BEYOND THE BARRIO

Latinos in the 2004 Election

edited by

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Chapter One

Introduction

A View from the Battleground’s Periphery: Latinos and the 2004 Elections

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Since 1988 the first two editors of this volume have coordinated collaborative analyses of the influence of the Hispanic population on national and state politics in the United States. More than fifty scholars have contributed to these quadrennial analyses of Latino efforts to shape federal- and state-level politics and political institutions’ efforts to bring Latinos into their winning coalitions (de la Garza and DeSipio 1992, 1996, 1999, 2005). Each of the four volumes published thus far has struggled with an ongoing dilemma: how to characterize Latino contributions accurately so that we neither perpetuate the rhetoric claiming a strong and inevitable Hispanic influence in politics today nor undervalue the increasing contribution of Latinos to the national political fabric.

This volume highlights the somewhat confusing and contradictory nature of the Latino constituency in the U.S. political arena. Early in the 2004 presidential campaigns, genuine two-party competition seemed to occur as both parties intensely courted the Hispanic electorate and established strategies for victory that included a central role for Latinos
and as each nominee reasonably claimed substantial loyalty among specific Hispanic subgroups. As time progressed, however, we find that the candidates, campaigns, and parties (especially the Democrats) largely neglected and marginalized Latino leaders, voters, and campaign staff in the primaries and in the general election—in particular, John Kerry and his campaign did not make personal connections to Latino leaders or voters—and neither campaign hired many Latinos, relegating them to outreach in Hispanic communities when they did.

In addition, Latino leaders were generally unable to overcome the neglect of the major parties and did not invest extensively in mobilizing Latinos new to the voting process. The Latino vote grew at rates comparable to recent periods between presidential elections, but this growth did not reduce the size of the pool of adults eligible to vote who do not turn out on election day.

Nevertheless, the Latino presence and, more important, its potential as a newly coalescing, sizable, and growing electorate increasingly guides the national political discussion. Nationally, Latinos had a previously unavailable opportunity to shape the selection of the 2004 Democratic presidential nominee in one early primary (Arizona) and one early caucus (New Mexico). In addition, the expectations and potential for Latino influence remained high throughout that race, influencing candidate and campaign strategies; were we to measure only their Election Day influence, we would miss their growing role in shaping the terms of national policy debates and of candidate (and potential candidate) strategies.

This potential has already begun to affect the outcomes of local and state races. Hispanics are increasingly able to use their numbers and organizations to form coalitions with other electorates to elect Latinos to office; in 2004 their participation in key coalitions resulted in the election of two Latinos to the U.S. Senate. This volume highlights the foundation of new forms of Latino politics and successful campaigns by Latino candidates for offices not previously held by Latinos (see, e.g., chapters 3, 4, and 12, this volume).

We acknowledge that not all the states analyzed here saw extensive Latino-focused mobilization or efforts to influence state or national political outcomes. Latino votes were, again, not significant to the outcome of the 2004 presidential race, and Latino voters were ultimately marginalized by the campaigns. Incremental growth in Latino voting
and Latino influence has not reached a tipping point; Latinos still do not routinely determine national outcomes, except in the most unusual circumstances, or influence elections as many pundits and campaigns expect early in each election cycle. Nevertheless, we think it is important to continue to chronicle the conduct of the campaigns in these selected states so that we can document the rise of Latino politics in the modern era over time and across the nation. Comparisons across the years for any of the states will allow for an otherwise unavailable portrait of the substantive meaning of contemporary Latino politics.

In this chapter and those that follow, we examine the political consequences of a subtle Latino voice. We begin here with a brief overview of features of the 2004 campaign that were different from those in previous elections. We then provide a narrative of the 2004 campaign to show how Latinos organized and how campaigns and candidates incorporated Latinos and Latino issues into the campaign. This narrative offers critical points of comparison with similar campaign narratives presented in the four previous volumes in this series. The third section of this chapter looks at nonpresidential federal- and state-level races of particular importance in Hispanic communities. We asked that the contributors to this volume also address statewide races, as appropriate, in order to provide a sense of Latino organization and influence at multiple electoral levels. The fourth section measures the influence of Latino votes in the 2004 election at the national level and in states with large Latino populations. This discussion assesses why Latinos constitute a smaller share of the electorate than they do of the national population and examines several measures of the impact of Latino votes on the outcomes of the 2004 national and state elections. It also assesses the role partisanship played in the 2004 election. We conclude the chapter with some observations of long-term opportunities and barriers facing Hispanic electorates and an assessment of how the 2004 campaign altered and reinforced these long-term patterns.

**WHAT WAS NEW IN 2004?**

The 2004 elections did not change the role Latino voters have played in national elections over the past twenty years. Instead, the patterns of incremental growth in the Latino electorate and instrumental neglect by
political parties, candidates, and institutions continued in 2004. That said, several important changes in the structure of the election, in the patterns of Latino participation, and in the electoral outcomes merit comment at the outset so that they do not get lost in the broader narrative of the 2004 campaign. These changes appeared anew in 2004 or became more apparent throughout that campaign compared to previous years, signaling a future for Latino politics that is beyond the barrio—or at least beyond the narrow confines that have characterized it in national campaigns since 1988. Latino politics in 2004 was more national than in the past. First, candidates and campaigns sought Latino votes nationally. Second, the potential of Latino votes shaped the national discourse about electoral outcomes. Third, Latinos had the opportunity to shape the presidential election not just in November but also in the primaries and in key competitive Senate races in states where Latinos are far from the majority.

In terms of the structure of the election, three important changes occurred that, though they do not appear to have affected the 2004 elections, could make a difference in the future. A potentially positive change was the calendar shift of the primaries. Prior to 2004, each party selected its nominee before large numbers of Latinos voted. Democrats changed this in 2004 with a conscious effort to reach out to Latinos (and more broadly to westerners) by scheduling an early primary in Arizona and an early caucus in New Mexico. On the negative side, many states enacted ballot security requirements that increased the likelihood that potential voters would be asked to provide evidence of citizenship, despite little evidence that non-U.S. citizens vote and considerable evidence that many U.S. citizens lack the documentation needed to meet these standards. Latino leaders reported increased levels of intimidation at the polls in states that implemented these requirements. Finally, Latino politics expanded to new destinations: campaigns in battleground states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania saw Latino outreach as major components of state-level campaigns.

As we will demonstrate, Latino voting increased incrementally but at approximately the same rate as that seen between other presidential elections (de la Garza and DeSipio 2006). Guided by exit polls, many analysts find the most interesting change in Latino 2004 voting patterns was a shift to higher levels of Republican presidential voting. While we do see a shift to support President George W. Bush relative to
the 2000 election, we are less confident that Bush saw increases at the rates suggested in media accounts. We do, however, see some interesting changes in Latino voting patterns. To the extent that President Bush improved his performance among Latinos, the gains appeared among two segments of the Latino electorate—Tejanos and Protestants, particularly Evangelical and Pentecostal Protestants (DeSipio and Uhlaner 2007; Lee and Pachon 2007). In part, these Protestant Bush voters reflect a more general policy congruence between religious conservative voters and the Republican Party. In addition, the 2004 elections demonstrated that targeted Bush/Republican outreach could translate these policy and ideological connections into higher numbers of Republican Latino votes. This ability to narrowly target Latino outreach efforts (and, evidently, to win votes in close elections based on such efforts) is a new phenomenon.

The 2004 election also saw a dramatic change in Latino representation: two Latinos were elected to the U.S. Senate. Never before had more than one Latino served in the U.S. Senate at any given time, and none had served since 1977. Furthermore, the gubernatorial election of a sitting U.S. senator in New Jersey laid the foundation for a third Latino to join the Senate via the appointment process. One of the newly elected senators was Cuban American, also a first.

