it should be illegal in all cases. Yet, when asked which political party aligned closer with their views on abortion, slightly more than one third claimed the Democratic Party, while only 22 percent claimed

¹²² “impreMedia-Latino Decisions Tracking Poll Results - December 2011”
Republicans, and 31 percent claimed ignorance. To the extent that the issue of abortion matters to Latinos, it seems that better political information might benefit the Republican Party.\textsuperscript{123} While a majority of California Latinos maintain a stance against the death penalty, it likely results from the same religious foundation that makes them conservative on the abortion.\textsuperscript{124}

California Latinos maintain a fairly liberal attitude towards same-sex couples. The same 2011 poll showed that 43 percent supported same-sex marriage and 14 percent supported same-sex civil unions, while 26 percent believed that no legal recognition should be given to same-sex couples. Yet an LA Times exit poll in 2000 showed that Latinos provided the largest margin of approval for Prop 22 prohibiting state recognition of gay marriage.\textsuperscript{125} The 2006 Latino National Survey also showed that more than half of Latinos nation-wide opposed legal recognition of gay unions though U.S. born Latinos tend to oppose it at much lower levels.

As for core American values, Latinos tend to share these with other Americans across the board. Mexican-Americans have been found to be equally or more supportive of values such as economic individualism and patriotism.\textsuperscript{126} Polling on statements such as “Poor people can get ahead through hard work,” “No matter what a person’s political beliefs are, they are entitled to the same legal rights and protections as anyone else,” and

\textsuperscript{123} “Univision News/LD National LATINO Electorate Poll Results November 8, 2011” Univision http://faculty.washington.edu/mbarreto/ld/latino_nov11.html
\textsuperscript{124} DiCamillo and Field.
\textsuperscript{125} Latinos in the New Millenium, 374.
\textsuperscript{126} Kenski and Tissinger, 192.
“Most people who don’t get ahead have only themselves to blame” face overwhelming agreement by Latino-Americans.\(^\text{127}\)

Polling on these issues is sometimes difficult to use in a campaign setting. It is a challenge, for example to reconcile polling which indicates that Latinos do not prioritize “values” issues with those which show that for over a third, religion has an impact on their vote choice. Then we come to the discrepancy between the polling on ‘values’ issues and the success with Latinos of George Bush’s presidential campaigns. His conservative stances on these issues under the label of ‘compassionate conservatism,” and his tagline that “family values don’t stop at the Rio Grande” did more to appeal to Latino voters than the candidacies of every other Republican presidential nominee in modern history. The explanation, as I will discuss in the next chapter rests on the overall appeal of Bush in an era of increasingly candidate centered elections. This chapter opened with the opposing lines of various conservative pundits regarding the values appeal to Latinos. While polling supports the idea that this class of issues matters little to California Latinos, who hold mixed views, the success of candidates like George Bush indicates that insofar as values matter to the candidate as a whole, they can be helpful to gaining Latino votes.

**Finding Common Ground**

Connecting with Latinos on issues is a strategy which warrants serious consideration and careful application. Latino perspectives on political issues straddle the gamut of partisanship. Liberal on healthcare and other social programs, Latinos tend to be moderate or mixed voters on social issues, agree on the primacy of jobs and the economy,

\(^{127}\text{Latinos in the New Millenium, 59.}\)
while conservative views on education hold potential to attract the community. Latinos do not fit perfectly into either party platform, nor do they uniformly fit under the label “Latino vote.” The best strategy for appealing to Latinos on issues likely emphasizes religion, family values, the need for economic recovery, and a focus on education reforms aimed at the low-performing districts where many Latino children attend school. Finding areas of common ground on issues is important, but as we discuss in the next chapter, it is only the first step in developing a candidate image and mobilization plan which directly connect to Latino communities.
Chapter Three: Appealing to Latino Voters

Knowledge about how Hispanic Americans think and how Latino subpopulations differ provides a basis for appeal by candidates to find common ground or at least craft an attractive message. Ultimately, however, a single candidate is unlikely to change the party platform or how voters think about issues. Campaigns do not usually change these either, but they can change what really matters—the vote count.

While issues have historically been the territory of pollsters, candidate image and outreach remain in the unscientific grasp of political consultants armed with experience. A fairly recent and extensive literature from political scientists, psychologists, and economists seeks to demystify the realm of campaign tactics, where previously only these weathered campaign strategists dictated. Their work has both confirmed the political instincts of campaign managers and brought to light the cost effectiveness and results of various strategies.

The previous chapter discussed shaping messages on issues to reach Latinos. This chapter focuses on shaping image and campaign tactics to appeal to Latinos. It begins with a discussion of how campaigns have attempted to attract Latino voters in the past. I then move on to a discussion of more recent campaigns, emphasizing two areas within a campaign that can affect whether and how Latinos vote: candidate image and mobilization or GOTV efforts.

Reaching Out to La Comunidad

In the past, campaigns by both parties have done comparatively little to reach out to Latino voters. As Kenski and Tisinger note, “a consistent theme of research since the late 1990s has been that many Latino voters are ready to be mobilized, but elites have
failed to do enough to energize them."\textsuperscript{128} In many cases, ignoring the Latino vote is a rational choice. Low concentrations of likely voters in Latino majority neighborhoods render a low payoff to outreach as the average Latino is an unlikely voter due to youth, lack of citizenship, low levels of education, and lower incomes. In fact campaign strategists have historically advised against “overdoing it” in Latino neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{129}

On a national level, Latino outreach was rare prior to 1988. Early work among presidential campaigns attempted to distinguish the Latino message from that of the broader campaign, but this sometimes backfired, leading to loss of white votes. Such was the case with George H.W. Bush’s 1992 presidential race, in which the Latino message emphasized Bush’s support for bilingual education and affirmative action. This messaging conflicted with that of the mainstream campaign and alienated many white voters.\textsuperscript{130} Since then, there has been much experimentation with various campaign strategies. The 1996 Dole campaign also ran a Latino-specific campaign within the presidential one paralleling other group-specific campaigns. This structure changed with the Clinton campaigns, which incorporated Hispanic mobilization efforts in multiple aspects of the campaign by abolishing the Latino office within the campaign and placing Latinos throughout the campaign staff. This model became the norm by the 2000 elections. Other, party-coordinated efforts are often not well integrated into the broader campaign.\textsuperscript{131}

On a state and local level, efforts have been both more creative and more concerted due to sheer necessity for politicians in majority-Latino districts. This is the

\textsuperscript{128} Kenski and Tisinger, 192.  
\textsuperscript{129} Barreto, \textit{Ethnic Cues}, 58.  
\textsuperscript{130} De la Garza and DeSipio, 18.  
\textsuperscript{131} De la Garza and DeSipio, 17-20.
source of the Republican anomalies elected to districts and states with large Hispanic populations. These politicians emphasize the conscious efforts they make on multiple levels to serve and appeal to their constituents. The lessons gleaned from the campaigns of politicians like Governor Susana Martínez, Governor Rick Perry, the younger Bush generations, Representative Steve Pearce, and other Republicans unsurprisingly confirm findings of the research on the topic. The sources of their success lie in ethnic identity, cultural connections, perceptions of the candidate, and face-to-face mobilization.

**Ethnic Identity**

One of the most effective campaign methods emphasizes connection with the Latino community if not through a shared racial identity, then with a willing friend with that racial identity who will campaign for the candidate. As any racially motivated observation, this one is not without its critics. The *Huffington Post* comments: “Democrats, of course, will be the first to scoff at the notion that Mexican-Americans in Texas will vote for a Republican like [George P.] Bush just because he is one of their own. But as this past president campaign showed, Democrats were of that same thinking flying in their Mexican-American elected politicians like Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to campaign for President Barack Obama wherever the number of Latino voters dictated the need.”

