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Fe y accion social: Hispanic churches in faith-based community organizing

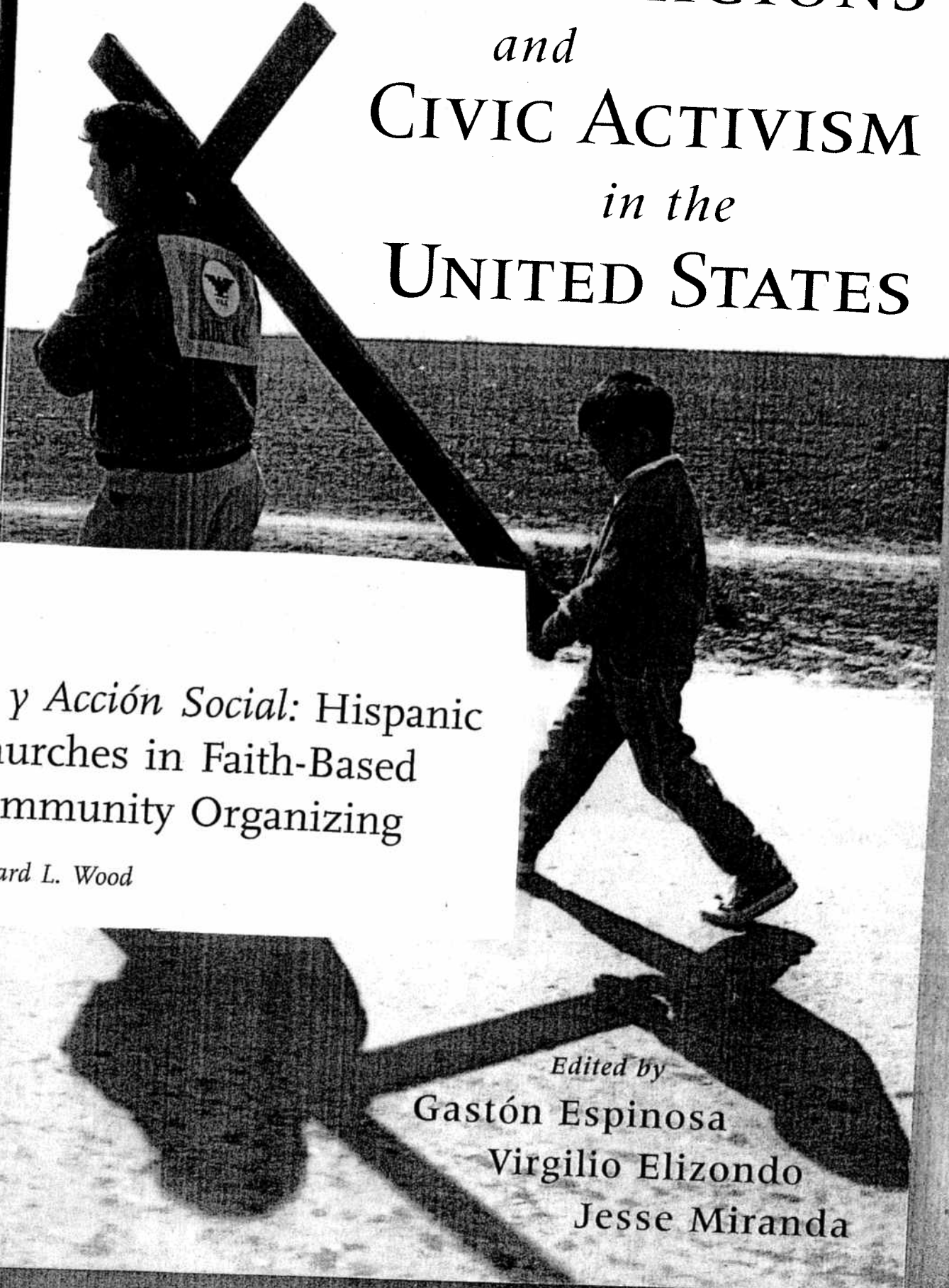
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LATINO RELIGIONS *and* CIVIC ACTIVISM *in the* UNITED STATES