LATINOS AND THE 2004 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: AN OVERVIEW

Between the resolution of the 2000 election and the beginning of the 2004 primary season, national political elites focused on the potential influence of the Latino vote. Matthew Dowd, a pollster and senior consultant to the Republican National Committee (RNC), noted in 2001 that if Bush won the same share of the minority vote in 2004 that he did in 2000, he would lose the election by three million votes, placing Latinos at the center of Republican strategies for 2004 (Kiefer 2001). Dowd’s calculations focused on minority populations that Republicans could win: Latinos and Asian Americans. Taking the next step, Bush adviser Karl Rove said that Bush would lose the election unless he raised his share of the Latino vote to 40 percent, from the roughly 35 percent he earned in 2000.
From the first days of his administration, the president engaged in targeted outreach to Latinos, primarily symbolic in nature, including presidential radio addresses in Spanish, a White House Cinco de Mayo celebration, talk of a guest worker program that might evolve into more comprehensive immigration reform, and frequent visits with Mexican President Vicente Fox. Just as the Democrats were beginning the primary season, Bush made a final preelection outreach effort with a renewed immigration proposal, this one more explicitly acknowledging that comprehensive reform would require a path to legalization for unauthorized immigrants (Bumiller 2004).

Contributing to these outreach efforts, the Republican Party recruited Latino Republicans to compete for statewide office. Some candidates were ultimately successful; others were not able to beat white Republicans in party primaries (Marinucci 2003). Examples of these campaigns, respectively, Florida’s Mel Martinez and California’s Rosario Marin, are discussed below. State and local Republican parties were not as supportive of Latino outreach goals as the national party, a continuing dilemma for Republicans as they try to win more Latino votes.

The Democrats did not cede the Latino vote. In addition to rhetorical appeals, they altered their primary calendar to move Arizona and New Mexico earlier. The Democrats also tapped New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson to deliver a Spanish-language Democratic response to President Bush’s State of the Union message (Salinas 2004).

All the Democratic presidential candidates made efforts to win Latino primary votes. In 2003 eight of the nine Democratic candidates spoke to the annual meeting of the National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO); absent was former Senator Carol Moseley Braun. Two—former Vermont Governor Howard Dean and U.S. Representative Dennis Kucinich (D-OH)—addressed the meeting primarily in Spanish (Barabak 2003; Karamargin 2003). The first of the candidate debates sanctioned by the Democratic Party took place in New Mexico and was hosted by Ray Suarez of PBS and Maria Elena Salinas of Univision. Although this debate did not focus on Latino issues per se, several of the candidates used the occasion to highlight their abilities to speak Spanish or to call for a legalization program for unauthorized immigrants. Observers noted, however, that none of the candidates at the debate “offered any new proposals tailored for the Hispanic community” (Balz and VandeHei 2004).
Introduction

As his campaign developed a sense of inevitability, Governor Dean used this period before the primaries to capture endorsements from prominent Latino leaders, including six of the twenty members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Latino members of Congress differed from their peers in their choice of candidate; Richard Gephardt, who had served as majority and minority leader in the House, received the most congressional endorsements among non-Latinos. No other Democratic candidate had the support of more than two Latino members (Anderson 2003; Eby 2003).

Despite these party and candidate efforts to reach Latino voters and to accentuate the importance of Latino votes in the period before the primaries, the campaigns did not energize Latino voters, nor did Latino voters’ preferences coalesce behind a single candidate. Preelection polling did not show a dramatic move to the Republican Party, as some Republican leaders had hoped, but the polls did show some ambivalence toward the Democrats (Hulse 2003; Marrero 2004). What was not discussed at the time was that this ambivalence was felt especially among adults who were less likely to vote in 2004. The core of the Latino electorate remained aligned with the Democratic Party, and by restructuring the primary calendar, the party created an opportunity for Latinos to have a new voice in presidential politics.

The Primaries

Ultimately, as has been the case in each election since 1988 (de la Garza 1992), Latinos proved largely irrelevant to the selection of their parties’ presidential nominees. Suspense was completely absent on the Republican side. President Bush faced no opposition in his bid for the Republican renomination. On the Democratic side, Latinos in Arizona and New Mexico could have shaped the selection of the Democratic nominee if they had taken positions distinct from other electorates or if they had voted at unusually high levels. Although California had also moved its primary forward (to early March) in the hope that an earlier primary would increase its voice in the presidential selection process, it had little effect on Hispanic voters.

Iowa and New Hampshire continued to lead the caucus and primary calendar in 2004. New Mexico and Arizona changed the traditional calendar by following in the next wave. New Mexico and North

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Dakota held the second wave of caucuses on February 3 (following the January 19 Iowa caucus). Arizona (along with Delaware, South Carolina, Missouri, and Oklahoma) held its primary on February 3, only one week after the January 27 New Hampshire primary. Some pundits characterized February 3 as “Hispanic Tuesday,” following the locution of a southern “Super Tuesday” in earlier elections.

New Hampshire and especially Iowa saw the traditional extensive outreach to all potential voters. This outreach included Latino voters, but they make up a very small share of these states’ electorates: approximately 12,000 in Iowa and 5,000 in New Hampshire (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2005). The large number of young volunteers from all corners of the country energized the Dean campaign, which was particularly aggressive in seeking Latino voters. Latino Democrats in Iowa reported that they had been contacted multiple times by English- and Spanish-speaking Dean staff.

With the collapse of the Dean campaign after his defeat in New Hampshire (and, conclusively, after his defeat in the Wisconsin primary on February 17), John Kerry became the Democratic frontrunner. Although he participated in collective candidate efforts to win Latino votes, he made small attempts to win them in the early primary states (Avila 2003). Kerry formed a Latino Steering Committee in January; its co-chairs were Henry Cisneros, former Small Business Association director Aida Alvarez, New Mexico House Speaker Ben Luján, and Los Angeles City Council member Antonio Villaraigosa. In his New Mexico campaign, Kerry tapped Cisneros, as well as Senator Edward Kennedy, as surrogates to reach Latino voters. He also ran some Spanish-language ads in both states (Kasindorf 2004). Overall, however, the Kerry campaign’s spending on Spanish-language advertising in Arizona and New Mexico was relatively low (approximately $78,000) compared to the other candidates who courted Hispanics: Dean spent $150,000, and Wesley Clark spent $91,000, all in Arizona (Segal 2004b). There is little evidence that the other Democratic candidates conducted targeted Latino outreach in either state.

The Arizona primary and the New Mexico caucuses offered an opportunity for Latino influence in the selection of the Democratic candidate (Roth 2004). Latinos did not express a voice distinct from other state electorates, however. In Arizona, exit polls indicated that 42 per-
percent of Latinos supported John Kerry, roughly the same level of support of non-Hispanic white (Anglo) voters. In New Mexico, approximately one-third of Latino and Anglo caucus participants supported Senator Kerry. Thus, at least among Latino Democrats in these two states, Latinos reinforced the choices of other electorates. This move toward Senator Kerry also occurred in states with few Latino voters that held primaries and caucuses on these days. Although turnout data on Latino voters or caucus-goers in either of these states is not available, there is no evidence that Latinos participated at unexpectedly high levels.

Primaries in states with large Latino populations were held well after John Kerry had come to dominate the Democratic field (a possible exception is Nevada, which held a February 14 caucus). California’s change in its primary date proved futile; by March 2 the nomination race was largely over.

Arizona and New Mexico Latinos voted for Senator Kerry at rates comparable to other electorates; in general, this pattern continued in the two other states that held primaries before Senator Kerry formally wrapped up the nomination in early March. In New York, 67 percent of Latinos and 66 percent of Anglos voted for Kerry. Latinos were more likely than Anglos to support Al Sharpton in New York, but Sharpton’s Latino support remained in the single digits. In California, Latinos were somewhat more likely than Anglos to support Kerry (74 percent among Latinos and 64 percent among Anglos).

Despite the revised primary calendar, the Latino voice in the primaries can at best be viewed as subdued. Latino Democrats joined the Kerry bandwagon as it gained steam. Kerry’s major opponent, Howard Dean, was effectively out of the race before large numbers of Latino voters were consulted. As a result, it is not possible to say if Latinos would have been a pro-Kerry force in a competitive race or if they were just following other Democrats to the new frontrunner (Sanchez 2004). None of the other candidates who were still active by the time the primary calendar moved to states with Latino voters—most notably, John Edwards and Al Sharpton—caught on among Latino voters. Since Kerry did little to win these Latino votes through active campaigning, extensive elite endorsements, Latino-focused advertising, or substantive outreach on issues of importance to Latinos, it is not possible to say
whether he would have been able to energize Latino voters and mobilize Latinos who do not traditionally vote (the majority of the Latino U.S.-citizen adults) in close races, as this one was expected to be (Marelius 2004). As a result, ongoing confusion among pundits about whether Latinos would continue to vote as they traditionally had or would be a swing electorate continued (Lester 2004; Mason 2004; Moreno 2004).