Research confirms that the single most important factor which can sway a Latino vote is the ethnicity of the candidate. Co-ethnic voting trumps every other candidate trait in appeal to Latino voters and can even render party identification meaningless. It also boasts a large number of studies and articles which examine its import.
In a study published in 2007, Matt Barreto directly tested the effect of race on candidate preference, controlling for individual ethnic identification. His work supports a 2006 study which finds that Latino racial identity influences Latino vote for a candidate of the same race.\textsuperscript{132} Previous studies have shown that ethnicity predicts party identification, which in turn predicts vote choice, but failed to show a specific tie to candidate preference. Barreto argues that due to increased ethnic-based discrimination, growing numbers of viable Latino candidates, and rapid growth in Latino rates of naturalization, registration, and voting—co-ethnic voting continues to become more important.\textsuperscript{133}

His findings suggest that the effect is substantial. In the study, Latino voters were given the choice between two candidates—one with a Hispanic surname and one without. The two were assigned stances on issues which clearly placed them in one of the two parties, but no party labels were given. Only 40 percent of Latinos chose the candidate of their own party over the Latino of the other party. Furthermore 26 percent indicated that they would vote for a Latino of the opposing party rather than a non-Latino of their own. This crossover rate in response to the question is lower than the actual crossover rate for the mock vote, but the response crossover rate was the same for both Republicans and Democrats. The results reveal that ethnicity is a statistically significant predictor of vote choice and has roughly the same effect as issue preference in explaining Latino voting. Finally, ethnic attachment is a strong predictor of cross-over voting, meaning that the

\textsuperscript{132} Barreto, \textit{Ethnic Cues}, 69.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 72.
more a person identifies with the Latino community or Latino ethnic label, the more likely she is to express a willingness to vote for a Latino of the opposite party.\textsuperscript{134}

The results have significant implications for election results among Latino voters with a Latino on the ballot. First, they support the idea that campaigns are becoming candidate centered, as party identification was not a significant predictor of vote choice.\textsuperscript{135} They also indicate that faced with the choice between a Latino of the opposite party and a non-Latino of their own, the majority of Latino subjects chose the candidate of the opposite party. The fact that then only 26 percent indicated a willingness to do so suggests low levels of political information, but also magnifies the importance of party cues. Fewer Latinos indicated a willingness to support an opposite party than actually did in the mock vote in the absence of party cues. This is an important attenuation to the finding and would reduce the actual crossover voting rate in real elections compared with the mock vote.

That both Republican and Democrat Latinos are susceptible to the same tendency to vote for the opposing party due to co-ethnic voting is critical for the GOP. The prospects for the Republican Party to take advantage of using viable co-ethnic candidates in districts with significant Latino populations are especially hopeful given these findings and the fact that the majority of Latinos identify as Democrats. From a party perspective, starting out with a higher baseline of support among Latinos could be as simple as choosing a viable Latino over a non-Latino candidate.

Though no studies explicitly compare crossover voting on a national level with crossover voting on more local levels, it seems that local and state levels return higher

\textsuperscript{134} Barreto, \textit{Ethnic Cues}, 79.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 82.
rates of crossover voting than have ever been achieved on a national level. In a study which accounts for party cues because it uses real election returns—Barreto supported the above findings using precinct data from five mayoral races involving a Latino candidate in different cities across the U.S. Across parties and geographic areas, heavily Latino precincts consistently supported the Latino candidate with high crossover margins. The data even includes a Green Party candidate in San Francisco who won between 67 and 83 percent of the Latino vote. The results are consistent with the stories of Orlando Sanchez and many others. Sanchez is a Cuban-born Republican who won 75 percent of the Latino vote in his 2001 quest to become the mayor of Houston. It is interesting to note that this pattern does not quite hold to the same level in Texas and to some degree Denver as it does in Los Angeles. This may indicate that the importance of ethnicity varies in different cities or states but holds with the notion that it is very important in California.

California Latino immigrants are more likely than other Latinos (both native-born and those in other states) to say that race is highly important in an election. Given California’s history with Hispanics, the saliency of race to Latino voters is unsurprising. It has also been demonstrated by Corrine McConnaughy et al, that “candidate ethnicity is an explicit ethnic cue that alters the political choices of Latinos through priming of their ethnic linked fate.” Work in political psychology supports the basis for this linked identity causing the co-ethnic voting phenomenon. Placing Latino candidates on the ballot can activate this sense of linked fate. An instance of more Latinos on a ballot

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137 Adrian Pantoja, “Fear and Loathing in California.”
corresponds with higher rates of Latino political engagement and voter turnout,\textsuperscript{139} as does running in a majority-minority district.\textsuperscript{140} Melinda Jackson finds that Latino presence on the ballot increases the salience of race and co-ethnic voting among Latino voters. She concludes that “political actors who are best able to prime and effectively link Latino identity to specific political preferences will benefit most from Latino votes.”\textsuperscript{141}

One way in which non-Latino candidates can do this is through contact by Latinos in support of their candidacy. Another study finds that in the 2000 election, contact with Latino Republicans during mobilization efforts increased Latino voter turnout for Bush, while contact with non-Latino Republicans had no effect.\textsuperscript{142} It is very clear that with the Latino vote, messengers matter. This is the strategy behind the Bush campaign’s use of the candidate’s Hispanic nephew at campaign stops and similarly Obama’s use of Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

President Obama’s re-election campaign sheds light on another means of earning implicit Latino endorsement. The campaign focused on disseminating its message through friendly Latino journalists. Reaching out to over 700 Latino journalists, talk show hosts, radio and television personalities, and disc jockeys, the campaign averaged 100 Latino media bookings a week.\textsuperscript{143} The GOP certainly recognizes the lack of an active Latino Republican network through which to disseminate their message. The post-2012 election report noted the need to “[d]evelop an extensive network of Hispanic […]”

\textsuperscript{139} Barreto, \textit{Ethnic Cues}, 112.
\textsuperscript{140} Melinda Jackson, “Priming the Sleeping Giant: The Dynamics of Latino Political Identity and Vote Choice” \textit{Political Psychology} Vol 32, No. 4, 2011, 692.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.
political operatives.”144 While ethnic networks will continue to play an important role in
campaigns, candidate traits contribute to vote margins as well.

Candidate Traits

Among Latino populations, low levels of political knowledge can result in an
inability to engage in issue voting, but the lack of socialization in American society also
contributes to this phenomenon among foreign-born Latinos. Nicholson, Pantoja, and
Segura showed that in a study of Latino voters in the 2000 election, 83 percent of Latinos
who incorrectly attributed an issue position to a candidate attributed their own opinion to
the candidate they preferred, indicating that voters are influenced by preferences that
neglect issue-voting or precede issue position information.145 As they assert, “despite
repeated claims by Latino activists during the 2000 Presidential election that Latino
voters are concerned more with issues than candidate-specific appeals or symbolic
politics, there is good reason to believe that policy issues may not have played a
significant role in their decision-making calculus.”146 Beyond ethnicity, candidate traits
are important for the candidate image. Among uninformed voters, the symbolism in this
image is particularly important.