9

Fe y Acción Social: Hispanic Churches in Faith-Based Community Organizing

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Fe y Acción Social: Hispanic Churches in Faith-Based Community Organizing

Richard L. Wood

Off the radar of most political observers, a new form of political engagement has taken hold among Latinos across the United States in the last twenty years: what I will call "faith-based community organizing." Also called broad-based, congregation-based, and institutional organizing, it has become a potent force in organizing Hispanic urban residents to represent their interests in the public arena.¹ In the process, it has helped forge ties between Latinos, African Americans, and Anglos and helped to join Latinos across many divides—including those rooted in political views, country-of-origin, immigration status, language preference, and religious affiliation. Indeed, I argue that faith-based community organizing represents a crucial emerging form of Latino political engagement. Engaged in this work are churches made up primarily of Salvadoran immigrants in Los Angeles and Mexican immigrants in Oakland, California; suburban immigrant communities in Orange County and longtime Mexican American communities in San Diego and San Antonio; rural Mejiicano communities in South Texas, Hispanos in New Mexico, and Puertorriqueños and Guatemaltecos in New England and Florida.

The success of faith-based community organizing in Hispanic churches may be due partly to the fact that contemporary statements of this work were first pioneered in Hispanic barrios in San Antonio, Texas, largely by Hispanic organizers, clergy, and nuns like Father Virgilio Elizondo, MACC, and Ernesto Cortés (see below). I argue in three parts for the democratic promise of this kind of political organizing by Hispanics. First, I describe faith-based community organizing generally, including its origins and contemporary contours. Second, I note current levels of Hispanic engagement in

this work, both as participants and as professional staff. Third, I analyze the movement's future democratic potential for Latinos. I conclude by noting three kinds of challenges posed by this discussion: challenges to the literature on Hispanic civic engagement; challenges to the field of faith-based community organizing; and challenges to Hispanic youth and all those who work with them.

Faith-Based Community Organizing

Most grassroots "community organizing" efforts in America today trace their origins to the work of Saul Alinsky in Chicago, initially with white ethnic groups and later with African Americans.² Over the course of four decades, Alinsky and others spread his highly confrontational model of populist organizing to various cities around the country. Though much of this work was sponsored by churches, over time it lost most of its religious roots and became a kind of secular technique for cultivating power in poor communities; in some places, it also was implicated in efforts by white communities to exclude black homeowners. By the late 1970s, old-style Alinsky organizing had lost much of its influence, like most other grassroots democratic movements.

Meanwhile, a group of organizers, pastors, and religious sisters—many of them Hispanic—were adapting Alinsky's ideas for use in the politically marginalized and economically poor barrios of San Antonio, Texas. Beginning in the mid-1970s, the local organization known as Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) transformed Alinsky's model by linking it much more intimately with the religious congregations and faith commitments of participants.³ As a result of this innovative work, COPS generated far greater political participation among poor barrio residents than had existed previously, accumulated significant power as an organization (including substantial influence on the city's expenditure of federal block grant money by the 1980s), and deeply transformed formerly Anglo-controlled politics in San Antonio. These changes helped create the context in which Henry Cisneros would rise to become perhaps the most salient Hispanic political figure in the United States. It also became the foundational experience leading to the elaboration of the faith-based model of organizing analyzed here.

Though COPS' work to break open San Antonio's power structure generated significant conflict, its links to religious culture and accumulating organizational power and confidence gradually led COPS to become less one-dimensionally conflictive in its relations with political officials. The organization developed a sophisticated political capacity for contestation and compromise that has come to be the hallmark of the stronger versions of faith-based community organizing.⁴

Also in the mid-1970s, Alinsky's model both spread nationally and divided internally, eventually giving rise to four major faith-based community organizing networks: the descendant of Alinsky's own organization, the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF; based in Chicago), of which COPS is a part; the Pacific



Faith-based San Diego Organizing Project leaders fight for better social and infrastructure services in the 1990s (Courtesy of Richard Wood)

Institute for Community Organization (PICO; Oakland, California); the Gamaliel Foundation (Chicago); and Direct Action, Research, and Training (Miami).⁵ In addition, smaller regional networks exist in some areas. Each ultimately adopted some lessons from the COPS experience and elaborated its own version of the faith-based community organizing model. Though differing organizational cultures within the networks give them rather divergent internal tenors for participants, very similar organizing practices characterize their work.

