

POLITICS, LATINO

The terms *Latino* and *Hispanic* are the most accepted words for a diverse population of people with linguistic, geographic, and historical similarities, but the terms are wrought more for practical convenience than descriptive clarity. The literature on Latino politics has stressed the differences between the various Latino groups since the Latino National Political Survey in 1989, the first major national survey specifically targeting Latinos. National debates over immigration policy in 1994 and 2006, however, demonstrate that despite their diversity, Latinos are a group of people distinguishable, for better or worse, by both Latinos and the electorate at-large.

LATINO ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

The litmus test of civic participation for any group is their level of electoral turnout. David Leal, Matt A. Barreto, Jongho Lee, and Rodolfo O. de la Garza noted in "The Latino Vote in the 2004 Election" that Latino voter turnout "surged from 5.9 million in 2000 to at least 7 million in 2004" (2005, p. 41). Increasing levels of electoral participation may suggest a comparative increase in socioeconomic status, higher levels of personal interest, greater levels of civic engagement, or a greater effort on the part of the establishment to recruit Latinos. The greatest impact Latinos have had on American politics comes from speculation regarding the Latino vote, but the numbers paint a considerably different picture. Table 1 illustrates U.S. Census Bureau reports showing that registration and participation rates among Latino citizens and non-citizens have hardly changed since 1980. The increase in the raw numbers of Hispanics voting from 1980 to 2004 is attributable almost entirely to population growth, considered to be the driving force of Latino politics.

LATINOS' RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

In their work *The Chicano Political Experience* F. Chris Garcia and Rodolfo de la Garza illustrated four models to explain the relationship between Latinos and American society in 1977: pluralism, internal colonialism, and elitism. Rodney Hero later contributed his influential description of a two-tiered pluralistic society in 1992 with *Latinos and the U.S. Political System*.

Under the pluralist framework, groups vie with one another on a competitive field, each with their own advantages, resources, and centers of power where there are multiple access points to influence the political system. The most compelling argument for a pluralistic model is Lawrence H. Fuchs's *The American Kaleidoscope* (1990), in

which he parallels the Latino immigrant experience and past immigrants who are now largely integrated into the political power structure.

By contrast, internal colonialism claims a sociopolitical system in which Latinos are dominated and exploited by other groups, even though they may have the same formal legal status of the dominant group. It emphasizes the integration of historically racist relationships between the dominant non-Latino majority and Latinos into the fabric of the political system. Distinctions from the dominant group are seen to have negative or inferior qualities, and the stereotypes of Latinos are embedded into the institutions of the social and political systems, from the electoral system to the financial and educational infrastructure.

The elitism perspective asserts that there is a privileged class of people who enjoy superior resources with racially generated attachments that serve to further appropriate the privileged class to their position at the top. The elitism model depends less on racial distinctions and more on class differences to explain the unequal distribution of power and resources that characterizes the Latino masses. Elitism is also different in that it does account for some growth in Latino influence, but Latino elites are not likely to resemble the Latino masses and are more likely to resemble their non-Latino elite cohort.

Hero argues that there is a large segment of Latinos who are structurally cut off from the opportunities that are available to the mainstream, despite the success stories. He describes a compelling perspective on Latinos' relationship with the American system, a two-tiered pluralistic society in which there is a conventional population that operates in the traditional patterns that most immigrant groups do, and a second tier that consists of a political and social subclass whose position is supported by historical and cultural inequalities that have become embedded into the fabric of the structural system. Two-tiered pluralism is a complex framework that consists of a political system that is formally unrestricting but exists within a social system that is informally constrained by negative historical relationships.

The 1994 Proposition 187 debate in California illustrates Hero's model, as Latinos were politically fully engaged, but largely helpless in their efforts to prevent Proposition 187 from passing decisively. Although Proposition 187 was deemed unconstitutional, the anti-immigration movement throughout the United States remains robust into the mid-2000s and illustrates the relationship Hero draws between Latinos and the American political and social systems. Latinos may have a legal status equal to the majority, but the continued poverty and social status of Latinos is a function of continually having

to defend themselves against the mainstream, preventing them from tapping into valuable social resources.

ASSESSING LATINOS' RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AMERICAN SYSTEM

As noted above, the rate of Latino electoral participation has not changed significantly since 1980, just three years after Garcia and de la Garza outlined their models on the relationship between Latinos and the American system. After reflecting on nearly three decades of literature on Latino politics, however, de la Garza believes Latinos do indeed fit into the pluralistic model. He points out that this was not always the case and if he were to make the same assessment back in 1977, pluralism would not have been his first choice.

The empirical evidence since 1977 has swayed his opinion, suggesting that the distasteful realities of the Latino experience have indeed improved. One reason for de la Garza's initial judgment in 1977 might have been the available models at the time, which were used to explain the how, why, and whom of Latino politics. Up until 1977, the field of political behavior had largely settled into two general camps, rational actor theory and socioeconomic status theory. These theories are not exclusive, but in their stages of development before 1977, neither could sufficiently explain the position of Latinos in the American system.

The literature on Latino politics up to that point had been guided by the scholarship on African American politics and focused on grassroots movements that tended to skew the perspective toward the inequalities born out of the social and political climate of the time. These perspectives focused on the effects of socioeconomic status (SES), social capital, institutional trust, group identity, and group relations. The development of these models provides researchers with the tools to better understand the forces behind Latino politics.