The Postprimary Season

With both nominations sewn up by early March, the candidates had a long period to gear up for the fall campaign. Primarily, each campaign used this time to raise money for its party, focus on key constituencies and states that were expected to be competitive, and undertake certain “bureaucratic” functions (including hiring staff and selecting a running mate in the case of the Kerry campaign).

Most campaign resources were focused on the states perceived to be competitive in the race for Electoral College votes (Shaw 2006). Although this list would narrow later, the spring saw Bush and Kerry speaking to Latinos and other potential voters in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Florida, and Nevada (Garay 2004; Morgan 2004; Radelat 2004; Runningen and Jensen 2004). In other words, they neglected the voters in the states with the most Latino residents: California, Texas, New York, and Illinois. Campaign advertising at this time, including ads primarily in Spanish that targeted Latino voters, targeted these competitive states (Clark 2004; Lang 2004). Both campaigns also began to assemble the leadership networks that would provide the face for the targeted Latino outreach efforts—Viva Bush! and Unidos con Kerry—and the accompanying Web sites and campaign paraphernalia.

Both campaigns ventured beyond the few competitive states to woo Latino elites, however. John Kerry spoke at the annual conferences of the National Council of La Raza and the NALEO, as well as to the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) via satellite. Once selected, vice presidential nominee John Edwards spoke at the annual meeting of the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project (SVREP). President Bush used satellite technology to attend these events, and his campaign sent surrogates, including White House Counsel Alberto Gonzalez and Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson (Associated Press 2004; Balz 2004; Romano 2004).
These meetings offered the venue for the most specific discussion of Latino issues in the campaign. Kerry, in particular, spoke to issues that topped the 2004 Latino issue agenda: education, employment and the labor market, immigration reform, and Iraq and national security.

The Kerry campaign also used this period to select a vice presidential nominee. Among the finalists was New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson (Senior 2004). In addition to his Hispanic heritage, Richardson's potential strengths included his executive branch and diplomatic experience in the Clinton administration and his state and region of residence—New Mexico, a battleground state in the competitive Southwest. Richardson's bluntness often appeared impolitic, leading many to wonder how serious he was in his pursuit of the vice presidency. In fact, despite his status among the handful of names discussed throughout the spring, Richardson insisted that he was not interested in the vice presidency and did not register with the American public. In a June survey, CNN found that voters were most enthusiastic about a Kerry-Edwards or Kerry-Gephardt ticket (CNN 2004). In early July, before Kerry announced his selection of Senator Edwards as the Democratic vice presidential nominee, Governor Richardson withdrew his name from consideration (Coleman 2004). There is no way to evaluate the degree to which discussions of a Richardson candidacy shaped Latino thinking about the campaign. At the time, Richardson was little known outside New Mexico, so it is unlikely that discussions of a Richardson nomination earned Senator Kerry any new Latino support.

Following the pattern of his 2000 campaign, President Bush hired few Latinos for his campaign. Interestingly, he faced little criticism for this neglect. Despite their recently initiated competition for Latino votes, Republican candidates are not held to the same expectations as Democratic candidates for hiring Latinos and assigning them to various roles. John Kerry was routinely lambasted for his low share of Latino staffers. In April, Raul Yzaguirre, president of the National Council of La Raza, denounced the “remarkable and unacceptable absence of Latinos in [the] campaign” (Wilgoren 2004). Yzaguirre noted that Latinos who did work in the campaign were given jobs relating to outreach and not to policy or finance. None of the staff who traveled with Kerry were Latino. Criticisms that the Kerry staff lacked diversity in this pre-general election period spurred the appointment of new African American staff but did not extend to Latinos (Shepard 2004).
This failure to incorporate Latino staff throughout the campaign reflected a broader concern about Kerry that began to be articulated and that would recur throughout the campaign—that the Kerry campaign took Latino votes for granted and did not invest resources in designing a campaign to speak to their policy needs. In April, Alvaro Cifuentes, chair of the Democratic National Committee’s (DNC’s) Hispanic Caucus, circulated an email in which he charged that “the Kerry campaign has no message out there to the Hispanic community, nor has there been any reach-out effort in any state to the Hispanic electorate, at least with any perceivable sustainable strategy in mind” (Wilgoren 2004). Tangibly, state campaigns neglected to reach Latino voters in Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, or Florida in late spring (Finnegan 2004). By contrast, Bush had a campaign presence and a Latino outreach effort in each of these states by May, running ads targeted at Latinos in both Spanish and English. When asked about this gap, the Kerry campaign spoke of the need to focus on fund-raising and its future plans to invest in a Spanish-language advertising blitz. In July the Kerry campaign committed $1 million to Spanish-language advertising in Florida, New Mexico, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, Ohio, Oregon, Washington, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina.

In past elections, the pre–general election period offered Latino leaders the opportunity to organize to enhance the importance of Latino votes or to mobilize nonvoters. Although efforts to increase the number of registered Latino voters were discussed in this period, nonpartisan elite coordination designed to speak to Latino issues or policy needs was not widely achieved. Perhaps this reflects a legacy of the 2000 election and the increased partisan divisions in U.S. society or, perhaps, the absence of nonpartisan leadership in Latino communities; regardless, few Latino voices were heard in this period of the campaign that were not tied to one of the candidates or parties.

Parallel campaign organizations (funded by private donations outside the limits on the candidates and the parties) were able to gear up and set goals during this period. In the lingo of the 2004 campaign, “527 organizations” (named for the section of the tax code that allowed for them to operate as tax-exempt organizations) attempted to mobilize voters. Some of their efforts focused primarily on Latinos; these promised to register one to two million new Latino voters, a number of new
registrants comparable to those in the 2000 election (Díaz 2004). Some focused not just on voter registration but also on turnout in the “battleground” states and were funded and organized with an almost military precision. Latinos in the battleground states—especially Florida, New Mexico, and Nevada—benefited from the mobilization efforts of these 527 organizations, but the majority of Latino nonvoters did not.

The Bush campaign committed to high levels of spending on Spanish-language media, both through the campaign itself and through a 527 organization (Progress for America). Overall, the Bush campaign spent a total of $3.3 million and Progress for America spent an additional $476,000. The most prominent of the 527s organized under the auspices of the New Democrat Network (NDN), however, focused on potential Democratic voters. The NDN funded a media campaign to reach Latino voters using Spanish-language media in the battleground states. These efforts began in March with a commitment of $5 million primarily for Spanish-language ad buys (Copp 2004). Ultimately, it spent about $2.3 million; the Kerry campaign spent an additional $1.3 million, the DNC $1.4 million (Segal 2006).

The NDN came to be one of the major loci of Latino outreach, although this may not have been its goal at inception. The Kerry campaign did not articulate a clear strategy to reach out to Latino voters, and Latino leaders did not organize effectively to coordinate Latino outreach efforts. Through advertising, the NDN ultimately did more than either the Kerry campaign or the DNC. With NDN resources in place, the DNC and the Kerry campaign failed to design targeted outreach strategies for Latinos, following the model of the 2000 race. Although it financed and managed “coordinated campaigns” to elect Democrats at various levels of office in competitive areas (e.g., Kerry, Ken Salazar, John Salazar, and Democrats for the state senate and house in Colorado), it did not focus these efforts extensively on states with high concentrations of Latinos.

State-level efforts to mobilize the Latino vote in the battleground states also began to appear in the spring. Viva Bush! served as an organizational structure for state-level Latino mobilization efforts in New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, and Minnesota. The Kerry campaign relied more on groups independent of the campaign, as did Bush in Florida. These included a voter registration organization led by New
Mexico’s Bill Richardson (Moving America Forward), which focused on Latinos in New Mexico and Florida, and a national nonethnic organization (America Coming Together), which focused on seventeen states, including a targeted Latino mobilization in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, and Florida (Finnegan 2004). Overall, Florida saw more of these mobilization efforts than did other states. Because it remained competitive, these efforts continued throughout the campaign season and included not just voter registration but also get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts to increase turnout (Kinsler 2004).