Faith-based community organizing remains rather unknown in academic circles but today arguably represents the most widespread movement for social justice in the United States.⁶ As of 1999, about 133 local or metropolitan area organizations existed, the large majority of these affiliated with one of the four networks. Some 3,300 congregations plus nearly 500 public schools, labor union locals, and other institutions are members of these organizations. Through them, faith-based community organizing touches the lives of perhaps 1.5 million members of religious congregations in all the major urban areas and many secondary cities around the United States.⁷

Each organization trains interfaith teams of leaders from local congregations to do research on issues and negotiate with political and economic elites. But the heart of the process involves "relational organizing"—building networks of residents concerned about a particular issue that affects them or their communities. These leaders work together to research that issue, define spe-

cific policies to address it, then turn out anywhere from several hundred to 6,000 participants in nonpartisan political actions at which political or corporate leaders are asked to commit to those policies. Through this process, the organizations gain civic power and negotiate leverage for local residents, thereby influencing government policy on a variety of issues that affect the quality of life of "working families," as they typically term their constituency. These issues include:

- Housing: In New York, the Nehemiah Project gained government funding for building homes for thousands of low- and middle-income families.
- Public schools: The San Diego Organizing Project worked with teachers to raise pay and reduce class sizes in public schools. The Oakland Community Organization worked with the local school board to create smaller schools-within-schools. The PICO California Project convinced the state to launch a statewide initiative promoting parental engagement in their children's schools and led a \$190-million bond initiative for public school infrastructure. The Texas IAF led the Alliance Schools effort that transformed public education for low-income residents. All these benefited large numbers of Hispanic students.
- Economic development: In San Antonio, COPS led the launch of Project Quest, a job-training program for enabling workers from low-income families to gain access to better-paying jobs.
- Policing: The Oakland Community Organization worked with the local police department to establish and promote a "Beat Health" unit for shutting down drug houses, most in poor neighborhoods. This became a model program for police departments nationally.
- Health care: The PICO California Project is leading the struggle to expand health coverage for families of the "working poor"—those who make too much to qualify for Medicaid/MediCal, but whose jobs include no health coverage. This effort has already generated \$50 million in new funding for the primary care clinics that are the front line of medical coverage for poor families.
- Recreational programs for youth: Local projects around the country have generated new recreational and after-school academic programs for children.

Typically, these organizations have only been capable of wielding influence on the level of citywide politics. Such local work remains the bread and butter of this kind of organizing, but, as reflected in this list, recently the most successful organizations have gained significant power at the level of state government. Examples of the latter include the PICO California Project, the Texas Industrial Areas Foundation, Gamaliel's regional work in the Midwest, the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, Arizona Interfaith, Direct Action, Research, and Training (DART) statewide work in Florida, and PICO statewide work in Louisiana and Colorado. Very recently, at least one has launched a drive to shape policy at the national level (PICO's *New Voices* campaign).⁸

Faith-based community organizing thus represents a widespread movement to empower lower- and middle-class residents of American cities to gain greater influence over the political and economic decisions affecting their lives. But how significant is the Hispanic presence within this movement?

This question takes on greater urgency given the findings of a massive and influential assessment of the underpinnings of democratic life in the United States. In *Voice and Equality*, Sidney Verba et al. analyze how Americans influence the political process through both their financial contributions and acquisition of civic skills.⁹ On both measures, Hispanics systematically fall behind other ethnic groups in their ability to influence the political process; as a result, they have less voice and also suffer greater inequality than other ethnic groups.