Significant roles are played by partisanship and likeability of the candidates. The
perceived likeability of Bush and Gore were more powerful predictors of voter preference
in the 2000 election study than even partisanship.147 Agreement with a candidate on
certain policy issues did not significantly correlate with a vote for the candidate with
similar positions. The study also found that those who considered a candidate’s ability to

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144 RNC
145 Nicholson et al., 262.
146 Ibid., 261.
147 Nicholson, 266.
speak Spanish important moderately favored Bush overall, and he was significantly favored by low-information voters.\textsuperscript{148} This is consistent with research based on the 2006 Latino National Survey which found that a majority of Latino voters indicated that a candidate’s ability to speak Spanish was an important factor in their decision.\textsuperscript{149}

As a testament to the efficacy of symbolic gestures, the Republican presidential campaign most successful with Latinos (until the reelection campaign) was rife with them. Robert G. Marbut Jr. wrote in 2005, “No Republican presidential candidate has ever given so much thought, put in so much effort, or spent so much time and money trying to attract Hispanic voters as Bush did in 2000.”\textsuperscript{150} That campaign saw Bush accepting invitations from Latino organizations and attending events where the candidate displayed enthusiastic, though not fluent, Spanish language skills. Ads aimed at Latino audiences focused on Bush the candidate—not Bush the Republican.\textsuperscript{151} Spanish-language ads in Iowa early in the primaries aimed not at attracting the vote from the state’s less than 5 percent Latino population, but at crafting an image of the younger Bush as the candidate reaching out to Latinos and—more importantly for gaining white moderate votes—the moderate Republican candidate.\textsuperscript{152} Latinos generally have very little influence in primaries due to their population concentration in states with later primaries. The commitment early on to appear welcoming to Latinos effectively cast Bush as the first Latino-friendly Republican candidate and forced some alarm and extra outreach on the part of the Gore campaign, which had to neutralize press assumptions that the Bush

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\textsuperscript{148} Ibid., 268.
\textsuperscript{149} Latinos in the New Millenium, 298.
\textsuperscript{150} De la Garza, Muted Voices, 61-2.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid., 67.
\textsuperscript{152} Ibid., 32.
\end{flushleft}
campaign was making huge gains among Latinos.\textsuperscript{153} Yet, as one Latino media specialist pointed out, actual resources for Latinos did not reach far beyond distribution of Spanish language materials to the media.

The power of the mere likeability of a candidate in predicting Latino vote preference makes a solid case for the modern, candidate-centered campaign and all its symbolic efforts. While there is no way to tell what factors created the “likeability” of Gore and Bush in the study, it is clear that among low-information voters, the Bush campaign efforts among Hispanics paid off. But in California, the Republican Party cannot always count on the likeability of a moderate figurehead, not just because of its increasingly conservative bent, but because of its history. Many consider the anti-immigrant ballot propositions and their proponent, Republican Governor Pete Wilson, perpetrators of a permanent shift in party identification among California Latinos. As John L. Korey and Edward L. Lascher, Jr. put it, “Republican strategists need to worry that the political imagery that Latinos associate with the parties may already have become frozen.”\textsuperscript{154} The notion that efforts such as Prop 187 remain indelible in the minds of voters whose memories soon will not stretch that far, in a society of forward-thinking and rationally ignorant voters seems absurd. However, there is no doubt that the image of Republicans as the anti-Hispanic, anti-immigrant party has created a different political context in which Hispanic voters have come of age. Evidence that the reactions to Prop 187 will eventually fade manifests in the weakening partisan attachment of younger generations of Latinos. The Republican Party cannot blot out its transgressions of the 1990s, but it can craft a new image following the example of those Republicans who have

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., 45.
\textsuperscript{154} Korey and Lascher, 62.
reached out to Latinos. These “anomalies”—those Republicans elected with a substantial share of Latino voters, like Congressman Pearce consistently attribute their success to their conscious efforts with and physical presence in the Latino community, suggesting that a concerted effort could go a long way, even in a blue state like California.

**Mobilization**

Hispanics out of all demographic groups in the electorate, may be the most discussed by the media and simultaneously ignored by party strategists. Media outlets (particularly in the aftermath of the 2000 through 2012 elections) have enjoyed argument, prediction, and pedantry on the “sleeping giant” of the American electorate. Meanwhile campaign managers pay lip service to the issue and continue to guard their precious bank accounts and volunteers. Beyond the simplistic assumption that Latinos (with the exception of Cubans) are all Democrats—Republican campaign strategists face the reality that Latinos are simply not “likely voters.” Even the Bush campaign, for its $11 million spent on unprecedented courting of the Hispanic vote, did little groundwork to mobilize it.¹⁵⁵

Political scientists have performed myriad studies breaking down the characteristics which comprise a “likely voter.” Among these are higher levels of education and income as well as older age. Latinos maintain some of the lowest levels of these social characteristics of any demographic group. A significant non-citizen population skews population-turnout ratios even more. Yet everyone knows that the Hispanic population and therefore its vote is burgeoning and will certainly figure significantly in future elections. Currently, contact by political campaigns among Latinos

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¹⁵⁵ De la Garza and DeSipio, 42.
is very low. Only 35 percent of second and later generation Hispanic-Americans have been contacted by a campaign while only 24 percent of foreign born Hispanic-American citizens have been contacted. The better educated, higher income Latinos are more likely to have received this contact. Of nonvoting Latinos in the 2004 election, 22 percent would have supported Bush, 33 percent would have supported Kerry and 35 percent do not know. With a 35 percent pie to split, there is certainly a missed opportunity for Republicans here, if not to win the population, to plant the roots of a relationship. This nonvoting and undecided demographic possesses the characteristics which favored Bush in the 2000 and 2004 elections among Latinos—namely low levels of education and income, and first generation immigrant status.\textsuperscript{156}

In addition to individual characteristics, some geographic and community factors affect participation in elections specifically among Latinos. Latinos tend to be community oriented in their political participation. While there is a 21 percent gap between white and Latino voting rates, twice as many Latinos as whites indicate that they have participated in a protest.\textsuperscript{157} Contact by organizations—particularly Latino organizations can increase the likelihood of voting. Membership in an organization also correlates with a greater likelihood to vote.\textsuperscript{158} For Hispanics in America, discussion and participation in civic life seems to happen in groups, lending credence to the saying that “Latinos vote like their neighbors.”

Latinos also tend to live in geographically concentrated areas. In his chapter in \textit{The New Political Geography of California}, Frederic Douzét finds that while diversity

\textsuperscript{156} Latinos in the New Millenium, 268-73.
\textsuperscript{157} John A. García, \textit{Latino Politics in America}, 97.
\textsuperscript{158} Melissa Michelson, "Getting out the Latino Vote: How Door-to-Door Canvassing Influences Voter Turnout in Rural Central California" \textit{Political Behavior} Vol. 25, No. 3 (Sept. 2003), 256.
has increased in California, so too has residential segregation. Between 1990 and 2000, Latino segregation increased 4.7%—largely driven by white flight from urban areas. As newer generations of immigrants and their offspring swell Latino neighborhoods, the pervasive Hispanic context within the communities shapes political participation. Residing in a majority-Latino district increases turnout among Latinos. This turnout increases further with the number of overlapping Latino majority districts of residence. The correlation between community composition and voter turnout again supports the notion that community provides an important context to Latino political participation. Given the importance of an ethnic community, it follows that the linguistic community should also play a role in political participation. One study found that areas with local news television in Spanish saw voter turnouts 5-10 percent higher than those areas without. Lamenting the “re-Mexicanization” of neighborhoods opposing the “historic assimilation process”—Republicans fear that this group will never vote a conservative conscience because unlike other ethnic enclaves and recent immigrants—it has moved up the socioeconomic ladder quite slowly. But Republican mobilization efforts are not entirely lost in these Latino-populated areas.