The Conventions

While each party sought to use its convention as a tool to promote an image of inclusiveness, their efforts took somewhat different forms. The Democrats named New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson convention chair and created a complete Spanish-language version of the convention Web site. Republicans also ensured a Hispanic voice at their convention, but its role was somewhat more formal and muted than at the Democratic convention. Representative Henry Bonilla served as one of the six deputy permanent chairs of the convention. Although the Republicans were more cautious in their approach, each party trumpeted its diversity; for example, GOP press releases discussed the racial/ethnic diversity of its campaign and constituent base, as well as geographic diversity and the presence of large numbers of veterans (Republican National Committee 2004). Media presentations of the delegates at the Republican convention often focused on the black and Latino delegates, perhaps overstating their actual representation.

Each party saw an increase in the number of Hispanic delegates. Of the 4,300 delegates to the 2004 Democratic National Convention, more than 12 percent were Latino (Torrens 2004). The comparable figure in 2000 was slightly more than 10 percent (DeSipio and de la Garza 2005: 37). Latinos made up the largest minority delegation at the Republican National Convention, increasing from approximately 8.3 percent in 2000 to 9.5 percent in 2004 (Republican National Committee 2004). Based on their share of each party, Latinos were arguably underrepresented at the Democratic convention and overrepresented at the Republican convention.
While each convention offered opportunities for Latinos (especially Latino elected officials) to speak, they were not offered the major speeches that the media covered in its limited capacity. Just two Latinos spoke in prime time at the Democratic National Convention: Richardson and Representative Robert Menéndez (D-NJ) (Root 2004). This low representation in the prime-time slots led to last-minute negotiations that added to the number of Latino speakers overall (Adair and Bousquet 2004). Other Latino Democrats who spoke to the convention included AFL-CIO vice president Linda Chavez-Thompson, National Council of La Raza president Raul Yzaguirre, Los Angeles supervisor Gloria Molina, Los Angeles City Council member Antonio Villaraigosa, U.S. Representatives Hilda Solis, Linda Sanchez, Ciro Rodriguez, and Raul Grijalva, and some state and local elected officials.

To the extent that a widely recognized minority voice was prominent at the 2004 Democratic convention, it was that of Illinois Senate candidate Barack Obama, who electrified the convention on its second night in a prime-time speech. Not only was his speech well crafted; it broke from the structure of each night’s theme (frequently focusing on Kerry’s military service and national security issues). To the extent that Latinos watched the Democratic convention (about which there are no data), it was this night that spoke most clearly to Latino issues.

Fewer Latino voices were present at the Republican National Convention in New York, although two speakers were given prominent placement in the prime-time lineup. The president’s nephew, George P. Bush, addressed the convention in Spanish and English on its opening night. Seeking to unite traditional Republican themes with a Latino outreach strategy, he observed, “Our party has always represented the interests of all people seeking opportunity. We are the home of entrepreneurs, men and women who want to know the pride of accomplishment, the honor of self-sufficiency” (Purdum 2004). Former U.S. Treasurer Rosario Marin joined George P. Bush in prime time.

Columnist and former Republican presidential candidate Pat Buchanan released a new book, Where the Right Went Wrong (2004), just before the Republican convention began, undercutting Republicans’ efforts to present themselves as a more diverse and inclusive party than in previous years. Among Buchanan’s indictments of President Bush was his support for immigration reform that, in some iterations, included a
path to permanent residence for unauthorized immigrants in the United States, which caused disquiet among some Republican delegates. At its heart, the book called for a renewed effort in the culture war that Buchanan brought to the floor of the 1992 Republican convention; the power of this sentiment reveals that Latino outreach efforts were questionable for many mainstream Republicans and that the party needed to tread lightly around the issue of inclusion, especially of Latinos, during the convention.

Finally, both conventions offered the opportunity for Latino delegates and party activists to meet possible candidates for the 2008 presidential election, as well as candidates for state office. With the likelihood that there would be no incumbent in either party in 2008, many potential candidates sought inroads among Latino activists. Each convention also saw efforts to connect Latino delegates from throughout the country with ethnic caucuses and to connect delegates to Latino campaign professionals and civic organizations.

The General Election

Ultimately, Latino voters were a footnote to the 2004 general election. The campaigns, the parties, and the 527 organizations focused most of their general election energies on a handful of the battleground states with few Latino residents. Latino communities did not organize to influence the outcome of the presidential race, and the issues of unique importance to Latino communities were not central to either presidential campaign. Perhaps most important, neither candidate made Latino outreach central to his campaign’s mission; in particular, the Kerry campaign did less than any recent Democratic nominee to win Latino votes. The Bush campaign, following the model of the 2000 race, did much more than recent Republican candidates and made Latino votes more competitive in two of the battleground states, New Mexico and Florida.

Labor Day 2004—the traditional start of the general election campaign season—saw a tight race in the national polls and a widespread concern that the 2004 race might again result in a contested outcome. Both campaigns anticipated that victory would result from mobilizing voters in one of a handful of battleground states. These competitive
states numbered no more than twenty-one in September, with just nine being true toss-ups (Seelye 2004). Of these, Latinos constituted a significant share of the population in six: two states leaning to President Bush—Arizona and Nevada—and four truly unknowns—Colorado, New Mexico, Florida, and New Jersey. By mid- to late October, efforts to win Latino votes narrowed to three of these states: New Mexico, Florida, and Colorado. The competition in Colorado increasingly focused on the Senate race between Ken Salazar and Pete Coors. Thus the opportunities for campaigning in Latino communities and discussing issues of importance to them were few and far between. Most of the campaigns’ time and energy focused on the battleground states of the industrial Midwest.

Latinos in New Mexico and Florida did see extensive efforts, including candidate and candidate-surrogate visits, advertising, and voter mobilization efforts by several 527 organizations, to win their votes and ensure that they would vote (DeBose 2004; de Córdoba 2004; Nieves 2004). In New Mexico, for example, field organizers for both campaigns focused on Latino turnout in all of the state’s counties. These mobilization efforts, which included door-to-door canvassers and phone banks, were reinforced by advertising campaigns in place since March in the case of the Bush campaign. Latino leaders were happy to see that new registrants in the state had the same proportion of Latinos as did the state voter registration rolls at the beginning of the election year. Considering the socioeconomic disadvantage of Hispanos in New Mexico relative to Anglos, this was thought to bode well for turnout in November. Republican outreach appears to have been somewhat more targeted than was Democratic outreach. In particular, in addition to general outreach, GOP outreach to Hispanos blended with its outreach to places of worship. This Republican effort to mobilize religiously observant Latinos included both Catholics and Protestants.

President Bush and Senator Kerry also competed for Latino votes in Florida. The Florida Latino vote included both Republican-leaning areas (Miami and environs) and Democratic-leaning areas (Orlando and the I-4 corridor). What was interesting in 2004 is that each candidate had to both defend his base and compete in the other candidate’s areas of strength (DeBose 2004; de Córdoba 2004). Bush faced certain challenges among Cuban Americans because of new travel restrictions
added to the U.S. embargo of Cuba. We discuss this issue later, but it is important to recognize that it forced President Bush to use time and resources to campaign among those who should have been safe Republican voters. The Kerry campaign believed it could win a higher share of Cuban American votes in Miami than had Al Gore in 2000 (de Córdoa 2004). In the central part of the state, the Bush campaign courted Latino voters who had been somewhat reliably Democratic in previous elections, as the 2000 election results suggested that their partisan loyalties might be in flux (Balz and Morin 2004). In particular, the Bush campaign focused on religiously observant Latinos in Orlando and along the I-4 corridor, thus paralleling its efforts in New Mexico.

Although the Kerry Latino campaign in both of these competitive states was well organized on the ground, it was never able to articulate a message to Latino communities—a problem for the campaign throughout the 2004 election. The only consistent Kerry messages to Latinos were (1) that Kerry, like many Latinos, is Catholic and (2) that Kerry’s Democratic policy agenda traditionally receives more Latino support than does the Republican agenda (Navarrette 2004a). Kerry never proved a successful messenger when campaigning in Latino communities, and he failed to tailor his message to the specific needs of Latinos.

The candidate’s wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry, often spoke to Latino audiences (Agence France Presse 2004), but her intermittent claim of being an immigrant and in some sense a Latina did not always meet a receptive audience (Navarrette 2004b). Kerry’s surrogates in the fall campaign, including Henry Cisneros, Antonio Villaraigosa, and Bill Richardson, could speak more directly to Latino concerns, but they did not add excitement to the Kerry campaign. The campaign paid a price for the absence of a Latino message and the dearth of excitement surrounding Kerry in Latino communities.