Current Hispanic Engagement in Faith-Based Community Organizing

Anecdotal reports of Hispanic engagement in this field vary from glowing accounts of a burgeoning movement in which Latinos play a predominant role to highly charged critiques that suggest minimal connection with Latino communities. These conflicting reports appear to be driven both by political biases and by regional variation. In different parts of the country, faith-based community organizing may be primarily rooted among African American churches, Hispanic churches, or white/Anglo churches—or they may be richly multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual. Good data from which to draw a reasonably objective picture of the field have been sadly lacking.

The Interfaith Funders study (Wood and Warren, "A Different Face") provides the best data available on Hispanic participation in faith-based community organizing. The key finding (for the purposes of this volume) is that about 20 percent of the 3,300 participating congregations are predominantly Hispanic—meaning that one out of five participating churches is more than half Latino. Extrapolating from this figure to individual participants is unreliable.¹⁰ My observations suggest that a significant portion of Hispanic-majority churches are very large (often swollen by burgeoning immigrant communities); if that is so, the 20 percent figure may underestimate the presence of Latinos within faith-based community organizing.

The level of Hispanic involvement in faith-based community organizing varies widely from one region to another. The heaviest Hispanic presence (local organizations for which 30%–100% of their member institutions are more than half Hispanic) is found in Texas, California, Illinois (Chicago), Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. Though no data exist on variable participation across different Hispanic populations, this listing strongly suggests that it is heaviest among Mexican American and Mexican immigrant populations (with Philadelphia being the only probable exception). Also, immigrant Hispanics participate to a significant degree: about one-third of the Hispanic-dominant institutions (mostly churches) involved in faith-based community organizing are made up mostly of immigrants.

The study also shows more than 16 percent of the approximately 550 professional organizers employed in faith-based community organizing to be Latino. These are relatively well-paid jobs, not based on the sacrificial wages paid in some sectors of grassroots civic engagement. Half of the Hispanic organizers are women—an important fact in a field historically dominated by men. However, Hispanics are underrepresented in high-level supervisory roles in the field. This may be changing: as the corps of professional organizers has diversified, more Hispanic organizers are gaining the experience to become supervisors and have, in fact, moved into supervisory positions in those parts of the country with heavy Hispanic involvement. Also, as discussed here, some of the most prominent and influential figures in the field are Hispanic.

For present purposes, I assume 20 percent to be our best estimate of Hispanic participation. This is greater than the average presence of Latinos in the total U.S. population (roughly 14%, 2003 U.S. Census Bureau) but may underrepresent the presence of Latinos in the core urban home turf of much of this kind of organizing. Thus, the best available data are ambiguous, and characterizations of the Hispanic influence on faith-based community organizing run the risk of being shaped more by the inclinations of the analyst than by real knowledge.

At risk of following into that trap, I offer my own interpretation of these data.¹¹ First, as noted, the level of Latino participation varies significantly from one location to another, reflecting both the level of Hispanic population in a given city and the effectiveness of outreach to that population. Second, at least in some places, Latino participation is extraordinarily high, either as a result of Latinos being the predominant force within a local organization or through strong Latino presence within a highly multiethnic organization. The IAF's Valley Interfaith project in South Texas and Gamaliel's project in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago represent the former case; examples of the latter include the IAF's Chicago project and PICO's Oakland project. In Oakland, for instance, at public actions with 2,000 or more attendees, participants are often evenly split between Hispanics, Anglos, and African Americans, with a smaller contingent of Asian immigrants. At a statewide action on health care for the working poor in May 2000, sponsored by the PICO California Project, the 3,000 participants present were likewise rather evenly split. Such large, multiracial gatherings are extraordinary in American public life. Organizations capable of putting them together gain significant political leverage.

Third, some skepticism is warranted in assessing claims of remarkable diversity in this field, as well as charges of racial or ethnic exclusion within it. Organizers in the field are competitive professionals and prone to making exaggerated claims, especially when under pressure to diversify their membership bases. Equally as significant, however, are the outsiders' charges of ethnic exclusion, which often appear to be motivated by resistance to the field's tendency to appeal to diverse ethnic groups on the basis of their religious ties and class interests rather than on the basis of ethnic identity.¹² Indeed, the internal culture of organizing tends to implicitly suppress identity-based polit-

ical claims, due to its commitment to cross-racial organizing and coalition-formation. For those inclined more toward identity-based politics, this appears insufficiently "political" and "radical." Again, the best data on this question come from the Interfaith Funders study: 36 percent of member institutions are predominantly African American, 35 percent are predominantly Anglo, 21 percent are predominantly Hispanic, and more than 6 percent are interracial.

