

Latino Mobilizing Agents and Voter Choice in the 2008 Presidential Election

Taylor Watrous
The University of New Mexico

Abstract

The 2008 Presidential election was unique in many aspects, including diversity of candidates, a competitive Democratic primary, and importance of mobilization and certain issues, namely the economy. Latinos especially are interesting to look at in this election, as they voted for Barack Obama in high numbers. This paper explores the possible mobilization agents compelling Latinos to vote for Barack Obama. Here, I use survey data to find what the main mobilizing agents were in Latino voter choice in the 2008 Presidential election. I found that Latinos voted for Obama largely because of Democratic Party affiliation, and the issue of the economy. Mobilization did not seem to matter in this election for Latinos and their vote choices. This perhaps signals a long-term stronghold on Latinos by the Democratic Party, depending on the state of the economy in the next Presidential election, as well as no widespread effort to register Latino voters as Republicans. The paper proceeds in four parts. First, relevant findings in the research on the Latino electorate and Latino voting behavior in the past are highlighted. Second, the unique traits of the 2008 election in relation to Latinos are discussed. Next is an extensive discussion on the datasets and findings from the empirical analysis. I conclude with observations on overall trends, as well as speculations about Latino voter choice in future elections.

"I'm not taking a single Latino vote for granted in this campaign. We're meeting with Latino leaders across the country. We're reaching out to Latino organizations to get input on my policy proposals. We've got a nationwide Hispanic media strategy. We're recruiting and training Latino organizers. We're holding Latino voter registration drives across America. And when I'm President, I'll be asking many of you to serve at every level of government." Barack Obama, July 15, 2008, Addressing the National Council of La Raza

"I'm proud to have worked hard over the years with many friends here and elsewhere to make sure Americans of Hispanic heritage are appreciated for their contributions to the prosperity, security and culture of the United States, and to improve opportunities for your continued success, not for your sake alone but for the benefit of the entire nation...I know many of you are Democrats, and many of you would usually vote for the presidential candidate of that party. I know I must work hard to win your votes, but you have always given me a respectful hearing, and I appreciate it." John McCain, July 16, 2008, Addressing the National Council of La Raza

Introduction

The 2008 Presidential election resulted in unprecedented turnout for many voter groups, including Latino voters. For example, African Americans increased their voting numbers from 11% in 2004 to 12.4% in 2008 of the entire electorate. Latinos are an important group to study because they currently compose 16% of the United States population, and are projected to represent 25% of the population in the year 2050. Nine and a half percent of the entire electorate in the 2008 election was Latino, an increase of 1% from the 2004 Presidential election, and an increase of almost two times the number of voting Latinos in 2000 (Lopez and Taylor 2009).

The Pew Hispanic Center's analysis of exit polls conducted by Edison Media research as published by CNN found that Latinos voted for Democrats Barack Obama and Joe Biden over Republicans John McCain and Sarah Palin by a margin of over two to one (Lopez 2008). "This election proves Latinos are no longer just a political sideshow," says Henry Cisneros, former secretary of Housing and Urban Development. 'The Latino

population is large enough that it moves the needle" (Eaton, Jordan). The question regarding the level of influence in the 2008 election is an issue clearly open to debate, although it is certain they had some influence. The increase in the Latino vote was somewhat overshadowed by overall increases in all minority votes, so it is hard to say that Latinos influenced the overall outcome of the election. Although Latinos may have not influenced the election overall, their impact in specific states was immense. First, New Mexico, Colorado, and Nevada all went to Bush in 2004, but all transitioned to the Democratic candidate, Obama, in 2008. The Latino vote was especially key in New Mexico and Nevada where Obama lost the non-Latino white vote. In Virginia and Pennsylvania, where Latinos now represent about 5% of the voting population, Latinos may have not directly handed Obama their states, but they certainly helped, as high numbers of Latinos in these states voted for Obama (Insert Table 1 here).

Florida was particularly interesting in the 2008 election, as it was the first time in history a Democratic candidate won a majority of the Latino vote. Florida's Latino population is largely made up of Cuban Americans (41% in 2004) who traditionally vote Republican mostly because of Republican policy toward Cuba (Bishin et. al. 2008); in 2008 all Latinos in Florida voted 56% for Obama. These numbers are very interesting in relation to the 2004 Presidential election, when Bush won 44%¹ of the Latino vote, which will be further discussed later.

Why did Latinos come out to the polls in 2008 in higher numbers than in 2004,

¹ I am aware of some controversy surrounding this figure. The number might be closer to 40%, although this is still a large number for Latino Republican voter choice (Barreto et. Al. 2005).

specifically to vote for the Democratic candidate, Barack Obama? It seems likely that they turned out to the polls for a number of reasons unique to this election, having to do with mobilization of Latinos. The Democratic Party primary was unmatched in 2008, perhaps compelling many Latinos to turn out to cast their votes; in the Democratic Primary was a female candidate, Hillary Clinton, an African American candidate, Barack Obama, and the first serious Latino presidential candidate, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson. This was also a very contentious race, with no clear forerunner, or winner, until towards the end of the primary (Barreto, Manzano, Sanchez 2009). Especially perhaps the influence of Bill Richardson inspired more Latinos to get out and get involved, participate, mobilize other Latinos, and vote. During his run, he really tried to emphasize his Latino voters: "My mission is to reach Latino voters to let them know that I'm Latino and that I'm a candidate with their roots..." (Cohen). Barack Obama's campaign spent over \$20 million courting the Hispanic vote, on Spanish-language media, opening campaign offices in Latino-populated areas, and training Latinos to conduct door-to-door grassroots campaigns (Jordan). Also in this election, many people, especially young people, used technological advances in order to learn about the campaign and become involved. These many factors that were incredibly unique to the 2008 Presidential campaign seemed to be crucial in getting the Latino electorate out to vote, and possibly out to vote specifically for the party who utilized many of these tools seemingly effectively, the Democratic Party.

The purpose of my analysis here is to find out which factors, including

mobilization, were key in Latino vote choice - what compelled Latinos to come out and vote in such high numbers for Obama. I use post-election survey data to test the role of mobilization on vote choice for Latinos in the 2008 Presidential election. Overall, I posit that the main mobilization agents for Latinos to vote for Obama in this election were being contacted, especially by the Democratic Party. Also, with the current shape of the economy, I posit that many Latinos went out and voted, perhaps signifying not only a dislike for economic conditions, but also an unhappiness with and rejection of the Bush administration.

The Latino Electorate: Mobilization Agents and pre-2008 Voter Choice

“Without fail every four years, many politicians in the United States rediscover Latinos, only to forget them all over again for the next three years... It is a phenomenon so predictable that I have dubbed it the Christopher Columbus Syndrome.” - Jorge Ramos (2004)

What composes the minority group known as Latinos? Latinos make up over 16% of the United States population, which makes them the largest minority group in the United States, a number which is continuously increasing, projected to be about 25% of the U.S. population in 2050 (Sanchez 2009). The second largest minority group is African Americans; as of 2007 African Americans made up 13.5% of the U.S. population (McDonald 2009). The Latino population is a diverse group within itself, as well as a group overall very different than the U.S. population at large. The definition of Latinos:

those with ancestors from national origins in which Spanish is a significant and

often dominant language. These are countries in which people from Spain have played a major role in their histories and...their culture...[this] leaves us with twenty-two countries from which Hispanic Americans emanate or emigrate (Garcia, Sanchez 2008).

The three largest Latino groups are Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban Americans, making up 7.3%, 1.2%, and 0.4% of the United States population, and 58.5%, 9.6%, and 3.5% of the entire Latino population, respectively (McDonald 2009). As a minority group in the United States, Latinos have grown 50% since 1990. Three fourths of Latinos live in the West (43.5%) and the South (32.8%). They are a young population, having a median age of 25.9 compared to the U.S. average of 35.3; 35% of the Latino population was under 18 in 2000- a critical factor given the need to be 18 to be eligible to vote (McDonald 2009). Latinos are an especially interesting group to study because they are such a diverse group in themselves in terms of nationalities and cultures.

Even though Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States, they historically turn out to vote in low numbers. The numbers for Latino voters have been increasing with each election; the 2000 election had 5.9 million Latinos turn out to vote, 2004 saw 7.6 million Latinos, and 2008 had 9.5-10.5 million Latinos voters (Barreto et. al. 2005, Sanchez 2009). This was about 8% of the entire electorate; African Americans increased their voting numbers from 11% in 2004 to 13% in 2008 of the entire electorate, a 4.9% increase of African American voters from 2004. The white, non-Hispanic vote actually decreased by about 1% in 2008 from 2004, but still made up about 75% of the

electorate. The young vote overall increased in the 2008 Presidential election by 2% from 2004 (McDonald 2009).