External factors such as contact with political organizations do shift Latino turnout—this is where campaigns have poured money into mobilization efforts to fight historically low registration and turnout rates among Latinos for their particular candidate. Much work, both academic and commercial, has been done to discover the

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159 Douzét and other, 50-2.
best methods of addressing these low rates. In general, the findings on turning out the average registered person apply to Latinos. Political scientists Donald Green and Alan Gerber, in their seminal work which has become a handbook for campaigns, study the effectiveness of various strategies. Canvassing consistently beats out direct mail and phone banks for its efficacy and efficiency. It turns out 1 in 14 contacts and with paid canvassers, costs around $19 a vote. The results are exceptional compared with direct mail which turns out 1 in 200 recipients at $200 a vote and phone banks, which turn out 1 in 20 contacts with volunteers.163

Studies focusing on GOTV among Hispanics confirm that canvassing Latino populations is the most effective method as a natural experiment in New Mexico and Texas confirms. Las Cruces, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas—both heavily Hispanic areas—belong to the same media market. The 2012 presidential campaign featured television and radio ads in the whole market, but turnout was significantly higher in New Mexico. Journalist Erica Grieder (formerly of the Economist) explains the difference, “New Mexico was a swing state and was therefore getting actual volunteers, outreach, etc.—and the increased turnout was a result of the latter, not the ads.”164

Contact with Latino organizations leads to more turnout than contact with non-Latino organizations.165 As Melinda Jackson’s 2011 study on the Bush-Gore election demonstrated, turnout for a particular candidate (in this case Bush) can be aided by contact with Latino representatives or contacts of the campaign rather than non-Latino

164 Erica Grieder, e-mail message to author, March 25, 2013
165 Michelson, 256.
persons. This result was confirmed by Gerber and Green who find that co-ethnicity of messengers aids the effectiveness of canvassing. Latinos can also respond differently to outreach depending on their party identification. Canvassing is particularly powerful among Latino Democrats. This group also responds better to messages emphasizing ethnic solidarity rather than civic duty, while Latino non-Democrats respond better to messages about civic duty rather than ethnic solidarity. Regardless of the message, Latino voters respond well to targeted mobilization, which means that Latino-specific campaign efforts can be well worth their cost.

This has been the case in California assembly and senate districts, where historically low turnout figures have kept out party resources. In the 1990s politicians in these areas began adopting campaign techniques designed to mobilize the Latino working class and immigrants. Faced with the stinginess of state parties, state senator Richard Polanco led efforts to raise money for the expressed purpose of financing intensive field operations. This money, coupled with union funds and volunteers helped elect many Latino politicians to the state legislature in the 1990s because these politicians recognized the importance of groundwork. As one said, “Old political consultants devalue mobilization as an effective part of the political campaign budget and promote heavy mail programs […] The fact is that people don’t vote if you don’t reach out to them […] The reason the Latino voting percentages were less historically, I believe, is because nobody reached out to them.”

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166 Jackson, 692.  
167 Michelson, 256.  
168 De la Garza and DeSipio, 93
Marbut asserts a beneficial lesson from Bush’s gubernatorial election days, courting the Hispanic vote was that, “Substance is what matters over the long term, but style is what opens the communication channels.” Despite a moderate governorship that could be deemed quite welcoming to Hispanic immigrants, it was his style that the campaign would sell to the American people. But the design of presidential campaigns usually obstructs a focus on the ground game in garnering Latino support. And while the symbolic approach can be effective, it is the canvassing and phone-calling grunt work that will get out the voters to whom the campaign has already appealed. As Representative Steve Pearce (R-NM) says, explaining his success in a majority Latino district, “You just have to show up, all the time, everywhere. Most Republicans don’t bother. I do.”169

**On Not Losing the non-Hispanic Vote**

Little evidence supports the notion that courting the Hispanic vote would lead to a loss of support among core Republican demographics. An academic study of the “racial threat hypothesis” using three California ballot initiatives which implicated race (particularly Hispanic identification) found little to support for the hypothesis. Residence in a predominantly Hispanic area did not significantly manifest in anti-Hispanic voting behavior among non-Hispanics. Political context had a far more important effect on voting on these measures than racial context.170

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It should come as a relief that Republicans do not have to worry about any racist notions in their base while choosing candidates. Studies show that while ethnic cues can alter political choices, "when non-Hispanics also know the party affiliation of the candidates, the effect of their attitudes about Latinos is attenuated by partisan considerations."\(^{171}\) This research is affirmed by that of Cindy Kam, who also found that attitudes towards Hispanics affect vote choice for a Latino candidate only in the absence of a party cue.\(^ {172}\) This means that party affiliation with the non-Hispanic voter’s preferred party can reduce bias against a Hispanic candidate and that white conservatives will likely continue to vote for Republican candidates regardless of their race.

As regards issues, the last chapter discussed the areas of common ground which Republicans can emphasize in appealing to Latino voters. The area with the most disagreement and recent vitriol—immigration—does not rank highly among either Republicans or Latinos as an important issue. Latinos consistently rank immigration for example outside their top three most important issues. Not even half of Republicans think immigration is a “top priority.”\(^ {173}\) And even on this issue, there seems to be decreasing unanimity within the Republican Party. Furthermore, as discussed earlier, almost half of California Republicans support a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants.

Noting recent efforts by Republicans such as George W. Bush, Nicholson et al note that, “Republican Party appeals may also be driven by the realization that their inclusion will not distance key coalition members. That is, symbolic outreach (as opposed

\(^{171}\) McConnaughy et al., 1201.
to substantive policy changes) has the potential of yielding additional Latino votes without alienating other members of the GOP coalition—who might have reacted negatively to a shift in policy.” While a shift in policy is unlikely, symbolic outreach not only seems the easiest method of reaching Latinos, but also the most effective. Republican campaign managers might be well-advised to stop pouring over Latino opinion polls and to start learning Spanish.

**Winning in La Comunidad**

The idea that the Republican Party can win Latino votes without significant change in policy stances is bold. But the political science and psychology research quoted in this chapter examining the political context and social identity of voters and the profiles of candidates demonstrates that this is not the hopeful dream of a conservative strategist, but a real possibility, already taking shape in some recent campaigns. Perhaps the most important revelation of this analysis is that Latinos do, as the saying goes, “vote like their neighbors.” This does not mean that Latinos vote as a bloc but that they vote in the context of the community and that campaigns successful with Latinos recognize and connect with this community. Identifying with the same ethnic heritage, of course, makes the best case for being a part of the community, but an entrenched member who can vouch for the candidate makes an impression as well. Candidate imagery and rhetoric is certainly helpful on the margin, but the recipe for “likeability” is not well defined to make specific recommendations. Finally, there is no better way to connect with the neighbors than by meeting them. Well-demonstrated findings that face-to-face contact trumps all other means of voter contact return especially significant results for the Latino

174 Nicholson et al., 269.
community. Political science research which attributes portions of the variation in voting among Latinos to various candidate attributes, allows educated guesses on the kind of Hispanic percentages to be gained from a new Republican campaign strategy. Starting with the substantial cross-over rates for co-ethnic candidates of 26 percent, adding percentages upwards of this figure to the current percentages of Latino votes won in California as estimates of the potential vote share is not unreasonable and pushes Republicans towards an evenly split Latino vote.

I now turn the application of these observations to politics in a majority-minority state demographically similar to California with very different Latino election returns. We will explore in Texas whether and how Republicans recruit Hispanic candidates, exploit connections with the Latino community, utilize welcoming imagery and friendly language, and mobilize Latino voters.
Chapter Four: The GOP in California and Texas

We turn now to an examination of the Latino vote in Texas, where the state Republican Party has been hailed as “a model for national Republicans looking to draw more Hispanics into the fold,” with a “proven Lone-Star recipe.” I examine the role of the parties and of demography in crafting the modest success with Latinos enjoyed by Texan Republicans. The comparison reveals that a combination of Anglo-Hispanic state history, the relative warmth of the GOP towards Latinos, and the strength of the political parties creates a political context which allows for greater success of Republican candidates.

The Facts on Majority-Minority States

While there is much that the Republican Party in one state can learn from another, the relative success of each depends partly on factors which lie beyond the control of the parties. Texas and California are fundamentally different states with Hispanic populations who live in distinct circumstances, maintain differing historical relations with Anglo populations, and are socialized under institutions unique to each state.

As of 2010, Latinos made up nearly 38 percent of both the California and Texas populations. The portion of foreign born Hispanics is somewhat larger in California (38 percent of Hispanics compared to 31 percent in Texas). Latino populations of both states overwhelmingly claim Mexican heritage and the median age is very young—26 in Texas and 27 in California. Marriage rates are higher in Texas. While median earnings are similar in both states are similar, Latino poverty rates are significantly higher in Texas.