The Bush campaign was also negligent in terms of developing a Latino message. The president often spoke of his personal connection to Latinos and would occasionally hint at his support for a legalization program as part of comprehensive immigration reform. Beyond this issue, however, he relied on the traditional Republican tropes of moral conservatism, opportunity, and patriotism when speaking to Latino communities. The Bush campaign was able to target these messages to Latino churchgoers, particularly the moral conservative message and
particularly in the battleground states. But Bush’s failure to craft a distinctive Latino message faced less criticism than did Kerry’s neglect.

Both campaigns (and their related 527 organizations) focused their outreach to Latinos through Spanish- rather than English-language media (Segal 2004a). This represents a change from the early period analyzed in our series (de la Garza and DeSipio 1992, 1996); the campaigns now perceive that Spanish-dominant voters are a sizable enough audience to merit considerable investment. These Spanish-dominant Latino voters are largely naturalized U.S. citizens. For their English-dominant children, the ads demonstrate a cultural sensitivity on the part of the candidate. The content of these Spanish-language ads is not very different from the English-language ads (though the visuals vary considerably), so the campaigns must be confident that they are reaching English-dominant Latinos through their nonethnic media purchases.

Nationally, the Kerry campaign spent nearly $1.3 million on Spanish-language advertising and the Bush campaign spent $3.3 million (Segal 2006). The gap is reversed, however, when party and 527 funds are included in the calculations. Overall in 2004, Kerry and the Democrats spent approximately $8.7 million on Latino-focused advertising in the battleground states; 57 percent of this expenditure was used in Spanish-language media. The campaigns and parties each spent around $2.3 million in Florida and $500,000 to $800,000 in New Mexico. Kerry and the Democrats spent about twice as much in Arizona, Nevada, and Colorado as Bush and the Republicans ($775,000 vs. $365,000 in Arizona; $593,000 vs. $315,000 in Nevada, and $395,000 vs. $203,000 in Colorado). The Kerry campaign also spent small amounts on Spanish-language advertising in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Washington, and North Carolina. These funds included both television and radio advertisements, some with content similar to English-language ads and some produced uniquely for Latino communities.

The Spanish-language ads used Latino community settings that were not simply those used in English-language advertising, as had been the case in some previous campaigns. As with the non-Latino advertising, the Spanish-language ads disproportionately focused on national security, the war in Iraq, military service (Kerry’s), and economic issues. Several spoke generically about Hispanic contributions to U.S. society.
Although the Kerry campaign and the New Democrat Network (NDN) each ran one commercial that focused on the Cuban community, specifically concerning the new restrictions on travel to Cuba imposed by the Bush administration, these ads were designed for a “generic” Hispanic audience. In addition, Kerry used Bill Richardson as a spokesperson in one ad.4

As was the case in 2000, neither campaign hired many Latinos in staff positions and mainly pigeonholed the Latinos they hired to organize and run outreach in the Hispanic communities (Bush-Cheney ’04 2004a; John Kerry Campaign Organization 2004). The Kerry campaign hired a director of Hispanic Outreach (Luis Elizondo-Thomson). The Bush campaign took the unusual approach for a modern presidential campaign of not naming a Latino outreach director. It did form a National Hispanic Steering Committee in April. More practically, its media office coordinated Latino media outreach, and staff members Lionel Sosa and Alex Castellanos were often mentioned in the press as the coordinators of Bush’s Latino outreach. Latino staff on the Bush campaign included a Southwest field coordinator, a deputy director of voter contact-phones, and a specialty media outreach coordinator. The Kerry campaign, in addition to Elizondo-Thomson, employed Latino staff in field director positions in New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington, as senior political adviser (primarily focused on community outreach), as deputy press secretary, and as director of Hispanic media (two staff members). In each campaign, Latinos made up less than 5 percent of the national campaign staff.

Similar patterns appear in the Bush and Kerry campaign organizations in Latino battleground states. For example, of the thirty-eight members of the Florida Kerry campaign, the Florida Democratic Party, and pro-Kerry 527 organizations in the state, only two were Latino (Kerry and Allies–Organization, Florida 2005), although it was somewhat more inclusive in New Mexico, with sixteen Latinos appointed to leading staff positions out of the fifty-five similar organizations (Kerry and Allies–Organization, New Mexico 2005). Similarly, the Bush-Cheney state campaigns hired fewer Hispanic staff. In Florida two of forty senior Bush-Cheney staff members were Latinos (Bush-Cheney ’04 2004b). In New Mexico four of twenty-two senior staff members were Latinos (Bush-Cheney ’04 2004c).
We find this dearth of Latino campaign staff odd. In the 1996 race, the Clinton campaign set what we thought would become the new standard, at a minimum, for Democratic candidates—the employment of Latino staff not just in Latino outreach roles but throughout the campaign as well (DeSipio, de la Garza, and Setzler 1999). This pattern, however, was not the case in 2000 or 2004. In 2004 it is especially telling that the Kerry campaign was unable to identify a strategy to energize Latino voters who might be predisposed to supporting the Massachusetts senator.

In the end, any promises of or expectations for Latino outreach were lost in the exigencies of a campaign highly focused on a handful of states that were primarily non-Latino in population. Certainly the small number of Latinos in battleground states such as Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Ohio did receive attention, but it would be difficult to characterize this meager effort as a coordinated Latino campaign. Perhaps if the race had focused more resources on states with large Latino electorates, the candidates or their campaigns would have found more effective strategies to reach Latino voters and speak to the issues of most concern to them. Voter mobilization, probably the greatest electoral need in Latino communities, was neglected in 2004 except in the three states with anticipated close outcomes.

The Electoral College

As the 2000 election taught the nation, the geographic distribution of votes for the candidates can be more important than the number of votes. Voters do not select candidates; they select Electoral College delegates who promise to support the candidate to whom they are pledged. These largely unknown, politically loyal individuals meet without fanfare to elect the president. Table 1.1 lists the number and percentage of Latino delegates for each party from 1992 through 2004.

We offer the caveat that we rely on Latino surnames to identify Latino Electoral College delegates, as we did with Latino campaign staff. If Bill Richardson were a delegate, he might not be counted but for his prominence. This table nevertheless provides a rough estimate and allows us to check for trends over time. In 2004 fewer Latinos were delegates from either party than in 2000. As before, there were more
Democratic (fifteen) than Republican (ten) delegates, but this represents a decline from twenty-four Democrats and thirteen Republicans in 2000. In addition, while the percentage of total Latino delegates had previously increased over time (from 5.39 percent in 1992 to 5.57 percent in 1996 to 6.87 percent in 2000), the 2004 Electoral College was only 4.65 percent Latino.

One explanation for the overall and partisan fluctuations is the specific states the candidates won. The two parties in the same state may have different proportions of Hispanic electors on the ballot, so the basket of states won by each candidate may affect party Hispanic representation in the Electoral College. The switch of New Mexico from the Democrats in 2000 to the Republicans in 2004, for example, reduced the number of Latinos in the Electoral College.

The position of delegate is honorific, and individuals are chosen because of demonstrated party loyalty. Although only a few practical rules constrain the delegate vote, even the closely contested and controversial 2000 election saw only one delegate shift her vote from what was expected of her. That said, a small number of electors could affect the outcome in a close contest; this did not happen in 2000 or 2004, but it cannot be ruled out for the future.

Table 1.1. Latino Electoral College Delegates, by Party, 1992–2004

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5.7%)</td>
<td>(4.8%)</td>
<td>(6.3%)</td>
<td>(3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Latino</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ calculations using standard sources of Latino surnames.
Note: Latino surname lists underestimate the true Latino population by approximately 20 percent.
Table 1.2 illustrates the mid-October responses of registered voters to a preelection survey administered by the Washington Post, Univision, and the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute. The survey asked respondents to identify the single most important issue in their vote for president. The table is different from those in previous volumes, as the events of September 11, 2001, and the war in Iraq significantly changed the public policy priorities of Americans. As DeSipio and de la Garza (2005: 48) noted in the previous volume, *Muted Voices*, “Foreign policy continues to not be a relevant concern among Latinos.” But it was an unavoidable part of the 2004 campaign.