What impacts Latino voting behavior? From 1976 to 1996, 68% of Latinos have on average voted for Democratic candidates (Barreto et. al. 2005). Recent elections in 2000 and 2004 have, for some, signified a possible party realignment or shift for Latinos from Democrat to Republican, or it could also signal “the electorate ceiling for Republican presidential candidates with appealing personalities for Latino voters” (Barreto et. al. 2005). As briefly mentioned in my introduction, the 2004 Presidential election had the highest Republican turnout by Latino voters ever, at 44% - up from 20% in 1972 (Barreto et. al. 2005). However, this number was reduced by thirteen percentage points in 2008 down to 31% of voting Latinos for McCain in the 2008 Presidential election. Why did the supposed shift, or high Latino Republican voting numbers happen in 2004, and what happened in 2008?

In order to understand voter choice among Latinos, we must look at mobilization agents that have compelled Latinos to participate and possibly vote in certain ways. "Mobilization is the process by which candidates, parties, activists, and groups, induce other people to participate" (Hansen, Rosenstone 1993). There are several mobilization agents for voters overall, mobilization by political leaders, mobilization around issues, and mobilization around political opportunities, as well as demographic factors that drive participation.

Campaigns will often overlook groups that do not tend to vote in high numbers;

Latinos are one such group that has been largely ignored in elections (Michelson 2005). Latinos have also been largely ignored because they have been considered a part of one party, chiefly the Democratic Party. For elections, political parties and campaigns act as mobilizing agents of voters by standing “between political leaders and ordinary citizens,” as a form of mobilization by political leaders (Hansen, Rosenstone 1993). Specifically, direct contact with campaigns is especially important:

Contact with campaign activists communicates information about politics.

Party workers inform people about the issues facing the nation and the steps people can take to influence their resolution...contact with campaign activists

presents opportunities to participate (Hansen, Rosenstone 1993).

Although contact in the 2004 election by George W. Bush's campaign did not seem like a huge factor during the campaign, (only 25% of Latinos were contacted by political parties) other types of mobilization were used to target Latinos, like Spanish-language media advertisements specifically aimed at Latinos and President Bush trying to speak Spanish to Spanish-speaking audiences (Barreto et. al. 2005). These were helpful tools to get Latinos to vote for Bush; almost all of Bush's gains in the Latino electorate in 2004 came from predominantly Spanish-speaking Latinos, possibly because of the feeling that Bush could relate to Latinos (Broder, Goldfarb 2006).

Mobilization around issues is another important agent, where “in their constant struggles for influence, politicians and interest groups mobilize when conditions...make it

possible for them to muster public support” (Hansen, Rosenstone 1993). Rosenstone and Hansen do not talk about this issue specifically in relation to elections, but recent elections have shown that mobilization around issues is important, especially important perhaps to Latino voters. Are Latino voters issue voters or symbolic voters (voting on candidate preference and candidate likeability, as well as caring about the use of ethnic symbols by candidates? Symbolic outreach, specifically an individual candidate reaching out to Latinos and their interests, has “the possibility of yielding outreach votes...” though this will only have “limited success if not accompanied by substantial change” (Nicholson, Pantoja, Segura 2006). The importance of symbolic outreach may also become less important as candidates increasingly reach out to Latinos, and their education levels grow. More Latinos will be issue voters with higher levels of education and information (Nicholson, Pantoja, Segura 2006). Issues that have been of importance to Latinos have ranged from immigration (especially to naturalized and foreign-born Latinos) to a great emphasis on the economy and healthcare. At the same time, Latinos often have trouble becoming issue voters. This is due to two factors, both low levels of political information and possibly low levels of socialization into American culture, mostly affecting foreign-born Latinos (Nicholson, Pantoja, Segura 2006). Because of these factors affecting foreign-born Latino voters, Latino voters are susceptible to "incorrect voting" (voting for candidates who do not share similar policy preferences) and possibly being more receptive to symbolic gestures of a candidate over issue voting and policy preferences (Nicholson, Pantoja, Segura 2006).

In the 2004 election, as well as the most recent election in 2008, several issues seemed to be of exceptional importance; I will discuss the 2004 election here and the 2008 election in another section. Bush's support in the 2004 election by Latinos was thought to have largely to do with specific issues; especially social conservative issues affecting religious Latinos:

An article in the San Jose Mercury News reported that: "The conservative group

Focus on the Family had a major Latino outreach program revolving around

opposition to abortion rights and gay marriage. The group aired Spanish-language advertisements on 200 radio stations nationwide and sent information to about 13,000 churches" (Barreto et. al. 2005).

Religion seemed like a very salient issue for Latino voters in 2004, and groups like Focus on the Family mobilized Latinos around issues like abortion and gay marriage, but the impact of religious Latinos on Bush's victory in the 2004 election was found to be small. Still, the religious Latino electorate is thought to be important:

For the Republicans, appealing to Latino evangelicals and other non-Catholic

Christians may be the key to making (small) inroads to the Latino electorate,

while Latino Catholics would be an important part of a future winning coalition for the Democrats (Barreto et. al. 2005).

Many polls did not find that religion was a salient issue for Latinos, however; the most salient issues for Latinos in 2004 were the economy, the war on terrorism, and the war in

Iraq (Barreto et. al. 2005).

Symbolic gestures of candidates may be important in elections; Nicholson, Pantoja, and Segura (2006) found that Spanish language-usage by candidates was an important factor in Latino vote choice, especially among low-information voters; meaning that he appealed to low-information voters for reasons other than policy. Some people speculate that Bush won in 2004 simply because of his likeability among voters, including Latino voters (Fry, Passel, Suro 2005, Barreto et. al. 2005).

Another important mobilization agent for voters overall, including Latino voters, is political opportunities (Hansen, Rosenstone 1993). One important opportunity for voters is simply being able to register to vote (although not a topic discussed at large by Rosenstone and Hansen). Especially among Latino voters, whose registration rates have been low due to low voter eligibility (discussed at length in the following paragraphs), access to registration is an important mobilization agent. As previously stated, Latinos have been a largely ignored group of voters. However, if asked to register to vote, and if asked to vote, especially by other Latinos, Latinos are likely to register to vote and vote (Michelson 2005). In the last few Presidential elections, campaigns have been taking more of an interest in the Latino electorate, not only directing television advertisements and debates towards Latinos, but also trying to register and mobilize more Latino voters (Alvarez, Garcia-Bedolla 2003).

In terms of demographic factors that mobilize people to participate and vote for a specific candidate, nationalities within the diverse Latino group matter. Mexican

Americans and Puerto Ricans are extremely different in their party affiliation than Cuban Americans (Bishin et. al. 2008). Latino partisanship evolves over time in the United States; younger Latinos identify more as independents and as Latinos get older, they start to identify themselves with parties. Older Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans identify with the Democratic Party, and Cuban Americans with the Republican Party (Hero, Garcia, Pachon 2000). It is theorized that as Latinos grow older, they are increasingly socialized according to cultural traditions that cause them to later ascribe to a certain party (Hero, Garcia, Pachon 2000). Related to this is the fact that many Latinos (40%) are foreign born. Nativity is important to party affiliation in a few ways. Possibly proximity to native culture may affect party affiliation. Also, foreign-born Latinos receive different socialization than native born Latinos; for instance, native born Latinos receive socialization in civics classes that foreign-born Latinos may not receive. This may also affect party affiliation, both if and when a foreign-born Latino affiliates himself with a particular party (Alvarez, Garcia-Bedolla 2003).

Other very important driving factors for voter participation and party affiliation are education, income, and life cycle factors - especially age (Hansen , Rosenstone 1993). People with higher socioeconomic status (SES), including education and income, usually have more time, money, and civic skills than those without (Hansen , Rosenstone 1993). According to Michelson (2005), accounting for SES and citizenship, Latinos generally vote in the same numbers as Anglos - though Latino citizenship rates are much lower than Anglo citizenship rates and SES levels are also lower. The poverty rate for Latinos

is 20% compared with the poverty rate of Anglos, which is 8.5%; 12.6% of Latinos are college graduates compared to 30.5% of Anglos who are college graduates, showing that Latino SES rates are much lower than Anglo SES rates (Dockterman 2007). The number of foreign-born Latinos has increased slightly from 2000 to 2007, from 38.5% to 40.1% (Dockterman 2007). Citizenship rates and age are important factors in understanding Latino voter participation:

Latinos have lower levels of income and education, which are...associated with information levels, political attention, and sophistication. Moreover, this deficit is compounded by over half of all Latino adults in the US being foreign-born, in many instances denying them the benefits of political socialization and US civics education provided to children raised in the United States (Nicholson, Pantoja, Segura 2006).