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than California. Conversely, rates of home-ownership in Texas are the second highest in the country—58 percent, while those in California are around 44 percent. More Texas Latinos go uninsured; 37 percent are not insured compared to 29 percent in California.\textsuperscript{176,177} In Texas, 46 percent of Hispanics say they are conservative, 36 percent moderate and 18 percent liberal.\textsuperscript{178} In California, 35 percent of Latino likely voters identify as conservative, 31 percent moderate, and 34 percent liberal. Well over 60 percent of these California voters are Democrats while Independents and Democrats make up around 17 percent each.\textsuperscript{179}

The similar origins, size, and youth of the two Latino populations begs comparison between them based on very different political identification and activity. Interestingly, the lower share of foreign born Latinos and higher rates of marriage and home-ownership suggest that Texas Latinos are more settled. Lower rates of insurance and higher poverty levels however, indicate that the economic situation for Texas Latinos lags behind that of California Latinos.

The very histories of the two states underscore important differences in the relation of Latinos to state politics. Both states began with overwhelmingly white populations and now claim majority-minority status with burgeoning Latino populations. Yet in Texas, one can find Hispanic families whose residence stretches back for generations. While not immune from the influx of immigrants which constitutes much of the Latino population in California, Tejanos (as Texas Latinos are called) lack the

\textsuperscript{176} “Demographic Profile of Hispanics in Texas in 2010”
\textsuperscript{177} “Demographic Profile of Hispanics in California in 2010”
\textsuperscript{179} Mark Baldassare “Latino Likely Voters in California.”
transience of California immigrants who cycle through neighborhoods and cities as they move up, out, and away. Harold Meyerson of the American Prospect notes that, “In Texas, most Latino legislators and congressional representatives come from the long-established Mexican American communities that constitute virtually the whole southern part of the state; the vast new immigrant populations of Houston and Dallas remain woefully underrepresented. In California and Los Angeles, by contrast, most Latino officeholders represent new-immigrant districts.”

Peter Skerry describes this transience in his book *Mexican Americans*. Comparing Los Angeles and San Antonio, he notes the weaker community ties in Los Angeles due to the mobility of immigrants. He recounts the story of a local priest in an LA barrio who estimates that 25 percent of his parish neighborhood moves out every three months as each time the church mails out contribution envelopes, a quarter are returned. The community ties absent in California are crucial for politics in Texas where neighborhood politics are critical to candidates and churches are an important means of mobilization. The lack of “neighborhood politics” in Los Angeles creates a very different political scene. Skerry asserts: “Unlike San Antonio, recruitment into Los Angeles politics is typically not through neighborhood or civic activities or other means of building up a community base. Rather individuals enter politics primarily through the narrow gate of staff work for elected politicians.”

Perhaps as a result of this system, Latinos have penetrated Texas political institutions to a much greater degree than their California counterparts. While representation in the state delegations to Congress remains similar, Latinos hold 22

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positions in the California legislature and 38 positions in the much smaller Texas state legislature. Latinos hold 399 municipal and county seats in California to Texas’s 930. Representation in judicial positions, law enforcement, and on school boards in California also pales in comparison to Texas. \(^\text{182}183\)

Tejanos may be better represented in state politics, but California Latinos are politicized in a way that their Texan counterparts are not. This seems to arise from the fact that while Texas Latinos have been relatively welcome in state and local politics, California Latinos have had to fight for representation. One of the critical battlegrounds has been the fight for rights and services of illegal immigrants (already detailed in this thesis.) Without the need to fight an onslaught of anti-immigrant ballot measures, any grief over immigration in Texas seems to be directed towards federal policies as those of the state tend to be laissez-faire and even pro-immigrant. As Erica Greider notes, “Texas really hasn't seen as much vitriol on the subject of immigration as California has. I think that does a lot to explain why Texas Republicans haven't fared as poorly with Hispanic voters (even though most Hispanic Americans aren't immigrants).”\(^\text{184}\)

The relatively strong political unification of California Hispanics against anti-immigrant policies is merely one reason for the heightened importance of race to California Latinos and their more similar, liberal voting patterns. The histories of the two states demonstrate a strong tradition of events in California which have primed an ethnic consciousness lacking among Tejanos. The Zoot Suit Riots of the 1940s represented some of the first conflicts contributing to deep sense of unification along racial lines.

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\(^{182}\) “California: Political Demographics,” *Almanac of Latino Politics* [http://almanac.ushli.org/states/california/](http://almanac.ushli.org/states/california/)

\(^{183}\) “Texas: Political Demographics,” *Almanac of Latino Politics* [http://almanac.ushli.org/states/texas/](http://almanac.ushli.org/states/texas/)

\(^{184}\) Erica Grieder, e-mail message to author, March 25, 2013
Clashes among young white soldiers stationed in southern California and local Mexican-Americans resulted in unequal treatment by police, who arrested hundreds of Latino youths. City officials did not help matters when the city council passed a resolution banning the wearing of the popular Mexican-American style “zoot suits.” The events kicked off the protests, riots, walkouts, and clashes with police which have characterized the civil rights quests of the Chicano movement which peaked in the early 1970s and developed an ethnic consciousness which armed generation of Latino activists.

Another battleground has been the labor scene. Meyerson explains not only the mobilization of California Latinos, but their affinity for the Democratic Party as a consequence of this force. “One big factor in this disparity is organized labor. The key institution in the rise of Hispanic political power in both Los Angeles and California has been the city's Latino-led labor movement, which mobilizes more Latino voters, anoints more Latino candidates, and constructs more progressive coalitions than any force in the state.” These powerful backers can turn out thousands of volunteers in election season and several hundred to campaigns in a single district on election day. For the election day of Los Angeles Mayor Villaraigosa, the local AFL-CIO turned out 2100 volunteers. Texas, a right-to-work state, maintains much weaker unions, with shrinking membership and little power, which can turn out a few dozen volunteers before an election. While Chavez’s United Farm Workers fell from power after its success in the 70s, the grape boycott and media attention of the incident is illustrative of the struggle for fairness towards California’s immigrants—a struggle which, if it exists in Texas, has nowhere near the kind of organized power. Without the organization of unions and the unifying

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\[\text{185 Meyerson}\]
power of fighting anti-immigrant measures, there is less cohesion among Latinos as voters in Texas.

One demographic factor which contributes to less political cohesion among Mexican Americans in Los Angeles as opposed to Texas is the non-citizen population. This demographic is much more significant in Los Angeles and California, throwing off representation due to non eligibility to vote.\(^{186}\) California contains over 10 million immigrants—around 55 percent of whom are not naturalized—and Texas contains a little over 4 million, with 68 percent not naturalized.\(^{187}\) A subset of this population—undocumented immigrants—make up a larger percentage of the population and the workforce of California than Texas. In absolute terms, California has one million more illegal immigrants than Texas.\(^{188}\) While citizen and non-citizen Latinos share many causes, as explained in Chapter Three, these two groups have different political attitudes on a range of issues, but without the ability to vote, there may be less political cohesion between non-citizen Latinos and their representatives.

**The Importance of Saying “Howdy”**

The analysts, politicians, and consultants who study Texas do so for a reason. As Grieder puts it, “if this was just about demographics, Texas would already be a swing state.”\(^{190}\) Republicans in Texas really do better than those in the demographically similar California and the key, according to many is a warm tone. Friendly rhetoric is the

\(^{186}\) Skerry, 95.

\(^{187}\) Immigration Policy Center, “New Americans in Texas,” January 2012
http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/new-americans-texas

\(^{188}\) Immigration Policy Center, “New Americans in California,” January 2012
http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/new-americans-california


\(^{190}\) Erica Grieder, e-mail message to author, March 25, 2013
recommendation of every expert from the RNC to Hispanic politicians and leading Texas Republicans have mastered it. There is much difficulty in weighing just how much of the appeal of Republicans can be attributed to their smooth talking, but the emphasis placed on this strategy by Hispanic politicians and white ones successful with Latino voters indicates that it is at least a low cost, no harm strategy.