Nevertheless, the most important issue for Latinos in 2005 was the economy, with 26.7 percent identifying it as central to their vote choice. The second and third most important issues related to post-9/11 concerns: terrorism (20.2 percent) and the war in Iraq (15.2 percent). It is not entirely clear how to interpret these responses, but one might guess that “terrorism” indicates a voter concerned primarily with security issues, while “Iraq” may indicate a voter concerned that the war was not going well. The fourth most important issue was education (15.2 percent), traditionally the top issue for Latinos: in 2000 Latinos rated education as the most important issue facing the nation and facing Latinos. The next most important issue was health care, followed by immigration and then crime. It is worth noting that while many believe immigration is a high-priority issue for Latinos, this survey confirms the findings of previous research. Latinos do not emphasize the immigration issue, and more generally, Latino issue priorities are quite similar to those of Anglos (DeSipio 2007).

As was the case in recent elections, the candidates discussed few issues in the 2004 presidential race that were unique to the Latino community overall. Cuban Americans in Florida, however, were able to get one uniquely Latino-specific issue on the national table because of Florida’s potentially central role in selecting the president. Non–Cuban Americans had long been barred from sending money or prescriptions to Cuba or visiting Cuba. When the Bush administration extended these limits to people in the United States who had close relatives in

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Cuba or were born in Cuba (although small remittances could continue to be sent), recent Cuban émigrés (the group in U.S. society most likely to be affected by the changes) were outraged and vocal (Glionna 2004).

Interestingly, these new restrictions came in response to calls from Cuban American leaders to tighten the Cuban economic embargo (Wallsten 2004). These limits, and the outrage they engendered, led many to believe that divisions might emerge in the Cuban American vote, with more recent émigrés (who had naturalized) being more likely to support Kerry or not to vote. The Bush campaign was clearly concerned about this possibility and invested heavily in advertising in Miami media markets. The Bush campaign alone spent nearly $1.5 million in Miami (Segal 2006). In contrast, the Kerry campaign spent just $197,000, although this was supplemented with $1.2 million in party and NDN advertising. In the end, there is little evidence that this issue shaped many Cuban American votes (Balz and Morin 2004; chap. 9, this volume). Nevertheless, the possibility of political cleavages

Table 1.2. The Single Most Important Issue in Your Vote for President, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>October 2004 Result (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terror</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

among Cuban Americans based on year of migration and communication with relatives in Cuba is one to watch for in the future (García Bedolla and Lavariega Monforti 2006; New Democrat Network 2006).

A second important issue in the 2004 race was the potential for voter intimidation. Although it was not uniquely focused on Latinos, it certainly had the potential to shape the power of their votes. Specifically, critics of the identification requirements included in the Help America Vote Act for first-time voters and state-passed voting identification requirements worried that these limitations could be applied more broadly (Kurlantzick 2004). These requirements disproportionately affect Latinos for three reasons. First, the poor, of whom Latinos are a substantial subpopulation, are less likely to have identification than others in U.S. society. Second, precinct workers may tend to apply the rules unevenly; fears about noncitizen voting (of which there is virtually no evidence on the ground) could cause them to ask Latinos for identification more often than others. Finally, signage at polling places listing identification requirements and, especially, penalties could prove confusing or off-putting for new voters and voters whose first language is not English, again disproportionately reducing Latino votes. In addition, Latino civic organizations identified a significant number of localized efforts to reduce the Latino vote (Hendricks 2004).

Latino organizations responded as they had in previous elections—condemning these policies and setting up phone banks to collect reports of voter intimidation (National Council of La Raza 2004a, 2004b). On Election Day several organizations documented incidences of voter intimidation and rules that disadvantaged minorities. For example, urban and minority voters in Ohio faced long delays in voting and needed court intervention to keep the polls open (Highton 2006; Kennedy 2006). Again, new voting requirements and new forms of intimidation need to be monitored in upcoming elections.

Although Latino leaders would periodically seek to interject specific issues into the campaign, their organizational efforts were weak in 2004. In part, this probably reflected the electoral map of the campaign and its exclusion of the states with the largest Latino populations. As has been the case in recent presidential election cycles, coalitions of Latino organizations raised funds for and implemented national voter
registration drives (Gonzales 2004). These voter registration efforts claimed to have registered two million new Latino voters since 2000.

Puerto Rico’s taxpayers funded one such effort. The Puerto Rican Federal Affairs Administration claimed to register 322,000 new Latino voters. Its focus on Latinos, rather than just Puerto Ricans, caused some controversy in Puerto Rico.

These Latino-led voter mobilization efforts generally focused on voter registration rather than GOTV efforts. While they certainly added new registered voters to the rolls, they did not add a commensurate number of new voters (discussed later). However, that connection was more likely to be made in the battleground states, especially Florida, where the parties invested heavily in GOTV efforts among the newly registered.

The leaders of the major Latino organizations also sought, as they had in presidential elections since 1984, to craft a consensus document on issues facing Latino communities—the so-called National Hispanic Leadership Agenda. Despite some tentative efforts, no document was produced in 2004, and neither campaign had the opportunity to speak to the leading Latino civic organizations sitting as a collective about a broad Latino-focused agenda in a formal setting. Nor did the campaigns undertake any other effort to shape a cohesive Latino policy agenda using help from leading Latino organizations.

LATINOS AND 2004 NONPRESIDENTIAL RACES

Where Latino influence was limited in the 2004 presidential race, it was felt more dramatically in the year’s Senate races. Two Latinos, Mel Martinez (R) in Florida and Ken Salazar (D) in Colorado, were elected to the U.S. Senate. The election of Senator Jon Corzine (D-NJ) to the New Jersey governorship led to the appointment of U.S. Representative Robert Menéndez (D) to the Senate in 2005. Never before had two Latinos served simultaneously in the U.S. Senate, let alone three, and never before had a Latino represented a state other than New Mexico in the U.S. Senate.

The Martinez and Salazar elections reflected the abilities of both candidates to build multiethnic coalitions among voters and to build
strong donor bases. Neither Colorado nor Florida Latinos have the numbers or political influence to elect statewide candidates on their own no matter how cohesive their votes. Equally important, and especially so for the Republican Party in the case of the Martinez candidacy, these efforts reflected national party calculations about the need to promote Latino candidacies at the state level in order to build Latino support for non-Latino party candidates. These two candidacies offer models for state-level campaigns to elect Latinos in other states.

Senator Martinez, a naturalized U.S. citizen who migrated from Cuba to the United States while in his teens in 1962, brought a rich set of professional credentials to the Florida Senate race (Barone and Cohen 2006). After an unsuccessful race for Florida lieutenant governor in 1994, Martinez was elected chair of the Orange County, Florida, government, a position whose name was later changed to mayor of the county to reflect its executive responsibilities. In 2001 President Bush nominated Martinez to serve as secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). During his service, the Bush administration tapped Martinez to speak to the Spanish-language media on behalf of HUD, as well as about Bush policies more generally. He served as secretary until he resigned in December 2003 to run for the U.S. Senate. The Senate seat was opened when Senator Bob Graham (D) began a presidential campaign and indicated that he would not simultaneously run for reelection. Martinez did not initially seem interested in pursuing the U.S. Senate seat, instead focusing on the governorship in 2006. He eventually entered the race with backing from the White House and leading Senate Republicans, including George Allen and Rick Santorum, then rising stars in their party.

The open Senate seat attracted a large number of candidates from both parties. Martinez was not initially the leading candidate for the Republican nomination. Representative Mark Foley raised over $3 million by June 2003, but he dropped out of the race when the media hinted at his homosexuality. The White House appeared to intercede to discourage some high-profile candidates from pursuing the race, most notably Representative Katherine Harris (who would run and lose in 2006) (Ceaser and Busch 2005: 152).

In the primary, Martinez faced former Representative Bill McCollum, who had lost a Senate bid in 2000. The primary race was ugly.
McCollum attacked Martinez as a trial lawyer and “failed HUD secretary.” Martinez defended his work as a lawyer, spoke of his rags-to-riches successes, and attacked McCollum as anti-family because of his support for a hate crimes bill. The Martinez campaign ran one commercial that tied McCollum to the “radical homosexual agenda” because of his support for a hate crimes bill, which the campaign later withdrew at the request of Florida Governor Jeb Bush. Throughout the race, Martinez maintained the support of the White House and national Republican leaders. Because of this support, state Republican politicians and activists may have worried that a failure to support Martinez could result in negative consequences (see chap. 9, this volume).