In 2007, the median age of Latinos born in the United States was only 17 while the median age for those not born in the United States was 36 - overall, the average age for Latinos was 27(Dockterman 2007). This indicates that the numbers of Latinos who are eligible to vote is increasing as the population of eligible voters (due to age) is increasing, and many more Latinos were eligible to vote in 2008. The Pew Hispanic Center estimated that 17 million Latinos were eligible to vote in the 2006-midterm elections, an increase of 7% from 2004 (Eaton, Jordan). In 2004, the Pew Hispanic Center found that

the total Latino population grew by about 5.7 million between 2000 and 2004, although the number of eligible voters - those voters at least 18-years-old and U.S. citizens - only grew about 2.1 million. White, on the other hand, accounted for 29% of the overall population increase but 46% of the increase in the electorate (Fry, Passel, Suro 2004).

At first glance, one might think that increasing voting numbers for Latinos may be attributed to increasing SES of Latinos, although studies have found that SES levels for Latinos has not increased very rapidly, as many Latinos are concentrated in fields which have low levels of SES and many foreign born Latinos have a hard time of increasing their SES (Kochhar 2005). An increase in citizenship rates and increase in the average age of Latinos are probably better indicators of increasing Latino voting numbers (Fry, Passel, Suro 2005).

For the 2000 Presidential election, the US Bureau of the Census found that registered voters did not vote for numerous reasons: 35% were too busy or forgot, 22% did not vote because of illness, disability, or lack of transportation, 21% did not like the candidates, and 10% had problems with their registration or found that the day of the election and voting hours were inconvenient (United States Hispanic Leadership Institute). These are important factors that seem like they can be easily remedied; however, underlying all of these factors are circumstances that many Latinos share - low SES can account for people being too busy and having to work multiple jobs, as well as lacking transportation. As previously mentioned, many Latinos are concentrated in nonprofessional, blue collar, and menial jobs, which also might account for feeling that

voting hours are inconvenient. However, effective mobilization can overcome many of these factors attributed to SES, by dispersing information and drawing people in to participate. Some interest groups may also even try and mobilize voters by providing transportation (Hansen, Rosenstone 1993).

The 2008 Presidential Election and Latino Mobilization

Specifically, the 2008 election had several unique traits that could be possible explanations for Latino voter turnout, and even more important to my purposes, Latino voter-choice. From the exciting and contentious Democratic primary to the general election, Latinos and their vote choices really signal some possible trends for Latino voters.

Obama's decisive win of the Latino vote in November is thought provoking when one considers the Democratic primary between Senator Hillary Clinton and Obama. Recent studies have found that Latinos supported Clinton in the primary by 83% (Barreto, Manzano, Sanchez 2009). Some people thought that this indicated that Latinos would not vote for an African American. For instance, a New Mexico Republican County Chair, Fernando C de Baca, made a comment that Latinos in New Mexico would never vote for an African American candidate: "The truth is that Hispanics came here as conquerors. African-Americans came here as slaves. Hispanics consider themselves above blacks. They won't vote for a black president" (Anderson). So how did it come to pass, then, that a large majority of Latinos voted for Clinton, and then turned around to throw their support for Barack Obama, especially when the primary was so incredibly

contentious? This could signify a number of things: perhaps a solid Democratic stronghold for Latinos, perhaps an intense dislike of the Republican Party, who had been in office for the last eight years. At the same time, perhaps Obama's high voting numbers had to do with "McCain's inability to gain traction with Latinos from the primary to general, [which] made it difficult for him to make inroads with voters beyond those with strong partisan and policy orientations" (Barreto, Manzano, Sanchez 2009). Another reason these Latinos threw their support behind Obama could have been because of Obama's use of mobilization agents.

The primaries are also interesting to look at because many states have closed primaries, which would exclude those not affiliated with a party. In the contentious Clinton-Obama Democratic primary, many people would have been excluded from voting if not affiliated with a party. Perhaps voters affiliated themselves with a party in order to enable themselves to vote in the primary. This could have specifically affected Latinos because many of the states with large Latino populations (i.e. New Mexico, Colorado, Florida) have closed primaries.

Latinos were also registered in large numbers in this election, mobilized by political parties, as well as by non-party actors. These large numbers of registered Latino voters played important roles in specific states, as was previously discussed. Nonpartisan groups like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) and others teamed up to form a coalition called Movimiento, to register Latino voters. As of October 28, 2008, they had registered

126,000 Latino voters, as part of an effort to increase the 9.3 million registered Latino voters to 11.5 million (Lopez-Rodriguez). Barack Obama formed an advisory group specifically for Latinos, and spent \$20 million on courting Latino voters, compared to the \$8 million spent by both candidates in 2004 (Hendricks). Obama for President had a website, www.latinosforobama.com, just for Latinos; the website helped inform Latinos as well as teach Latinos how to register and find out how to register their friends and neighbors. Not only does registering Latinos help to get Latinos out to vote, who registers them also matters; if contacted by Latinos, Latinos are more likely to register to vote and to vote, which seemed to happen this election (Michelson 2005, Lopez-Rodriguez). Related to this, as previously discussed, some Latinos in the past have voted for symbolic reasons and candidate likeability. Being contacted by Obama's campaign or being registered to vote by someone supporting Obama could psychologically make a Latino voter like Obama more, thus making them more likely to register for the Democratic party and vote for Obama. Many Latinos had positive attitudes toward Obama (insert Table 2).

What issues possibly mobilized Latinos in 2008? The most important issues for Latinos and how those issues were addressed can show a few trends that may have caused Latinos to mobilize around those issues and vote in specific ways. First, according to Matt Barreto, immigration was not one of the two most important issues for Latino voters as in prior elections, but rather the two most important issues were the economy and the war in Iraq, which my data set mirrors (Lawrence) (insert Table 5).

Specifically, the economy was highly important this election. In 2008, the economy had been in a downward slope, and collapsed in the Fall of 2008. The main sector of the economy that was affected was the housing sector; banks were lending money to many people who could not afford houses, which essentially led to a collapse of the housing market and a subsequent collapse of the entire economy (Ahrens). The issue of the economy was very present during the election, with the Congressional financial "bailout" of the banks. The financial "bailout" of the banks happened in September, and the news centered largely on the presidential candidates; whether they were voting for or against the financial bailout (Ahrens). How did this especially affect Latinos? As previously mentioned, Latinos are often concentrated in jobs with low levels of SES, like labor jobs in construction and building (Kochhar 2005). When the housing market collapsed, many people were affected, and Latinos might have been directly affected with job losses in building and construction sectors, perhaps making Latinos care about the issue of the economy, mobilizing Latinos to vote.

Also relating to issues, Latinos might have also been affected by media coverage, both of the economy, other issues, and perhaps even their own impact in the election. First, the economy, as mentioned before, was played up more and more as the election drew closer. Debates were focused on the election, and media coverage focused on candidates and their positions on the economy. Second, Latinos were mentioned much in the election, possibly mobilizing them to go out and vote. All over the nation, the news media was mentioning, discussing, and speculating about the Latino electorate; from

news articles from the New York Times, like "The Emerging Minority" by James Traub, to many stories of how the candidates were appealing to Latinos, to other stories all across the nation about how Latinos were going to be a huge part of the 2008 electorate.

Hypotheses

In the past, Latinos have been unlikely to be contacted by campaigns; however, when contacted, they are likely to vote (Michelson 2005). It seems that the 2008 Presidential election paid comparatively more attention to Latinos than in previous elections. For instance, the media circulated many stories of the Latino power house, the candidates, especially Obama focused their elections toward Latinos. Obama focused his election on Latinos by his Latino advisory group, website, and with other groups contacting and registering voters. Essentially, the entire election was largely based on contacting, registering, and involving Latinos in the election. I hypothesize that being contacted, especially by the Democratic Party, was the most important factor to voting for Obama by Latinos.

H1: Being contacted, especially by the Democratic Party during the 2008

Presidential election was the most important mobilization agent driving Latinos to vote for Obama.