Fourth, it is important to note that faith-based community organizing does not line up easily with Democratic, Republican, or third-party politics. The fact that these organizations disproportionately engage working-class and lower-middle-class urban residents, often under the rubric of "representing working families," and sometimes seek government funding for programs to benefit those families, in some places appears to give them some affinity for Democratic Party policy positions. But this is not at all universal, and faith-based organizations have worked very collaboratively with politicians of both major parties, as well as with independent and minor-party representatives. In part, they are forced into an official nonpartisanship by their tax-exempt status as 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 organizations. Generally speaking, their nonpartisanship is not just a veneer. They tend to eschew partisan ties and actively seek links with figures who can exert political leadership on a given issue, regardless of party affiliation. This tendency distances them from those Latino leaders embedded in either party or opposed to any party linkages whatsoever.

Thus, Hispanics represent a numerical minority within the field of faith-based community organizing, but a minority with a significant profile—albeit with a political style rooted in religious faith that not all Latinos find appealing.

Hispanic Leadership in Faith-Based Community Organizing

The fairly strong presence of Hispanic churches is reflected, and in some cases amplified, by the prominent roles played by Latinos in this field. Whereas more traditional models of community organizing (including these networks in their prior work) have frequently been criticized for being rather the province of white men,¹³ today all four networks have significant numbers of Latinos working as front-line professional organizers. Perhaps more significantly, Latinos hold positions of primary influence among the top-level directors within the field. Among the most important examples are Ernesto Cortés, head of the Southwest IAF, perhaps the best-known organizer in the country; José Carrasco, an academic with longtime ties to the PICO network who played a key role in its elaboration of its own distinctive version of faith-based community organizing, now a key visionary and intellectual advisor within the organization; Mary Gonzáles, the associate director and head of training for the Gamaliel Foundation; Juan Soto, a lead organizer for Gamaliel in Chicago; Denise Collazo, national PICO staff and former director of PICO's San Francisco organization; and a significant number of mid-level organizers and directors around the country.¹⁴

Faith-based community organizing also benefits from public support on the part of Latino religious leaders. Jaime Soto, the auxiliary bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange County, is paradigmatic in this regard, but numerous other examples exist, at both the episcopal and local congregational levels. In addition, many pastors (both Hispanic and non-Hispanic, and including Roman Catholics, mainline Protestants, and evangelicals) involved in organizing traditions have previously been involved in either the United Farm Workers Organization or the Central American peace movement, or worked as missionaries in Latin America.

Finally, a significant number of the Anglo organizers involved in the field had previous experience in Latin America, through the Peace Corps, church work, or international exchange programs. Many are bilingual. Many thus reach out relatively effectively to immigrant Latino communities and help bring Hispanic cultural influences into the culture of organizing.

Religious Bases of Faith-Based Community Organizing

The primary institutional sponsors of faith-based community organizing are Catholic, moderate and liberal Protestant, and black Baptist and historically black congregations.¹⁵ Two of the fastest-growing sectors of the U.S. religious world—suburban white evangelical churches and urban Pentecostal, evangelical, and “Holiness” churches (many that are Hispanic or black)—participate only in very small numbers. Since most Hispanics are Catholic, evangelical, or Pentecostal, these groups are of particular interest here.

The Catholic Church has a long-standing presence as a key sponsor of faith-based community organizing in urban areas throughout the United States. Indeed, the Catholic bishops have been primary funders of community organizing for several decades. Today, the national office of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) provides about 16 percent of the operating funds of faith-based community organizing.¹⁶ The social teachings of the Catholic Church (see below) on a living wage, unionization, and other issues often form part of the lingua franca in the culture of organizing, and the clergy “up front” at political actions often include Catholic priests or bishops. Finally, about one-third of the professional organizers are themselves Catholic.