Republican politicians in Texas choose their words carefully around issues like illegal immigration and are certain to acknowledge the contribution of Hispanics to the state. Governor Rick Perry frequently pays lip service to the Hispanic history in the state: “We are very proud that the Hispanic culture is and has been a huge part of our heritage for a long time, and it will be a huge part of our future.”191 Perry’s campaign manager, Luis Saenz notes that the Governor’s 2006 campaign was sure to discuss border security without inflammatory wording. At a UT conference on Hispanic politics Mr. Saenz said: “It's not lost on Republicans that to capture more Hispanic voters, we've got to watch the way we phrase things.”192 But Republicans also acknowledge that there is much more room for improvement. Dallas state legislative representative Villalba says: “One area where we as a party need to improve is the ability for us to articulate our message in a way that resonates with the Hispanic community and doesn’t alienate with the white-hot rhetoric that we’ve had in the last 10 years,”193 The state party has also caught on. Last year, it replaced the term “illegal immigrants” with “undocumented immigrants” in the text of its party platform.

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191 Glueck
193 Glueck.
Moderate and conservative observers agree that this strategy does pay off. Erica Grieder (until recently the southwest correspondent for the Economist) notes that, “It sounds completely simplistic, but the best thing they’ve done is to not cross the line into deliberately offending people. Nationally, that hasn’t happened.” Larry Gonzales, a Republican Representative in the Texas House believes it really is that simple, “if we can just, you know, alter that tone a little bit, I think we'll go a long way toward making some, you know, great relationships and some good policy.”

Some Democrats assert that this strategy is all hot air and does not actually appeal to Latinos. “Bad policy in Spanish is the same as bad policy in English,” says Bill Brannon, executive director of the Democratic Party of Texas. But Republicans in Texas are responsible for many Latino-friendly policies which may indicate that their moderate success with Republicans could be due to their actions, rather than just their rhetoric.

First, the party as a whole seems to have embraced Hispanic immigrants. The state party platform explicitly supports guest workers programs—something that many Republican nationally opposed when President Bush touted it in his 2006 attempt at immigration reform. As one prominent Texas conservative told Politico, “It’s a huge deal, it’s an enormous deal…to support a guest worker program is to affirm several things that need affirming, the most important of which is, conservative Republicans don’t mind Hispanics in their communities and as their neighbors. That’s the problem with the entire immigration debate.” Last year, 700 new Hispanic delegates attended the

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194 Glueck.
196 Glueck.
state party convention. Governor Rick Perry appointed the first Latina secretary of state and Latina Justice to the Texas Supreme Court. The party is not entirely without its outspoken opponents of lenient immigration policies. Last session, about 100 pieces of legislation restrictive on immigration were introduced in the majority Republican state legislature. That none made it out of committee is a testament to the more welcoming views of most of those Republicans.\footnote{Glueck.}

Perhaps the most substantive service which Texas politicians have paid to Latinos is the passage of the Texas DREAM Act in 2001—the first of its kind to pass in any state. The bill allows the children of illegal immigrants to pay in-state tuition at Texas schools and received nearly unanimous support from the legislature (only four members voted against it) and from Republican Governor Rick Perry.

At even greater odds with national Republican sentiments is the attitude towards state enforcement of immigration laws by Texas politicians. In Texas, all major cities have sanctuary laws which prevent police from requesting documentation or asking about the legal status of an individual unless it directly relates to the incident at hand.\footnote{Erica Grieder, \textit{Big, Hot, Cheap, and Right} (New York: Public Affairs, 2013), 181.} Governor Perry called the idea of a border fence "nonsense" and has also said that an Arizona-style immigration law would not be a “good fit” for Texas.

Though purely anecdotal, the observations of Michael Barone on Californians and Texans reflect how demeanors—amicable or dismissive—might manifest in each state:

My observation in travel over the years is that Hispanics are treated very differently by Anglos in Texas than in California. In Texas, white Anglos see people with Hispanic features as fellow Texans. They smile and say
howdy […] In California, white Anglos, liberal or conservative, treat people with Hispanic features as landscape workers or parking valet attendants. They look past them without speaking or hand them their car keys.199

The Stop-Gap: Latino Turnout

There is an irony to the dominance of the Texas GOP and its relative success among Latinos, of which Texas Republicans are acutely aware. It is that most voting Hispanics still vote for Democrats, most Hispanics do not vote at all, and that if they suddenly did, the party might be in trouble. As Erica Grieder puts it, “The Democrats haven’t proven effective at getting [Hispanic] people registered, and Republicans, as you would imagine, haven’t really tried.”200 In 2010, Latino turnout (as a percentage of citizen voting age population) was 23 percent in Texas. In California, turnout was over 35 percent. 201 Rates of contact by campaigns are dismal in both California and Texas—31 percent and 25 percent—the lowest rate among all states with major Latino populations.202 A report by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute lamenting the disappointing Latino political clout claims that, “absent such a dual strategy emphasizing GOTV [and voter registration], Latinos will be unable to realize their potential electoral clout in the foreseeable future in any but the most closely contested elections.”203

199 Michael Barone, “Hispanic vote not lost if GOP talks change,” Boston Herald March 21, 2013 http://bostonherald.com/news_opinion/opinion/op_ed/2013/03/hispanic_vote_not_lost_if_gop_talks_change

200 Grieder, 192.

201 “California: Political Demographics.”


Texas Republicans are more wary. Ignoring Hispanic neighborhoods might have been strategic in the past, but the modern party is ready to reach out. Discussing the potential of this group to swing the state blue, Texas GOP chairman Steve Munisteri says, “The situation is not exactly desperate. There is truth in the conventional wisdom that Hispanics do not vote in large numbers, but that may have to do with the relatively young age of the group. Sooner or later, the Hispanic population will start to influence elections.” 204 The median age of Texas Latinos is 26. Yet California’s number is not far off at 27, so aging clearly is not the only thing that might bring up Texas’ Latino turnout in the future.

How the Tejano vote will look in the future is a matter of some debate. The claims of observers range from predictions that the first Hispanic governor of Texas is an election away 205 to claims that “Demographic inevitability alone won’t save the Democrats.” 206 Texas Monthly reports the figures of Mike Baselice, a respected Republican pollster, who says that every two years the Hispanic portion of the voting electorate increases by about half a percentage point. 207 It is important to note that a large portion of Tejanos live in South Texas—a poor, border area that is over 80 percent Hispanic and receives relatively little attention from Austin where neglect by politicians makes Hispanics distrustful. Paul Burka notes the factors which demobilize and disenchant South Texas voters: “the perception in South Texas that the Democratic Party took the border for granted when it was in power and still does, the grinding effect of

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205 Mercedes Olivera “Will 2018 produce the first Hispanic governor of Texas?” The Dallas Morning News January 19, 2008 ebscohost.com
207 Paul Burka, “Minority Report.”
poverty, which leads people to believe that voting benefits only the politicians, not the voters.” For Democratic-leaning Latinos, there are no big names on the ballot to draw out voters. Furthermore, the Patrón system (a south Texas Democratic machine) has historically replicated the neglect by Austin experienced by the region. “Democrats are going to have to clean up their act or they are going to lose more and more races in South Texas. The older people who have lived under the Patrón system all their lives are dying out. Younger, upwardly mobile Hispanics will not put up with it. The old ways will not go peacefully, but they will go.”

It seems they have already started to disappear with the rise of the Republican Party. In 2010, Rick Perry won almost half of the Hispanic vote in South Texas, countering claims that the region holds potential for growth of a new Hispanic base.

**Party Planning**

The complimentary explanation to the friendly rhetoric of the Texas GOP is its organizational groundwork. The state party is one of the most powerful in the country and there is good reason to look to the “Lone Star recipe” for more than a solution to the Latino problem. It’s a back and forth of well funded, volunteer stocked branches with supporting organizations and the sheer dominance of the party in the state which feed and propel one another.