For my second set of hypotheses, I wish to consider the factor of policy issues. As Matt Barreto discussed and my data set has confirmed, the most important issue in this election was the economy (Lawrence). I hypothesize that if the economy was the

most important issue for Latino voters, they voted for Obama. Related to this is the next hypothesis; that attitudes toward President Bush also affected rates of Latinos voting for Obama. Contrary to 2000 and 2004, Bush became a liability in 2008; his overall approval ratings were very low, fluctuating from 19% to 38% during his last year as president (the 38% approval rating was in January 2009 after the election, the highest approval rate before the election was 30% in August 2008) (“Obama Job Approval..”). He became a liability for a couple reasons, namely the War in Iraq and the state of the economy. Both of these events could easily be blamed on Bush, explaining his low approval ratings. The state of the economy had a rating as low as 82% of citizens thinking that the National Economy was getting worse in September 2008 (“Obama Job Approval...”). If, as discussed before, Latinos often vote on candidate likeability, and that likeability hinges upon substantial policies that help Latinos (Nicholson, Pantoja, Segura 2006), then the 2008 election for Latinos could be largely determined by voting in opposition to the last four years of the administration. In other words, as studies have found that Latinos largely voted for President Bush in 2004, perhaps based on candidate likeability. But his re-election as President was not accompanied by widespread change helpful to Latinos. Hence, the issue of the economy might be attributed to the shortcomings in economic policy of the Bush administration. Latinos who see this as their most important issue, then, would vote in opposition to the Republican administration and vote for Obama.

H2: Latinos who considered the economy as their most important issue were

more likely to vote for Obama than those who chose other policy issues.

H3: Latinos with poor attitudes towards President Bush were more likely to vote for Obama than those with more positive attitudes towards President Bush.

Data and Methods

The data used in this analysis are taken from the Collaborative Multi-racial Post-election Survey (CMPS). This is the first national comprehensive study on the effects of voter mobilization among Asians, Blacks, Latinos and Whites using a post-election study. The CMPS contains 4,563 respondents that self-identified as Asian, Black, Latino, and White. The telephone survey was in the field November 2008 to December 2008. The sample was drawn from 18 states with significant Asian, Black, Latinos and White populations, which also represent a mix and non-competitive states. Competitive states are those where candidates win by 5 percent or less of the state's popular vote, and non-competitive are those where candidates win by more than 5 percent of the state's popular vote. There are 51 items with sociopolitical attitudes, mobilization and political activity. Additionally, there are 21 items that capture demographic information, including: age, ancestry, birthplace, education, ethnicity, marital status, number in the household, religiosity, gender, media usage and residential context. Interviews were conducted in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, and Vietnamese (Barreto, Manzano, Sanchez 2009).

My dependent variable for all my hypotheses is a dichotomous variable called voterchoice, with 0 = McCain and 1 = Obama. The question reads: *In the 2008 election*

for President, did you vote for Republican John McCain, Democrat Barack Obama or someone else? Since the dependent variable is categorical and dichotomous, I use logistic regression to estimate vote choice models.

Independent variables include contact and contact specifically by the Democratic party. These questions read: *Over the past 12 months were you asked to register or to vote by a candidate for office or a person working for a candidate, a representative of a political party, or someone from an organization working in your community?* and *Were you contacted by the Democrats, Republicans, both parties, or by representatives of other parties such as Greens or Libertarians?* People who did not know or refused were excluded from the analysis. Another independent variable was salience of the economy for a Latino voter: *Thinking back to the presidential election, what do you think was the most important issue facing the nation?* This was coded as a dichotomous variable; respondents who said the economy was their most important issue = 1, those with other issues as the most important issue = 0. The last independent variable I used for my last hypothesis was attitude toward Bush: *Do you have a 1) very favorable, 2) somewhat favorable, 3) no opinion, 4) somewhat unfavorable, 5) very unfavorable impression of George W. Bush?* This was coded as 1 = very favorable, 2 = somewhat favorable, 3 = no opinion, 4 = somewhat unfavorable, and 5 = very unfavorable. Respondents who indicated that they had never heard of the President were excluded from the analysis.

Additionally, a host of explanatory variables are included in my analysis. These independent variables include: Socioeconomic status (income and education). The

question for income was, *What was your total combined household income in 2007 before taxes?* This was coded as 1 = less than \$20,00, 2 = \$20,000 to \$39,000, 3 = \$40,000 to \$59,000, 4 = \$60,000 to \$79,000, 5 = \$80,000 to \$99,999, 6 = \$100,000 to \$150,000, 7 = More than \$150,000, 8 = Don't know/Refused. The Question about Education was, *What is the highest level of education you completed?* This was coded as 1 = Grades 1-8, 2 = Some High School, 3 = High School Graduate, 4 = Some College/Technical School, 5 = College graduate, 6 = Post-graduate education. For demographic factors I included age, nativity, and national origin. The question regarding age was, *What year were you born?* This variable was just used as is; I did not recode it into categories. The question about nativity was, *Were you born in the United States, "on the island of Puerto Rico," or in another country?* This was coded as a dichotomous variable with 1 = yes, respondent was born in the United States and 2 = respondent was born in another country. The question about national origin was, *Hispanics and Latinos have their roots in many different countries in Latin America. To what country do you or your family trace your ancestry?* This question had 22 nations of origin; I used the answers of Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, and coded them as dichotomous variables, with 1 = yes, respondent is from the country (Mexico, Puerto Rico, or Cuba), and 2 = no, respondent was not from one of those three countries. Partisanship was also used as an independent control variable, specifically about Democrats. This question was, *Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, or do you not think in these terms?* This was coded as a dichotomous variable, with 1 = yes, respondent aligned

themselves with the Democratic Party and 0 = no, respondent did not align with the Democratic Party.

Findings: Political Orientations

Mobilization in the 2008 election appeared very important, as previously discussed. Mobilization is mobilization by political leaders as discussed by Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) involved political candidates, parties, and interest groups who contacted voters to register them and ask them to vote for a political candidate. Out of the 34.4% of Latino respondents in the CMPS who were contacted by a political party, 74.7% of them voted for Obama. This is more than 10 percentage points higher than the average of Latinos who voted for Obama, so this signifies that contact was perhaps an important factor in the election.

Latinos who were contacted by a political party totaled 32.4% of the Latinos surveyed in the CMPS, compared with the 25% who were contacted in the 2004 election (Barreto et. al. 2005). Out the people contacted, a majority voted for Obama. How was this different from other elections? In other elections, Latinos have been mobilization at lower rates than other groups: "Latinos have largely been excluded from get-out -the- vote (GOTV) efforts conducted by the major political parties" (Hero, Garcia, Pachon 2000, Michelson 2006).

Out of the 32.4% of Latinos who were contacted by a political party, 84.1% were contacted by a Democrat (including those respondents who were contacted by both Democrats and Republicans), while about 56% of contacted respondents were contacted

by Republicans (also taking into account those people who were contacted by both Democrats and Republicans). This shows how Latinos were mobilized, especially by the Democratic Party, perhaps signifying an important mobilization agent by political leaders in the 2008 election - a mobilization agent that has not been utilized largely to mobilize Latino voters. Of those Latino respondents who were contacted by the Democratic party, over 75% of them voted for Obama; perhaps being contacted by a particular party compels Latinos to vote in specific ways, which would explain why so many voted for Obama. The Democratic Party seemed more likely to use contact to mobilize Latino voters in the 2008 election, compelling Latinos to vote for Obama. However, at the same time, we must account for the media's role in the election and the way they portrayed the candidate's stances toward Latino voters; their widespread focus on Latino voters may have altered our perceptions of the role of mobilization in the 2008 election (insert Tables 3 and 4 here).

As discussed earlier, Latinos seemed to be mobilized by issues in the 2008 Presidential election, especially the economy, which was cited most frequently by respondents in the CMPS as the most important issue facing the nation in 2008; 69.5% of Latinos found the economy to be their most important issue (insert table 5 here). This most likely reflects the impact of the economic crisis on Latinos. They may have cared so much about the economy because of job insecurity and their SES levels. Hence, they say the economic crisis impacting them directly. Out of the 69.5% of Latino respondents who cited the economy as their most important issue in the CMPS, 24.2% voted for

McCain and 75.8% voted for Obama. These voting numbers possibly signify unhappiness with the handling of the economy by the Republican Party and the Bush administration. Related to this, attitudes of respondents in the CMPS had negative attitudes toward President Bush, with 17.4% having somewhat unfavorable opinions of Bush and 46.6% having very unfavorable opinions toward him. I believe that these mostly negative attitudes, coupled with the high salience of the economy to Latino voters, signals a possible backlash against the Republican administration and the Republican Party, causing Latinos to mobilize around the issue of the economy and vote for Obama (insert Table 6 here).

Although some cite religious or moral/value issues as having an impact in the high numbers for Bush in 2004, the CMPS found that religious issue salience for Latino respondents was 0.6%; these moral/value issues had almost no salience for Latino voters. Mobilization did seem to matter largely in the election. Latinos seemed to be mobilized by the Democratic Party, being contacted in higher numbers by the Democratic Party than by the Republican Party, and those voters voting in high numbers for Obama. Mobilization around the economy also seemed very important for Latino voter choice in the election, and coupled with attitudes toward Bush, caused Latinos to vote in large numbers for Obama.