Up until 1977, the strong impact that SES had on political participation was a truism in the field. The rational actor model assigned higher stakes to the socially privileged because they had a greater incentive to take an active role in a system from which they benefited. The socioeconomic status model had established the connection between participation and higher levels of SES in a variety of national and international surveys at the time. Whether it was out of civic-minded duty or rational self-interest, Latinos could hardly be seen to have had much of an incentive to participate.

Given the low SES of Latinos it was not difficult to speculate why Latinos did not participate, but the empirical models had yet to capture the depth of this dimension in Latino politics. While Latinos simply did not have the

Registration and voting of non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics in the 2004 and 1980 presidential elections

	2004			
	N/H White		Hispanic	
	Citizens only	Non-citizens included	Citizens only	Non-citizens included
Registered	75.1%	73.5%	64.0%	34.9%
Voted	67.2%	65.8%	47.2%	28.0%
	1980			
Registered	84.7%	70.3%	56.0%	36.3%
Voted	66.2%	62.8%	46.1%	29.9%

The comparison between 1980 and 2004 is an approximation because the changes in ethnic and racial categories by the census does not allow true apples to apples comparison.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 1

resources to effectively participate, from a theoretical perspective one could only speculate as to how Latinos would be able to exact change on the political system.

This hole in the literature left a heavy burden on pluralism to explain the unequal distribution of resources, and the literature had hardly given much promise in Latinos' ability to traverse the social barriers that were clearly evident at the time. Elitism and internal colonialism offered the best explanation for the position of Latinos in the American system almost by default. But if the relative participation rates have not changed much since 1977, what evidence have the empirical models provided that might convince de la Garza that Latinos live in a pluralistic society?

One potential answer is that the field of Latino politics has learned that Latinos behave no differently than do non-Latinos and that ethnicity in and of itself has little direct effect on the participation rates of Latinos. Carole J. Uhlaner, Bruce E. Cain, and D. Roderick Kiewiet concluded in their 1989 article "Political Participation of Ethnic Minorities in the 1980s" that "Latino activity rates appear no lower than those of non-Hispanic whites once demographic factors and related determinants of participation are controlled" (p. 217). The behavioral models have taken a greater account of the experiences and obstacles that faced Latinos and are able to control for many of the speculative factors that had not been empirically established, such as different patterns of civic voluntarism and an underdeveloped elite-driven organizational structure necessary for effective mobilization.

More important, events since 1977 have provided many examples of Latino political success and the large Latino population has made it easier to witness a growing Latino middle class. Because of this, it is difficult to jus-

tify the internal colonialism model, and Hero's two-tiered pluralism was an attempt to rectify the internal colonialism model with the facts on the ground. Two-tiered pluralism concedes what at that point could not be argued anymore, that Latinos had indeed reached legal parity with the majority, while still relying on historical racism to explain the differences in socioeconomic status. The future may prove two-tiered pluralism to be wrong, but until then, it is still the best framework available to explain why Latinos behave the same as non-Latinos given the same characteristics, and why they do not reap identical benefits as Anglos do from the same political actions.

SEE ALSO *Behaviorism; Boricua; Caribbean, The; Citizenship; Colony, Internal; Elite Theory; Hernandez v. Texas; Immigrants, Latin American; Immigration; Indigenismo; Latino National Political Survey; Latinos; Pluralism; Stratification*

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POLITICS, REPRODUCTIVE

SEE *Reproductive Politics*.

POLITICS, SOUTHERN

In politics, religion, and culture, the South is arguably the United States' most unique region. Southerners, particularly native-born white southerners, have a collective consciousness and attachment to history that exceeds that found in other regions, such as the upper Midwest, New

England, and the West. A native-born Connecticut or Massachusetts resident is far less likely to identify as a "New Englander" than a native-born South Carolinian or Mississippian is to identify as a southerner. Historian David Goldfield refers to the drive among some white southerners to preserve some elements of the past as "still fighting the Civil War" in his 2002 book of the same title. While not unique to the region, several elements, including military traditions, a "culture of honor," attachment to traditional gender roles, and fundamentalist Christianity, have striking support in much of the South compared to the rest of the nation. These elements materially influence politics, and southern politics, always distinctive in the past, remains distinctive in the twenty-first century.

Which states make up the South? This question has no single agreed-upon answer, and opinions vary. Many political-science datasets include data from only the eleven former Confederate states. For the purposes of this entry, the South includes thirteen states: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Kentucky. The first eleven of these states were the former Confederate states—those that seceded from the Union during the Civil War. Oklahoma and Kentucky, though not former Confederate states, have cultural and political features—for example, large Southern Baptist populations—that arguably warrant their consideration as southern states as well.

CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY STUDIES OF SOUTHERN POLITICS

The distinctive nature of southern politics is implicitly acknowledged in the two most widely cited scholarly studies on the topic: V. O. Key's *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (1949), and Merle Black and Earl Black's *Politics and Society in the South* (1987). Key wrote when southern whites remained economically, socially, and politically dominant over blacks—as they had been since the end of slavery in 1865. Southern whites used their control over government to ensure and perpetuate racial segregation and impose rampant, official racial discrimination on wide swaths of social institutions: education, housing, employment, voting, and criminal justice, to name a few. While racial discrimination also existed in much of the North, it was more pervasive and severe, and more a product of government actions, in the South. As Key notes, most of the South was under one-party Democratic control, and most political conflict in southern states centered on factions within the Democratic Party. Factions sometimes centered on regions within states (with conflict between Delta and "hills" factions in Mississippi). In other cases, factions centered on personalities (such as the flamboyantly racist "Pitchfork Ben" Tillman of South