Despite the vitriol of the race, Martinez won the primary handily (45 percent to 31 percent). He won all sections of the state but did especially well among the largely Cuban Republican electorate in Miami-Dade County. In Miami-Dade, Martinez took nearly four in five votes.

The negativity of the Republican primary continued through the general election, though backed by considerably more money. Martinez spent nearly $13 million, and his Democratic opponent, Betty Castor, a former legislator and president of the University of South Florida, spent $11.5 million. The race was interrupted by four hurricanes and was overshadowed by the hard-fought presidential race, which consumed opportunities to advertise and potential campaign volunteers. Martinez accused Castor of being soft on terrorism because of a controversy surrounding a University of South Florida professor. Castor sought to present herself as an “independent Democrat” and Martinez as a rubber stamp for the White House. Martinez continued to tap his own success story as a key message in his campaign. Like McCollum, Castor tried to attack Martinez based on failures at HUD during his term.

Unlike the Republican primary, the vote in the general election was very close. Martinez won by fewer than 83,000 votes. Cuban American votes were especially important to the Martinez victory, though his appeal did not necessarily extend to non-Cuban Latinos. In the end, however, Martinez did better among Latino voters than did President Bush; CNN analysis of the National Exit Poll showed that President Bush carried 56 percent of Florida Latino votes and Martinez won 60 percent.
Colorado also elected a Latino senator in 2004. Attorney General Ken Salazar defeated Peter Coors, heir to the brewery of the same name, somewhat more decisively than Mel Martinez defeated Betty Castor—51 percent to 47 percent. Salazar, whose brother also won an open House seat from Colorado, tapped the iconography of rural Colorado as well as his Hispanic roots to win the Senate seat for the Democrats (Florio 2004). Salazar’s victory is even more remarkable considering that John Kerry lost the state by a 52 to 47 percent margin.

The Colorado Senate seat opened with the retirement of Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R), a decision that came as something of a surprise. Initially, each party saw a large pool of candidates for the open seat. On the Democratic side, several of the initially leading candidates withdrew and endorsed Attorney General Salazar. The Republican Party saw a more competitive race between Coors Brewing chair Pete Coors and U.S. Representative Bob Schaffer. Although Coors was the odds-on favorite, he proved a less than adept campaigner with a policy agenda and corporate history—mostly notably, a proposal to lower the Colorado drinking age and the Coors company’s support of Colorado’s gay pride festival—that made him suspect to many Republican primary voters (Greene 2004). Ultimately, Coors won the primary by a healthy margin, but he entered the general election without the advantage that a Republican candidate would have expected in recent Colorado elections (Florio and Bartels 2004; Barone and Cohen 2006).

The fall campaign was fractious and ultimately proved one of the few Democratic victories. Throughout the campaign, polls suggested that it was a toss-up. Salazar won the fund-raising battle, raising nearly $10 million for his race compared to Coors’s $7.8 million. Salazar ran independently of the Kerry campaign and stressed his deep family ties to Colorado. He focused his campaign on environmental issues, health care, and tax equity. Salazar did not place issues framed in terms of the Latino community at the center of his agenda (see chap. 4, this volume), running a decidedly nonethnic campaign from start to finish.

The tone of Salazar’s campaign adopted that of the Republican primary; he continued to attack Coors and emphasize his inexperience. He noted in particular Coors’s inconsistent positions on education vouchers. When Coors attacked Salazar for being a lawyer, claiming there were already too many lawyers in the Senate, Salazar responded...
that there were too many multimillionaires in the Senate. Although Coors tried to galvanize moral conservatives by discussing his support for the Family Marriage Amendment, the legacy of the primary undermined this approach. Coors also focused on his support for President Bush and for the war in Iraq, though he undercut this position somewhat in October by saying that he might not have voted for it in 2003 had he known what he knew in 2004.

Salazar won the race with a comfortable margin—51 to 47 percent. CNN analysis of National Election Poll data indicates that the Salazar victory was the result of minority voters. He carried 80 percent of the black vote and 72 percent of the Latino vote, while losing the white vote by the same margin he won statewide—51 to 47 percent. Salazar did slightly better among Colorado Latinos than did John Kerry but not quite as well in the small Colorado African American community. Kerry lost the white vote in Colorado by a 54 to 44 percent margin. Ultimately, Salazar owed his victory to urban and suburban voters, but he was able to keep the gap sufficiently narrow in rural areas to ensure his victory. John Kerry, for example, took just 35 percent of the rural vote; Ken Salazar was able to win 45 percent.


Despite Cuellar's claim that a primary challenge was not an unusual occurrence in South Texas, it was highly unusual in the House and brought a great deal of attention to the race. Rodriguez was at a relative disadvantage because the district had been significantly redrawn in 2003 as part of a GOP mid-Census effort to weaken Texas Democratic House incumbents. The redistricting entailed moving several heavily Hispanic counties out of the district and moving more of Laredo (Cuellar's hometown) into the district. Though both were Democrats, the two candidates offered distinct views on policy. The more conservative Cuellar had endorsed President Bush in 2000 (but supported John
Kerry in 2004) and had served as Republican Governor Rick Perry’s appointed secretary of state in 2001, while Rodriguez had the most liberal voting record of Texas’s six Latino members of Congress (Barone and Cohen 2006).

The race proved very close, with Rodriguez initially winning by 145 votes of the approximately 50,000 cast. Rodriguez carried the parts of the district around his San Antonio base and Cuellar the parts around his hometown of Laredo. After a recount, a judicial challenge, and an appeal, Cuellar won the primary by 58 votes (Off the Kuff 2004). He then won an easy victory in the general election, garnering 59 percent of the vote. In the same election, President Bush won 53 percent of the votes in that district.

Democrat John Salazar’s Colorado congressional victory came in a Republican-leaning district; President Bush carried the district by 10 percentage points or more in 2000 and 2004, and Republicans had a six percentage point registration advantage. The post-2000 redistricting had added some Democratic areas and Latino population concentrations, however, improving Salazar’s chances. The incumbent did not run in 2004; Scott McInnis (R) announced in 2003 that he would not seek reelection after having served six terms.

Salazar was a sitting member of the Colorado assembly, but he was probably better known in the district for organizing against a developer’s efforts to sell San Luis Valley water rights for use in Denver (Barone and Cohen 2006: 330; Reid 2004). A great advantage, Salazar’s candidacy lacked competition in the primary. His general election opponent, Greg Walcher, faced stiff primary competition, including a strong race by the brother-in-law of the retiring representative.

In the general election, Salazar positioned himself as a centrist and emphasized his ties to the district and his occupation as a farmer. In addition, several high-profile policy issues worked to his advantage. Walcher had supported a 2003 state initiative to issue $2 billion in bonds for water projects that was highly unpopular in the rural parts of the state; Salazar noted at most of his campaign appearances, “Walcher stood on the side of urban interests while I was fighting for the rural areas here in the 3rd District” (Reid 2004), not a claim that a Democrat could routinely make. Walcher tried to attack Salazar on social conservative issues such as abortion and gay marriage, but ultimately these
issues did not drive the election in the district. Salazar focused on agricultural issues, repeal of the estate tax, and the rights of gun owners (Draper 2004).

Ultimately, Salazar won with 51 percent of the vote, which was significantly better than John Kerry’s 44 percent in the district. The excitement generated by his brother’s Senate campaign and the similar message about the Salazar brothers that the two campaigns promoted undoubtedly assisted his victory. John Salazar’s campaign, however, deserves significant credit for being able to raise more than $1.6 million. Walcher raised $1.5 million.

Table 1.3 provides financial data for House campaigns that involve a Latino candidate. The first row shows the money raised by Latino incumbents in three election cycles: 1995–96, 1999–2000, and 2003–4. Over time, Latino incumbent fund-raising increased, although the rate of growth slowed in the last four years (11.8 percent) in comparison to the 1996–2000 cycle (107 percent). The average amount, $853,000, is about $160,000 less than that raised by the average House incumbent. Because many incumbents run unopposed, we also calculate the funds raised by Latino incumbents facing major party candidates. This was slightly more ($941,000), which represented a small and possibly meaningless decline ($60,000) from the previous presidential election cycle.