The ubiquity of the party in a way allows Republicans to reach out to Latinos in ways which Democrats cannot. As Katie Glueck of *Politico* article points out, the Democratic Party in the past has been wary about expending any effort in a blood red state: “[Republican] Operatives regularly meet with Hispanic groups, appear on Spanish-

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208 Paul Burka, “Minority Report,”
language television, and bring the party’s pro-immigrant message to minority neighborhoods. The Democratic National Committee? No. Welcome to the Republican Party of Texas.” Erica Grieder elaborates, “The Republicans have been the biggest game in town for a long time and despite Texas's reputation, most of them aren't crazy.”

Central to the Republican strategy is contacting and developing Latino leaders. Texas GOP chairman Steve Munisteri stresses the importance of outreach, “You need to be in the community, ongoing, day after day, year after year, with representatives of the party meeting with community leaders, listening to them, responding to them, encouraging participation and promoting people within the party from a diverse group.” The party focuses on recruiting Hispanic candidates, getting all candidates on Telemundo and Univision, and utilizing focus groups and polls to see how their message played out. Even more liberal organizations like NALEO acknowledge that Texas Republicans have been strategic. Examples of how individual candidates and activists take on this duty of outreach include attending naturalization ceremonies for new immigrants, hosting citizen workshops with Hispanic Republican attorneys, and bringing conservative speakers to Hispanic neighborhoods. As I discussed in the previous chapter academic studies show that this kind of symbolic outreach is welcoming of the Hispanic community and appealing to Latinos. Even the stumbling of white politicians with a foreign culture does not diminish the effect of the strategy. Todd Oleson who

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209 Glueck.
210 Grieder, email message to author
211 Glueck.
212 Glueck.
213 Glueck.
worked on the Bush-Cheney reelection campaign recalls: “Bush knew his Spanish sucked, but he knew the families that were listening to him appreciated that he was trying, that he was genuine in that effort[...] “When he stumbled, or sounded a bit like only George Bush could deliver the line, they laughed, and said, ‘But you can see in his eyes, he’s genuine in his delivery, and his request of us, which is, ‘Trust me, I will lead, and will do so in a way that will honor what you’re telling your children and grandchildren.””\footnote{Glueck.}

Conspicuously missing from this list of GOP sponsored efforts is direct voter registration and mobilization. As the low contact rate for Tejanos suggests, the Texas GOP’s approach seems more about priming its image than turning out Latinos. Yet this approach may soon be complemented by the groundwork necessary to turn out Latino voters. Groups like the Federation of Hispanic Republicans are growing a network of conservative Latino activists who stress the importance of face-to-face contact with Latino voters.\footnote{“Texas Republicans Use Latino Activists to Gain Votes,” The Latino Times, March 27, 2013 http://latinotimes.com/politics/46105-texas-republicans-use-latino-activists-to-gain-voters.html} FHR is one example of the vibrant independent groups bent on furthering the Republican cause who support the groundwork of Republican politicians and the party itself. During the 2004 presidential election neither party spent time or effort in Texas—no national or state Democratic money flowed to ground efforts and Kerry and Edwards did not even visit the state. Yet Focus on the Family spent large sums on Spanish-language radio ads and outreach to Hispanics throughout the state and Bush improved his margin among Hispanics by 5 percent.\footnote{Jessica Lavariega Monforti, “A Candle in the Wind?” Beyond the Barrio: Hispanics in the 2004 Election (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010) P.179-81} Last year, Hispanic Republicans
of Texas was started by George P. Bush and other leading Latinos to recruit and support the candidacies of young Hispanic Republicans. It also managed to convince a sitting Democrat, State Representative J.M. Lozano to switch parties.

Perhaps one of the most important classes of independent contributors to political success in Texas is churches. Religion plays a vital role in Texas politics and churches are a hub in political outreach for campaigns. In the past, these have been utilized by both parties in Texas. Groups like Focus on the Family distribute literature emphasizing conservative and family values in support of Republicans. The Alinsky-ite organizations COPS (Communities Organized for Public Service) and UNO (United Neighborhoods Organization) use the structure of the Catholic Church to organize communities throughout the country for progressive causes and Texas is no exception. Organizers unite the communitarian traditions of the Church with modern-day issues and utilize its strength and structure to mobilize its members, making Catholic parishes “the backbone of Alinsky organizing efforts among Mexican Americans.”²¹⁷

Religion’s hold on voters is much weaker in California. “For the loyalty of Mexican Americans in San Antonio, the Catholic Church competes with folk beliefs, anticlericalism, and fundamentalist Protestantism. In Los Angeles the Church contends with all these, plus secularism.”²¹⁸ This last certainly seems to be the winner in California. After migration to California, attachment to the Catholic Church drops among Catholic Latinos and drops even further with the second generation. Recalling the story of the Los Angeles priest above and the mobility of the Latino population, it is clear how these factors and the popularity of secularism in California weaken the strength of the

²¹⁷ Skerry, 145.
²¹⁸ Skerry, 59.
Church in California. Yet in Texas, and across the country, growth in many churches is driven by Latino populations, and so their political importance also grows. Support for comprehensive immigration reform has been vocalized by both the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and several Evangelical Christian organizations.\footnote{Victoria M. DeFrancesco Soto, “Latinos are the Holy Grail of the Religious Right,” \textit{Latino Decisions} February 13, 2013 http://www.latinodecisions.com/blog/2013/02/13/latinos-are-the-holy-grail-of-the-religious-right/} Emphasis on the importance of the family unit and even some cautious calls for a path towards legal status or citizenship have been directed by these groups towards politicians.

Faced with this behemoth organization and its independent aids, the Democratic Party of Texas cannot compete. It lacks the organizational infrastructure, funding, and grassroots enthusiasm which stock the GOP arsenal. As GOP strategist Andy Seré puts it, “Democrats simply lack anything close to the statewide infrastructure that a majority party has, and they don’t appear even close to it. In order to become competitive, they need to expand their donor base beyond trial lawyers and their voter base beyond minorities. And until they do, they are not going to be competitive in a state as big and fast-growing as Texas is.”\footnote{Alexander Burns, “Democrats Launch Plan to Turn Texas Blue,” March 24, 2013 http://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/democrats-launch-plan-to-turn-texas-blue-86651.html} No Democrat has won statewide office in Texas for over two decades and Republicans dominate the legislature. In many races, Democrats do not even field candidates though they boast some success in local politics.

One of their best strategies may be to focus on turning out more Hispanic voters. Democratic political Consultant George Christian notes that “Texas Democrats have been less successful than their California counterparts at turning the state's Latino population
into a solid Democratic voting bloc.”

In fact many Democratic politicos think turning the state blue is just a matter of pouring money into registration and turnout campaigns in Hispanic areas. Some Democrats think it’s just a matter of money—enough of it will turn Latinos to voting and Texas to blue. One Democratic County Commissioner claims, "Someone is going to have to come down here and invest significant money on turning out the Latino population. It's going to take about $25 million. Until they do that, we're just going to be in the same spot.”

The money is on its way. In July of 2012, President Obama, noting that Texas is “not considered one of the battleground states,” promised “that’s going to be changing soon.” Following the comment, in March 2013, the Democratic National Committee announced its Battleground Texas initiative. Over the next several years it plans to pour tens of millions of dollars and several top Obama campaign workers into Texas, including Jeremy Bird, field director for the Obama campaign determined to, “make Texas a battleground state by treating it like one.” The focus rests on expanding the electorate by registering more voters—particularly minorities.

Democrats are hoping that demography favors their destiny and the trends seem to align with their hopes. And while Erica Grieder calls these “overly reductive” she lays out the reasons that Democrats have a chance to make some headway in the state. First, (largely due to the Hispanic population) the state is younger than the national average and younger voters favor Democrats. Second, recent population growth has been driven by

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222 Root.
224 Burns.
in-migration from other states. In 2011, Texas saw the most growth in population driven by movement from other states than any other state. Grieder notes that the same kind of in-migration (from Republican northeastern states in the 1970s) precipitated the last shift in state party dominance (from Democratic to Republican control). Considering that the second highest state to state migration pattern in the U.S. in 2011 flowed from California to Texas, there may be cause for Republican concern. Finally, she claims that the Republican Party “is getting a little bloated,” citing infighting between moderate and hard-line conservatives.