Findings: Socioeconomic Status

The \$100,000-150,000 income bracket voted in the highest numbers for McCain; voting rates for McCain essentially went up as income went up for Latino voters,

although percentages for McCain went down slightly with the highest income bracket (Insert Table 7). Education was similar; those with the lowest levels of education voted for Obama in higher numbers than those with higher levels of education. However, those Latino respondents with the highest level of education voted in higher numbers for Obama (Insert Table 8). These results regarding SES levels may signify that Latinos with very high levels of SES may tend to vote Democrat. This might show first that Democrats have a stronghold on the majority of Latinos with the lowest and highest rates of SES. Second, these descriptive statistics could show increasing rates of Latinos could present some interesting trends over time; perhaps those Latinos with the lowest levels of SES will become Republican voters as their SES increases slightly, and perhaps those with medium levels of SES (\$60-150K) may move toward the Democratic Party as their SES rates increase. These trends would be interesting to study further over time, however, as previously discussed, Latino SES levels do not increase very rapidly.

Findings: Demographics

The three largest Latino nationality groups are Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban Americans. Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans tend to vote Democratic, which was also shown in the 2008 election and the CMPS survey results (insert Table 8). Cuban Americans tend to vote Republican, which also was shown in the election and the CMPS results. I speculate that Cuban Americans tended to vote with McCain because of purely partisan reasons; they have voted 70% for Republicans in the last 40 years (Bishin et. al. 2008). The interesting thing to note however, for the 2008

Presidential election, is that it looks like Cuban Americans voted for Obama at surprisingly high rates in particular places. In Florida, with a 41% of Latinos in Florida being Cuban Americans (Lopez, Taylor 2009), Obama won the Latino vote. This perhaps has to do with issues such as the economy, or the mobilization of Cuban Americans in the 2008 election by Obama. For instance, the advisory committee formed by Obama's campaign explicitly wanted to court Cuban American voters and military Latinos (Hendricks). His efforts seemed to have paid off in Florida, as well as making some gains in Cuban American votes nationwide (Insert table 9 here).

Age and nativity are related to voter participation and affiliation in terms of voter eligibility; Latinos have been a very young group relative to the rest of the nation, with many more Latinos finally becoming eligible to become voters. Foreign-born Latinos are much less likely to be eligible to vote because many of them are not citizens (Dockterman 2007). The trends in the 2008 election are interesting for these groups, then, because they may signify trends for Latinos as more Latinos become eligible to vote because of age and citizenship trends. Younger voters tended to vote in high numbers for Obama; according to the data in the CMPS, 18-35 year-olds voted 75.3% for Obama, compared with 63.4% of 35-50 year-olds and 71% of respondents over the age of 70 who voted for Obama, these seemed to be the most interesting age groups. Foreign-born respondents in the CMPS voted for Obama by 69.8% compared to 78.6% for native-born respondents; this may be due to the fact that many Latino foreign-born citizens are Cuban Americans (Dockterman 2007). This data is very interesting and perhaps signifies no

change in voter trends for Latinos over time; as more Latinos are eligible to vote because of age, they may tend to vote Democrat, but as more foreign-born Latinos are eligible to vote because of increased citizenship rates, they may tend to vote Republican - canceling each other out and keeping the voter choice rates the same.

Findings: Logit Model Results

Although the descriptive statistics suggested that mobilization, policy issues, and demographic factors were correlated with vote choice, multivariate analysis will indicate the relative impact of these factors. My logit model did not find that being contacted or being contacted by the Democratic Party was significant. Therefore, mobilization was not as important a factor in this election as I had expected. However, as one would expect, partisanship was the most powerful explanatory factor the entire model (Odds Ratio = 17.06), where Democrats supported Obama significantly more than McCain. This still may have been due to mobilization, and as discussed at length, the Obama campaign and other nonpartisan groups which supported Obama registering Latinos to vote perhaps had an impact on more Latinos affiliating themselves with the Democratic Party, thus making them likely to vote for Obama. This may still be a stretch, however, it is important to take this into account. Bush attitude was not shown to be significant for Latino voters in voting for Obama. This showed that backlash against the Bush administration was not a significant contributing factor for Latino vote choice, as I had hypothesized. Still, the high significance of partisanship could still signal some dislike with the Republicans, that

those people who affiliated with the Democratic Party probably have some level of disapproval of Republicans simply by their Democratic Party affiliation. The economy was a significant contributing factors in the 2008 election according to my logit model controlling for other factors. The significance of the economy makes sense given the poor state of the economy and the media coverage of the economy; this issue was largely on people's minds and especially Latinos, with high levels of concentrations of low-paying jobs especially in the building industry, would care about this issue.

I found in my logit model that being Cuban American was a significant contributing factor in voting for McCain in the election, perhaps showing that although Obama made strides among Cuban Americans during the campaigning process, they are still more likely to vote Republican than other Latinos. Being Puerto Rican was also a significant contributing factor, though it contributed to Latinos voting for Obama. Being Mexican American, I found, was not a contributing factor to voting for either candidate. These results may show that the Republican Party has a definite stronghold on the Cuban American population and the Democratic Party has a definite stronghold on the Puerto Rican population, or that these two nationality groups found their respective candidates appealing to vote for.

The only SES factor that was significant to driving Latinos to vote for McCain was education, showing that increasing education is a contributing factor for Latinos voter choice, although as discussed before, SES rates do not increase very rapidly for Latinos. So, although this was a factor in the election of 2008, it may not signify any changes in

Latino voter choice over at least the short run. I also want to note that education seemed to be a factor in voting for Obama for everyone, regardless of race; those with the highest or lowest education levels voted for Obama. My descriptive statistics mirror this, although I found higher education to be a significant factor for McCain voter choice for Latinos (insert Table 10 here).

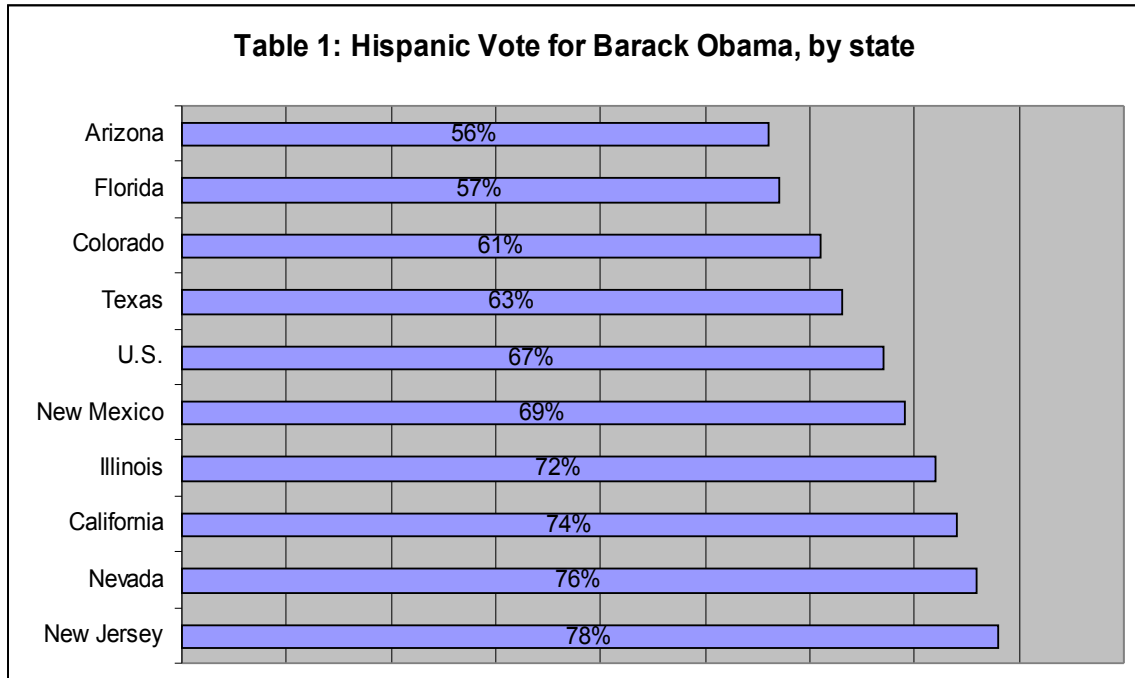
Conclusion and Discussion

I set out to establish some trends regarding the mobilizing agents for Latinos and voter choice, or what compelled Latinos to vote for Obama in the 2008 Presidential election. For Latinos in the 2008 Presidential election, the main mobilizing agent that caused them to vote for Obama was political orientations, especially their partisanship as Democrats and the issue of the economy. Although it seems that the Obama campaign was adept as using contact targeted toward Latino voters, the economy was an understandably monumental issue for voters in 2008, as the media coverage concerning the economic collapse increased as the election drew nearer. Latinos were especially impacted by the economic collapse, as their SES levels are primarily low and they are concentrated in jobs that were affected greatly by the collapse of the housing market. Not only was the economy a huge issue driving Latinos to vote for Obama, but also a backlash toward the Bush administration, demonstrated by unfavorable attitudes toward President Bush. However, this could also simply be that those people with unfavorable attitudes toward Bush are likely to vote for Obama anyway. As more Latinos become naturalized and of age to participate in elections, their party affiliations will affect who Latinos overall and over time vote for. Even though contact by political parties did not affect Latinos to vote for Obama, their registration as Democrats, perhaps propelled by