Most challengers raise significantly less money than incumbents, and this is also true for Latino challengers and those who challenge Latino incumbents. Major party challengers to Latino members of Congress raised $85,043, a $23,000 decline from the previous presidential election cycle. Furthermore, Latino challengers to non-Latino incumbents raised less money in 2003–4 than in 1999–2000. Nevertheless, Latino challengers to Latino incumbents showed an average increase of $90,000 (to an average of $227,788) in comparison to 1999–2000. This suggests that perhaps political competition in Latino districts is increasing as serious Latino challenges to non-Latino incumbents are on the decline.

In open seat elections, we see considerable spending increases over time. In the 1995–96 campaign Latino open-seat candidates raised almost half a million dollars on average. This declined considerably in 1999–2000 (to less than $100,000 on average) but then increased in 2003–4 to $752,573. Even this amount is less than the average $1.2 million that all open-seat candidates raised.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Incumbents, average for:</strong></td>
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<td>Latino incumbents</td>
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<td>+11.8</td>
<td>+131.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latino incumbents facing major party opponents</td>
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<td>$1,057,283</td>
<td>$941,508</td>
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<td>-11.0</td>
<td>+177.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All incumbents</td>
<td>$725,677</td>
<td>$900,026</td>
<td>$1,130,426</td>
<td>+24</td>
<td>+25.6</td>
<td>+55.8</td>
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<td><strong>General election challengers to incumbents, average for:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major party challengers to Latino incumbents (all ethnicities)</td>
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<td>$108,688</td>
<td>$85,043</td>
<td>+90.2</td>
<td>-21.8</td>
<td>+48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino challengers to Latino incumbents</td>
<td>$28,026</td>
<td>$135,848</td>
<td>$227,788</td>
<td>+384.7</td>
<td>+67.7</td>
<td>+712.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino challengers to non-Latino incumbents</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$364,944</td>
<td>$226,910</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>-37.8</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All challengers to incumbents</td>
<td>$262,813</td>
<td>$364,944</td>
<td>$267,253</td>
<td>+38.9</td>
<td>-26.8</td>
<td>+1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General election to open seats, average for:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino candidates</td>
<td>$480,545</td>
<td>$78,017</td>
<td>$752,573</td>
<td>-83.8</td>
<td>+864.6</td>
<td>+56.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All candidates</td>
<td>$640,000</td>
<td>$1,080,944</td>
<td>$1,204,340</td>
<td>+68.9</td>
<td>+11.4</td>
<td>+88.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: In 2000 one Latino incumbent (California’s Matthew Martinez) lost in a party primary and, consequently, did not run in the general election. If he is excluded from the average, the amount raised by Latino incumbents rises to $794,521. In 2003–4 nominees for both parties were incumbents due to redistricting in one Texas race. For the calculations in table 1.13, both candidates in these races were coded as incumbents rather than challengers or open seats.
Latinos also saw gains at other levels of elective office. The number of Latinos in state-level elective office increased, particularly in the lower houses of state legislatures. Prior to the election, 161 Latinos served in state assemblies and 61 in state senates (NALEO Educational Fund 2004a). After the election, the number of Latinos in lower legislative houses increased to 171, and the number in state senates decreased by one to 60 (NALEO Educational Fund 2004b).

The 2004 election saw a final dimension of Latino influence: a dramatic growth in spending by Latino political action committees (PACs). The role of PACs and 527s is growing in U.S. national elections, and Latino leaders are using these new tools to raise and spend campaign money. Latino PAC spending grew from $605,000 in 2000 to slightly more than $1.8 million in 2004 (Russell 2005). Republican Latinos seeking to support Latino Republican candidates formed the largest Latino PAC in 2004—the Latino Alliance. Its president is columnist and unsuccessful Bush nominee for secretary of labor, Linda Chavez. It spent nearly $700,000 in 2004. The second largest Hispanic PAC in 2004—the Hispanic Democratic Organization—supported Democrats running for office. The third largest Latino PAC—the U.S.-Cuba Democracy PAC—focused its money on “candidates running for the United States Congress, who oppose any economic measures that directly or indirectly finance and prolong the repressive machinery of the Castro regime” (U.S.-Cuba Democracy PAC 2004).

A review of the expenditures of these PACs at opensecrets.org suggests the first two spent relatively little money directly on candidates. Instead, they spent money to raise money and support staff and offices. The U.S.-Cuba Democracy PAC, on the other hand, spent most of its resources on candidate contributions and made those contributions in a very bipartisan manner. While Latinos therefore tapped a new resource for political influence in 2004, the impact of party-focused PACs was limited because they did not expand the financial resources available to candidates running for office.

The state ballot initiative most relevant to Latinos in 2004 was Arizona’s Proposition 200, the Protect Arizona Now initiative. It received a great deal of national media attention and would have prohibited “public benefits” for unauthorized immigrants. Following the logic of California’s 1994 Proposition 187, Proposition 200 added new prohibitions
on services to unauthorized immigrants, including a requirement that voters prove their U.S. citizenship and, according to its critics, requirements that local public officials deny authorized immigrants access to parks, libraries, or emergency services, such as fire departments (Kammer 2004; National Council of La Raza 2004c). The Arizona campaign in support of Proposition 200 grew from concerns about increasing unauthorized migration that resulted from enforcement efforts on the California-Mexico border. While national and state Latino leaders strongly opposed the proposition, it is not so clear that this outrage spread to Latino voters. Supporters of Proposition 200 were careful to limit their ire to unauthorized migrants and not, as had been the case in California in 1994, expand the rhetoric to a more general incitement of Latinos (see chap. 5, this volume). Ultimately, the proposition passed with 56 percent of the statewide vote. Latinos only narrowly opposed the initiative, by a 47 to 53 percent margin.

Colorado voters considered a ballot issue that, had it passed and spread to other states, would have served Latino interests. Amendment 36 would have changed Colorado’s allocation of Electoral College votes to a proportional system (Johnson 2004). Although this proposal was ultimately rejected by voters, it opens the possibility that states will consider alternatives to what is now the dominant winner-take-all pattern of allocating Electoral College votes. Changes like this would increase competition in states that are now solidly in the hands of one of the parties—the states in which the vast majority of the Latino population resides—and increase the incentive for candidates and parties to invest in voter mobilization in solidly partisan areas.

**LATINO VOTES AND NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

Expectations of Latino influence build from a recognition that the size of the Latino population is growing rapidly and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. This perception is generally correct, but it masks population characteristics that dampen the Latino political voice. Table 1.4 shows that Latinos make up 14.2 percent of the U.S. population and 12.6 percent of the voting-age population (VAP). In the parallel volume discussing the 1996 election, *Awash in the Mainstream,*
de la Garza and DeSipio (1999) noted an overall Latino population of 28.4 million individuals; the comparable figure in 2004 was just over 40 million. Of these, 27 million are of voting age, and 16 million are voting age U.S. citizens. Compared to other racial and ethnic groups in the United States, however, Latinos have a higher share of the population who either cannot or do not participate in electoral politics. Latinos make up just 8.2 percent of the *U.S. citizen* voting age population. This noncitizenship challenge helps to explain why Latino political power does not match the size of the Latino population: 11 million Latino adult noncitizens currently cannot vote.

Although political districts in the United States are based on overall population and elected officials are tasked with representing these districts, it is also true that politicians are more likely to respond to those who elected them to office or who might be expected to exercise the vote in the next election. Latinos may constitute a significant and growing share of the population, but this is no guarantee that political repre-

**Table 1.4. National Overview, United States, 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total U.S. population</td>
<td>285,691,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Latino population</td>
<td>40,459,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Latino of total U.S. population</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Mexican American of Latino population</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Puerto Rican of Latino population</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Cuban American of Latino population</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Other Hispanic of Latino population</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting age population (VAP)</td>
<td>215,694,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino VAP</td>
<td>27,129,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Latino of VAP</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen VAP</td>
<td>197,006,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino citizen VAP</td>
<td>16,088,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Latino citizen VAP</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino adult noncitizens</td>
<td>11,041,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* U.S. Census Bureau.

*Based on the 2004 American Community Survey.*

*Based on Current Population Study 2004: table 2 (White alone and Hispanic).*

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