**Learning from the Lone-Star State**

To the extent that the academic studies and testimony of seasoned politicos agree, there are certainly lessons to be drawn from the Texas Republican Party. The first commutes the importance of friendly rhetoric and symbolic efforts to connect with voters in a Latino cultural context, for example speaking in Spanish, attending naturalization ceremonies, etc. The second lesson rests on extending that friendliness to pro-immigrant policies. The benefit of state-level politics here is that these policies regard how immigrants are treated, rather than touching on the more controversial and federal topic of whether undocumented immigrants belong in the U.S. Texas Republicans have certainly had little trouble here in joining with Democratic legislators to pass such pro-immigrant policies. Finally, on a party level, the Texas GOP has dedicated many resources to priming its own image for Latinos, even if independent groups must pick up the slack on voter contact. The lessons gleaned from Hispanics and Republicans in Texas

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226 Maciag
227 Grieder, email message to author
seem to align with the arguments of the academics cited in the previous chapter who emphasize political rhetoric, symbolism, and voter contact.

However the “Lone Star recipe” does not promise unconditional victories. Much like California, Texas hangs in a moment of pause and a time for reflection. The difference is the willingness of party leaders to address the problem. While the “proven Lone Star recipe” promises modest success for Republicans among Latinos, Texas GOP chairman Munisteri acknowledges the problem which shifting demographics present: "Outreach is not recruiting a few Hispanic officials. If you want to have a real political party, you have to include everybody. You can't lose ninety percent of the African Americans and seventy percent of the Hispanics. The party has to embrace change." Pouring over numbers, he is the first to admit that while Republicans win races in Texas, their share of the vote has been dropping. But as the share of Hispanics among registered voters increases by roughly half a percentage point every two years in Texas, there seems to be ample time to avert a crisis.

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228 Glueck.
229 Burka, “The Party Never Ends!”
230 Burka, “Minority Report.”
Conclusion

Improving on current Republican percentages of the Latino vote in California is a tractable challenge. The current moment is primed for action and at least a portion of Hispanic voters are the Republican Party’s to lose, or rather, keep losing. The information on Latino groups within certain districts exists for Republicans to exploit. The information gathered in this thesis demonstrates how this can be done.

First, Latinos are much like other Americans in the issues they care about. Education and the state of the economy are always top concerns for Latinos. Broaching these issues with an eye to how they play out in the Latino community is important. Policy areas where Republicans might best connect with Latinos include school choice, solving joblessness, and emphasizing family values overall, but especially on issues like immigration.

Second, the symbolism of the campaign—from use of Spanish to perceived likeability—plays an important role in success among Latinos. A shared racial identity and cultural connection or at least an open appreciation of that culture is absolutely necessary for making a connection with the community. A network of Latino volunteers or activists friendly to the campaign stretches campaign resources further, turning out more votes for Republicans with face-to-face contact and affirmation of a shared interest in the ethnic community.

These recommendations are confirmed with the chapter on Texas. The necessity of more amicable rhetoric as part of building a Latino-friendly campaign image is clear. We also learn that many Republicans in Texas support more moderate stances on state-
level immigrant policies, indicating room for adjustment within the California GOP on this issue, without sacrifice of conservative principles.

**Latinos and Big Government**

A 2011 Pew Hispanic poll asked Latinos if they would rather “pay higher taxes to support a larger government or pay lower taxes and have a smaller government”? Latinos favored the former 75 to 19 percent, far more in favor of big government than the population as a whole, which favored smaller government 48 to 41 percent.²³¹

A frequent claim not yet addressed in this thesis is that as an economically disadvantaged group, Latinos are dependent on social welfare programs supported by Democrats and that their loyalty will remain with the Democratic Party for that reason. My research already supports my first objection to this statement that campaign symbolism plays a larger role than policy positions in determining the Latino vote. My second observation is that as assimilation occurs, Hispanics will begin to look more like middle-class Americans with a more even division of political ideologies and loyalties. Observing foreign-born immigrants at different lengths of American experience, we see that Latinos assimilate to American culture, though at a slower pace than most previous ethnic immigrant groups. The share of foreign-born Latinos living in poverty more than halves from 10 years in the country to 30 years in the country. The share proficient in English move from a third to almost three quarters. The percentage of these immigrants who own their own home increases from around 16 percent at 10 years since migration to

almost 65 percent at 30 years. The inevitable assimilation of Latinos makes reaching out to them now very important in order to break down the anti-Latino image which may be the most important barrier to Republican Party success with this demographic. Finally, Latinos are an exceptionally young group with an average age of 27 in California. As this population ages, it may well begin to share the concerns which make many older voters more conservative. Furthermore, illegal immigration—a phenomenon which brings the least skilled and most impoverished Mexicans to California has declined significantly. In 2009, the net of inflows and outflows across the Mexico-U.S. border was zero.

**Future Research**

As micro-targeting in campaigns becomes more sophisticated, it will allow for more experimentation and research like that of Donald Green and Alan Gerber. Work similar to their controlled experimentation with voter contact and turnout is needed to explore more specifically how the Latino population responds to various forms of contact and appeals. The literature on Spanish-language media is scarce and extensions regarding various radio and television ads could reveal important observations to inform a Latino-targeted media strategy.

My research suggests that in-person campaigning by candidates and their (especially Latino) volunteers is an effective means of winning over Latino voters. What warrants further study is the extent to which canvassing door-to-door is more effective than “taco stand politics” in which candidates insert themselves in a community location or event. Similarly the ways in which church organization can be used to spread the campaign message, recruit volunteers, and publicize the campaign among Latino

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members warrants far more study with a focus on conservative activism as the current literature reflects the reality that Alinsky organizers have been the ones in the past to take advantage of church organization.

Also missing to literature on Latino voters is a compilation of case studies on Republican candidates who consistently win substantial portion of the Hispanic vote in their districts with those who do not. The variables highlighted in this thesis, such as ethnic identity, rhetorical habits, Spanish-language ability, and mobilization strategy warrant more study in this context.

In the introduction to this thesis, I suggested that the history of California as a bell-weather for the nation is a cause for concern among Republicans. The comparison between Texas and California highlights the unique institutions in each which lead to very different Latino turnout for Republicans. These two states sit on opposite ends of a spectrum with very different racial contexts, political institutions, and candidates which uniquely shape the political experience of Latinos in each state. Within this spectrum fall many other states with Republican Parties equally concerned about the implications of living in a majority-minority society. In some ways the prescriptions above should prove even more effective in these states. Few have the vitriol-filled history with Latinos which California maintains. Republican parties in states with a less significant immigrant population might also be more moderate on issues like immigration. Isolation from the immigrant group can also speed assimilation and prohibit the development of an ethnic consciousness which causes many California Latinos to unite on many political issues. For these and a number of other reasons, the recommendations of this thesis may prove
more valuable to campaigns in other states. In fact, from a national perspective, experimenting with smaller states may prove more cost-effective and produce valuable adjustments to the approach. Returning to our question of whether California is a bellweather for the rest of the nation—it certainly does not have to be. The only state parties who can reap the rewards of careful campaign strategy are those who try to utilize it.

Looking just a decade or two into the future, Hispanic voters will be integral to the success of candidates in either party. This thesis provides a base of knowledge about Hispanic voters generally in California, but more importantly I hope to underscore the need for both information on the diversity of Latinos in every district and mobilization efforts—including volunteer and monetary resources—directed at Latino voters. Armed with this kind of data and willingness to engage Latinos, Republicans can look forward to the awakening of the “sleeping giant” among U.S. demographics with optimism.
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