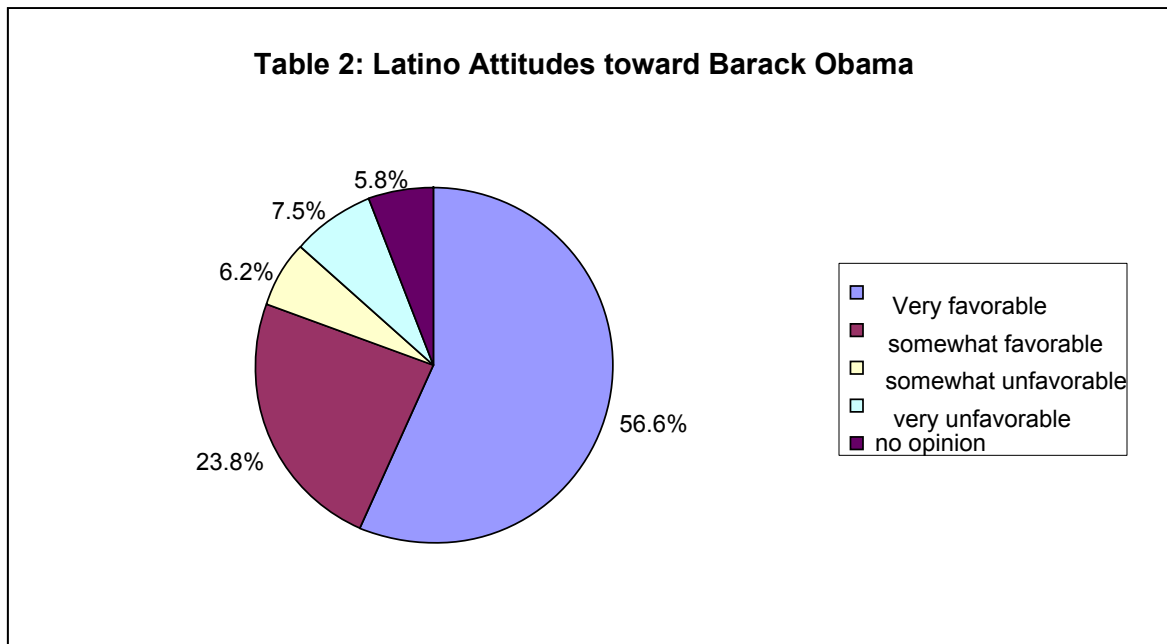
the Obama campaign and interest groups, may have indirectly affected the election.

The 2008 Presidential election was extremely unique. The circumstances surrounding the election, the economic collapse so close to the election, the presence of the 2 wars we are engaged in, the high disapproval numbers of President Bush, were all important factors to everyone. These circumstances, combined with unusual candidates, remarkable Democratic primaries, and the outreach to all sorts of people all over the nation compelled many people, including Latinos, to come out and participate in higher numbers than ever before. The uniqueness of this election makes it difficult to say whether Democrats have a stronghold on Latinos or if the circumstances were just right in this election for Latinos to vote in high numbers for the Democratic candidate. It is safe to say that for now, the Democratic Party does have a powerful hold on Latinos. If the economy does not improve substantially in the next four years, Latinos may go out and vote for the Republican candidate or if the Republican Party can go out and get many Latinos to sign up for their party, perhaps Latinos will start to move to the Republican Party. Another important factor to take into account in the future is the number of Latinos that could potentially become citizens in the next few years. The age of Latinos is rising, and the citizenship rates could also rise. Citizenship applications rose by 86% in Southern Arizona in 2007 (Kornman); this could signal a quickly growing Latino electorate if these numbers continue all over the nation and these people actually become citizens. This could also signal a long-term Democratic stronghold for Latinos. It will be important to continue studying Latino voter choices in the next few elections, as the number of eligible Latino voters continues to rise. Also, it is important to continue studying Latino voter choices: Was this unique Presidential election of 2008 just a fluke,

with all the right factors (the economy, dislike of Republicans, high registration with the Democratic Party) lining up for Latinos to vote in high numbers for Obama, or does this really signal a Democratic stronghold? If things continue to line up, like I stated before, then I speculate that Latinos will continue voting for Democratic candidates. Also, if past history indicates anything for the future, then it is safe to say that Latino will continue voting the way they have voted in the past, for the Democratic Party. However, the Latino electorate is a dynamic enough group in terms of a changing population and diversity that studies concerning their voting behavior and voter choices ought to be continued far into the future.

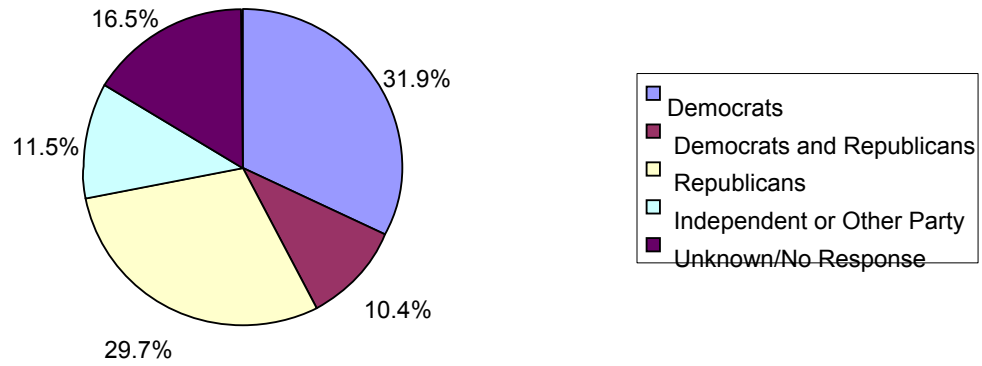


Source: Pew Hispanic Center Analysis of 2008 exit poll results as reported by CNN.



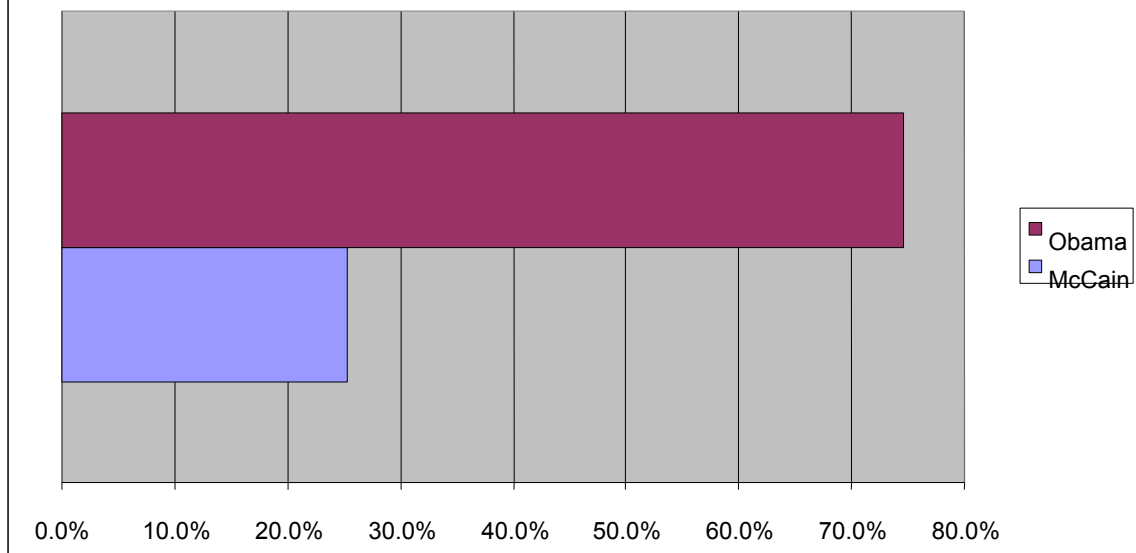
Source: Comparative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey Data

