

The stories are alive with conversations, dreams, feasts, and feelings, and with the sights and sounds of nature, humanity, and strife. Galeano intersperses his prose pieces with poems, chants, and songs from the times and with dramatic skits he has created from historical sources. The result is compelling, enlightening, and disturbing—history interfused with literature in a way that emphasizes the humanity of everyone described, yet comes down strongly and angrily on the side of men and women struggling to free themselves from the slavery of others' greed.

The vivid detail of Galeano's style, which Belfrage succeeds in transmitting to English-speaking readers, leaves no reason to wish the volume had illustrations or photographs. And the author's method of cuing each story by number to historical sources listed at the end is useful and unobtrusive. Readers wishing to use *Memory of Fire: Genesis* as an engaging introduction to Latin American history, however, may regret its lack of maps and index.

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**Rodolfo O. de la Garza, ed. *Ignored Voices: Public Opinion Polls and the Latino Community*. (Austin, TX: MAS Publications, 1987) 232 pp., \$12.95 paper.**

The past several years have witnessed the publication of a handful of books and articles focusing on Latino politics in the United States. These studies fall into three general categories: the first type of research attempts to shatter the popular myths about the lack of political sophistication among Latinos by discussing institutional obstacles which hinder Latino political aspirations; the second kind of study documents the rich organizational history of Latinos over the past century; the third type of literature promotes a variety of theoretical models as a way to explain the lack of influence of Latinos on the electoral process.

The book, *Ignored Voices*, breaks new ground in the field of Latino politics by addressing public opinion polls and the Latino community. The book is a collection of papers presented at a conference held in Austin in 1985. The presenters are a cross-section of Latino and non-Latino academics, elected officials, media representatives, and public opinion researchers. The publication is divided into four sections—the significance of public opinion, the 1984 election, issues in polling Latino attitudes, and Latino public opinion research.

*Ignored Voices* is a timely contribution to the growing list of studies on Latino politics because it takes a major step in answering some questions

which have puzzled Latino leaders, both major parties, and national polls about Latino voting behavior.

There has been wide-spread speculation that fundamental changes were taking place among the Latino communities in the U.S., especially since the early 1970s—yet there was no serious research attempting to measure these apparent shifts among Latino voters on issues and candidates.

One major reason for this void is that for years Latinos have been perceived as a homogeneous group of loyal, liberal Democrats. Democratic presidential and state candidates in the 1960s and early 1970s received overwhelming support from Latino voters, especially President John Kennedy in his narrow victory over Richard Nixon in 1960. Ironically, some Latino leaders see this blind loyalty as a major factor which has kept Latinos politically voiceless because the Democratic Party simply takes the Latino vote for granted while the GOP ignores the second largest minority in the U.S. As a result of this lack of political leverage, the social and economic conditions of Latinos have slowly declined in almost all categories including high drop-out rates, lack of affordable housing, increased unemployment, gang killings, unfair immigration laws, and political backlash against bilingual education and ballots.

Since the 1970s, however, several major changes appear to be taking place inside the Latino community including an emerging middle-class, increased political participation by conservative Cuban-Americans, growing activism among Latinas, massive voter registration campaigns, voting rights legislation, an effort by the GOP to attract Latino professionals, the establishment of community organizations sponsored by the Catholic Church, and the recruitment of some Latinos into religious fundamentalism.

As a consequence of these current changes, Latinos can no longer be viewed as a monolithic group, especially since many Latino voters have recently supported GOP candidates.

Both major parties, along with Latino social scientists, have disagreed about what all these changes mean for the future. *Ignored Voices* addresses these critical questions. The majority of participants found that the facts of class, gender, age, and geography must be important variables when measuring Latino voting behavior—ethnicity can no longer be the sole means to predict Latino voting patterns.

There are some differences among some of the participants regarding the most effective way to measure Latino public opinion, i.e. telephone surveys, door-to-door surveys, exit polling. Overall, *Ignored Voices* is a refreshing and welcome addition to the study of Latino politics.

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