Table 3: Latino Voter Contact by Party

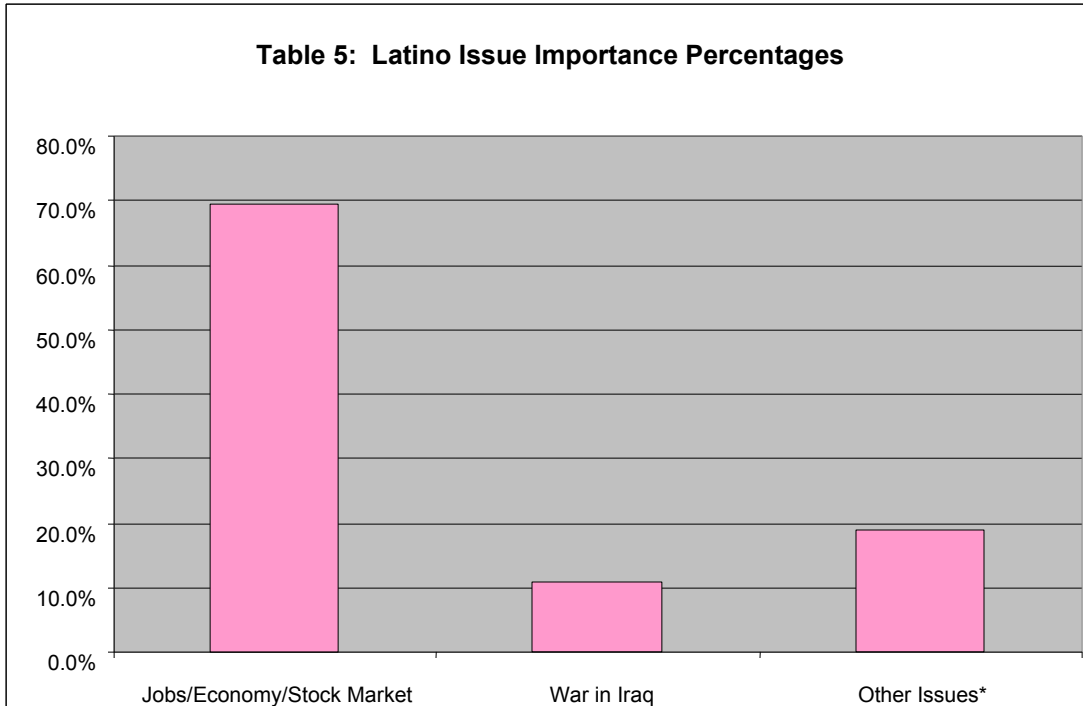


Source: Comparative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey Data

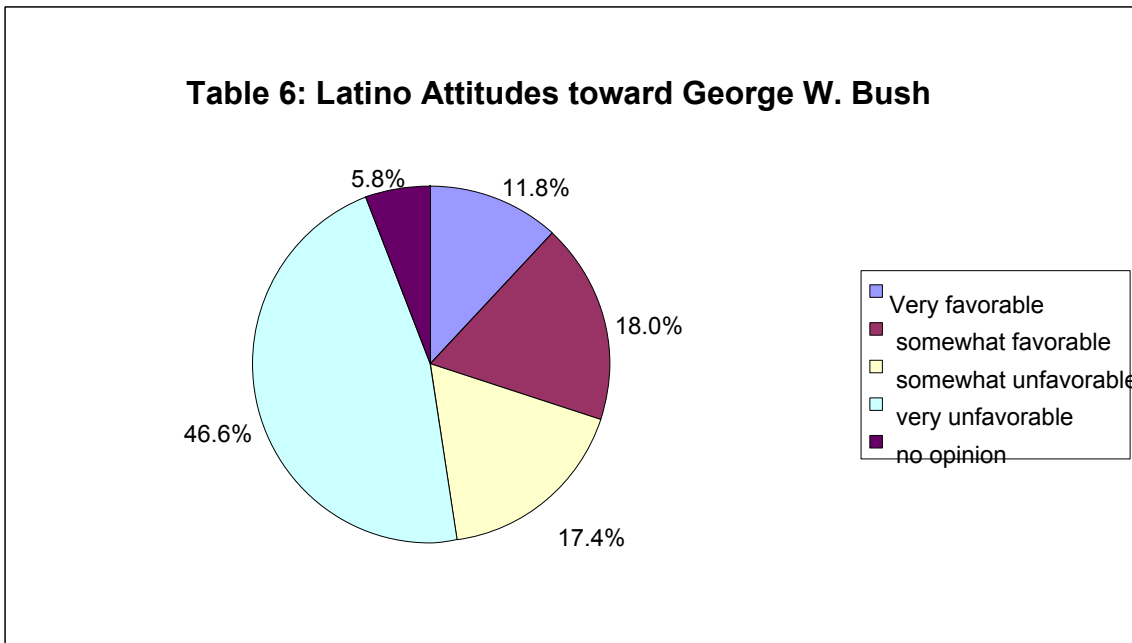
Table 4: Contact and Voter Choice



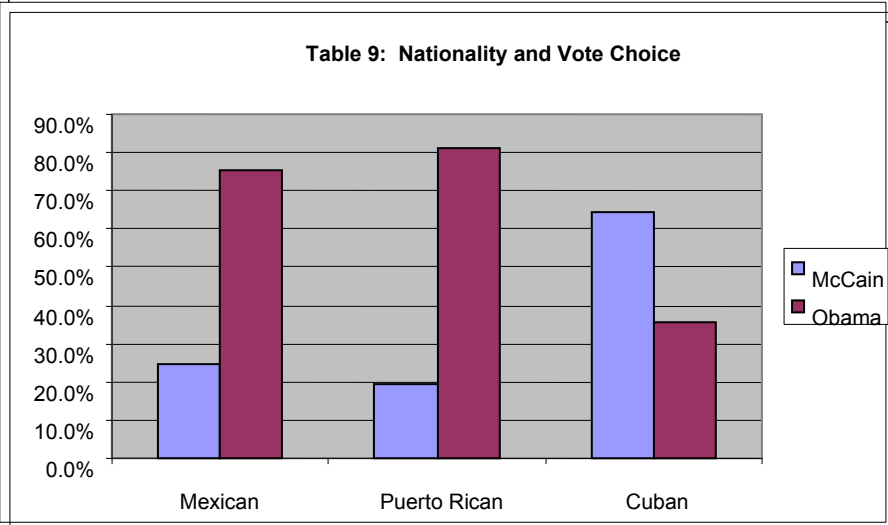
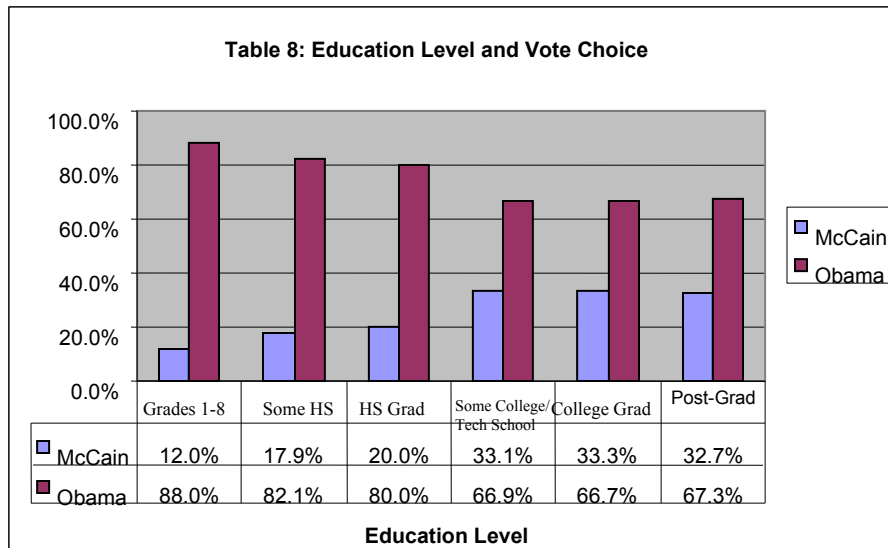
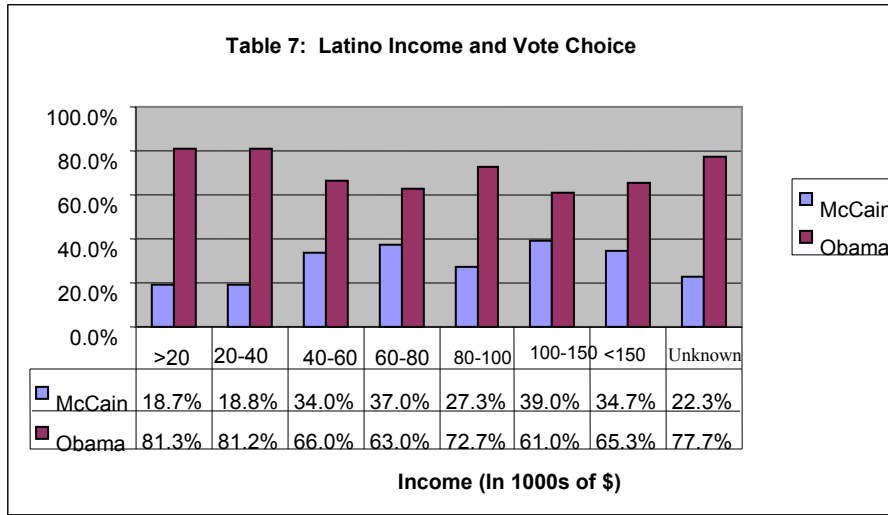
Source: Comparative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey Data



Source: Comparative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey Data



Source: Comparative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey Data



Source: Comparative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey Data

Table 10: Contributing Factors to Vote Choice
Among Latinos in the General Election

Contributing Factor	General Election Results		
SES	B	SE	OR
Income 20-40K	-0.017	0.960	0.982
Income 40-60K	-0.434	0.198	0.648
Income 60-80K	-0.585	0.130	0.557
Income 80-100K	-0.227	0.607	0.797
Income 100-150K	-0.553	0.184	0.797
Income >150K	0.808	0.145	2.243
Income unknown	-0.097	0.807	0.906
Education	-0.294***	0.000	0.743
Demographics			
Age	0.000	0.187	1.000
Nativity	-0.0125	0.572	0.882
Mexican	-0.027	0.904	0.973
Cuban	-0.844**	0.049	0.430
Puerto Rican	0.803**	0.033	2.233
Political Orientations			
Democrat	2.837***	0.000	17.059
Economy	-0.730**	0.002	0.482
Contact	-0.659	0.231	0.430
Contact by Democrats	0.932	0.111	2.540
Bush Approval	0.753	0.184	2.260
	N	1087	
	Chi-squared	646.74	
	R-square	0.5035	

* p< .10 ** p< .05 *** p< .01

Works Cited

- Abrajano, Marisa A, R. Michael Alvarez, and Jonathan Nagler. "The Hispanic Vote in the 2004 Presidential Election: Insecurity and Moral Concerns." December 17, 2007.
- Ahrens, Frank. "The Ticker." Washingtonpost.com. Accessed April 22, 2009. <<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/economy-watch/>>.
- Alvarez, R. Michael and Lisa Garcia-Bedolla. "The Foundations of Latino Voter Partisanship: Evidence from the 2000 Election." The Journal of Politics, Vol. 65, No. 1 (February 2003), pp. 31-49.
- Barreto, Matt A., David Leal, Jongho Lee, and Rodolfo O. de la Garza. "The Latino Vote in the 2004 Election." PS: Political Science and Politics, Vol. 38, No. 1 (January 2005), pp. 41-49.
- Barreto, Matt A., Sylvia Manzano, and Gabriel R. Sanchez. "En Fuego: Latinos and the 2008 Presidential Election." Paper prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the Western Political Science Association. March 2009.
- Bishin, Benjamin G., Geryal M. Cherif, Andy S. Gomez, and Daniel P. Stevens. "What to Expect from the Cuban-American Electorate." Brookings Institution. August 2008. <http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2008/08_cuban_americans_gomez.aspx>.
- Broder, David S. and Zachary Goldfarb. "Bush Rates Lower with Spanish-Speaking Voters." Washington Post. July 7, 2006. Washingtonpost.com. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/comments/display?contentID=AR2006071901840>>.
- Cohen, Alex. "Richardson Highlights His Hispanic Heritage." NPR. May 24, 2007. <<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10378847>>.
- Dockterman, Daniel. "Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States, 2007." Pew Hispanic Center, A Pew Research Center Project. March 5, 2007. Available at <<http://pewhispanic.org/factsheets/factsheet.php?FactsheetID=46>>.
- Eaton, Leslie and Miriam Jordan. "Big Turnout of Latino Voters Boosted Obama." Wall Street Journal. November 6, 2008. Wallstreetjournal.com. <<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122593469349803755.html>>.
- Fry, Richard, Roberto Suro, and Jeffrey Passel. "Hispanics and the 2004 Election: Population, Electorate, and Voters." Pew Hispanic Center, A Pew Research Center Project. 2005. Available at <<http://pewhispanic.org/reports/report.php?ReportID=48>>.
- Garcia, F. Chris and Gabriel R. Sanchez. Hispanics and the U.S. Political System: Moving into the Mainstream. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2008.
- Hansen, John Mark, and Steven J. Rosenstone. Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993.
- Hendricks, Tyche. "Obama Forms Advisory Group Focused on Latinos." SFGate.com. San Francisco Chronicle. August 8, 2008. <<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/08/20/MNKN12DESI.DTL&type=printable>>.
- Hero, Rodney, F. Chris Garcia, and Harry Pachon. "Latino Participation, Partisanship, and Office Holding." PS: Political Science and Politics, Vol. 33, No. 3 (September 2000), pp. 529-534.

- Jennings, Trip. "Republican Fernando C de Baca Says his Remarks Taken out of Context." *New Mexico Independent*. September 22, 2008. <<http://newmexicoindependent.com/1548/republican-fernando-c-de-baca-says-his-remarks-taken-out-of-context>>.
- Kochhar, Rakesh. "The Occupational Status and Mobility of Hispanics." Pew Hispanic Center, A Pew Research Center Project. December 15, 2005. Available at <<http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/59.pdf>>.
- Kornman, Sheryl. "Citizenship Applicants up by 86% in S. Az." *Tucsoncitizen.com*. October 1, 2007. <<http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/ss/border/64591.php>>.
- Lawrence, Jill. "Hispanic Vote Grows, Shifts to Democrats." *USA Today*, 7a. November 7, 2008. <http://www.usatoday.com/printedition/news/20081107/a_hispanics07.art.htm>.
- Lee, Jongho, Rodolfo O. de la Garza, Daron Shaw. "Examining Latino Turnout in 1996: A Three-State, Validated Survey Approach." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April 2000), pp. 338-346.
- Lopez, Mark Hugo. "How Hispanics Vote in the 2008 Election." Pew Hispanic Center, a Pew Research Center Project. November 5, 2008. Available at <<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1024/exit-poll-analysis-hispanics>>.
- Lopez-Rodriguez, Lillian. "Latino Leaders Register 126,277 Latino Voters." *Hispanic Tips: Hispanic/Latino News*. <<http://www.hispanictips.com/2008/07/09/svrep-president's-report-1-2008-the-latino-voter-registration-surge-in-2008/>>
- Lopez, Mark Hugo and Paul Taylor. "Dissecting the 2008 Electorate: Most Diverse in U.S. History." Pew Hispanic Center, Pew Research Center. April 40, 2009. Available at <<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1209/racial-ethnic-voters-presidential-election>>.
- McCain, John. "McCain's Speech to La Raza: San Diego, California." *realclearpolitics.com*. July 14, 2008. <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2008/07/mccains_speech_to_la_raza.html>.
- McDonald, Michael. United States Elections Project, 2008 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement. George Mason University. April 6, 2009. <http://elections.gmu.edu/Turnout_2008G.html>. Accessed April 22, 2009.
- Michelson, Melissa R. "Meeting the Challenge of Latino Voter Mobilization." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 601 (September 2005), pp. 85-101.
- Nadler, Richard. "Bush's 'Real' Hispanic Numbers." *Nationalreviewonline*. December 8, 2004. <<http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/nadler200412080811.asp>>.
- Nicholson, Stephen P, Adrian Pantoja, and Gary M. Segura. "Political Knowledge and Issue Voting Among the Latino Electorate." *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (June 2006), pp. 259-271.
- Obama, Barack. "Obama's Remarks to La Raza: San Diego, California." *realclearpolitics.com*. July 13, 2008.

http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2008/07/obamas_remarks_to_la_raz_a.html>.

“Obama Job Approval Unchanged from March.” American Research Group, Inc. April 21, 2004. <<http://www.americanresearchgroup.com/economy/>>.

Sanchez, Gabriel R. “Latinos and the 2008 Election.” Power Point Presentation. Fall 2008.

“Survey Brief: Latinos in California, Texas, New York, Florida, and New Jersey.” Pew Hispanic Center. March 2004. Available at <<http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/loader.cfm?url=/commonspot/security/getfile.cfm&PageID=32977>>.

Traub, James. “The Emerging Minority: Barack and Hispanics.” New York Times. March 2, 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/02/magazine/02wwln-lede-t.html?_r=1&ref=magazine>.

United States Hispanic Leadership Institute. “Voter Education.” 2008. <<http://www.uskli.org/latinovote/education.html>>. Accessed April 15, 2009.