Currently under way is an effort to reach out to evangelical and Pentecostal pastors, under the aegis of Christians Supporting Community Organization (CSCO).¹⁷ Should this effort prove effective, it will bring another important Hispanic constituency into the fold of faith-based community organizing—a constituency that is fast-growing, dynamic, and scripturally articulate. Should it fail, this constituency may be ripe for recruitment by other political movements, especially those placing more emphasis on moral issues and cultural conservatism.

Prospects for the Future

Given this analysis, what can we say about the future, particularly about the role of Hispanics in the field? Two sets of comments are relevant—one rooted in the characteristics of the Hispanic community, and one rooted in the current American political context.

Three characteristics of the U.S. Latino population make Latinos crucial in the future of faith-based community organizing. First, about 70 percent of U.S. Latinos are Catholic and, if trends continue, this affiliation will remain predominant for the foreseeable future, despite successful outreach to Latinos by other faith communities. Furthermore, although only one of many religious traditions represented in faith-based community organizing, the Catholic Church has the most salient role of any single religious institution in the field: bishops and pastors are frequent spokespersons at public events and provide a religious imprimatur to political actions, and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development has been a long-standing source of funding for these organizations.¹⁸ Thus, as Catholics—both through their growing numerical preponderance in the U.S. Catholic Church and through their increasing leadership roles as bishops, priests, sisters, and lay leaders—Hispanics will exert real influence over an institution key to the field of faith-based community organizing.

Second, Hispanics break down the frequent standoff between African American and white sectors of American life. Where Hispanics exist in sufficient numbers to provide a significant counterweight to the black-white polemic in American political culture (sometimes articulated, more often existing under the surface), they introduce an element of dynamism into political calculations.

Third (and more speculatively), the frequent tension between Hispanic economic interests linked to the left end of the Democratic Party and social values linked to the Republican Party may bring pressure to bear in favor of continuing nonpartisanship as a political strategy within faith-based community organizing.¹⁹ To the extent that nonpartisanship (or perhaps better, a kind of pan-partisanship) has been one key to the field's success, Hispanics may be able to parlay this pressure into growing influence.

Fourth, as noted, if Hispanics continue to be attracted to the Evangelical/Pentecostal/Holiness wing of American Christianity, with its historical legacy of involvement in social causes, cross-racial constituency, and resources for Bible-based discourse, they may emerge as a powerful voice within that movement. Combined with continuing income polarization in American society, Hispanics' overall low socioeconomic status, and the Bible's rich tradition of prophetic denunciation of inequality, this could lead Hispanics to reshape the contours of the Evangelical/Pentecostal movement and strengthen their hand as key leaders of faith-based community organizing.

Our current political context suggests further ways in which Hispanics will shape the future of this field. First, their growing numbers and strategic

placement geographically will give Hispanics a weighty political profile for years to come.²⁰ On one hand, in the future they will be the determinative vote in California, with its huge congressional delegation, massive influence in the presidential electoral college, and weight in political fund-raising. At the same time, Hispanics are a key swing vote in other electorally influential states, including Texas, Florida, and Illinois, as well as smaller "battleground" states for presidential elections, such as New Mexico and Arizona. Together, these factors make Latinos crucial in the future of American politics—especially if the new immigrants can be successfully brought into the political process. Faith-based community organizing appears to be one of the most successful ways of doing this.

Second, continuing international economic integration, with both its positive and negative aspects, will gradually erode the boundaries between the United States and Mexico. One vision for the long-term development of this trend, most prominently being articulated by Mexican President Vicente Fox, involves the creation of a fully integrated, borderless North America. The full implications of such a move are vast, perhaps unforeseeable, and certainly beyond this analysis—but it would surely mean an exponential increase in Hispanic political influence and a whole new field of operations for faith-based community organizing. Similar dynamics may well develop as economic integration with the rest of Latin America also moves forward.

Lastly, I note that Latino religiosity has already had a profound influence on the rest of American religion. A few examples may suffice. The "option for the poor," originally articulated by the Latin American Catholic bishops, today shapes universal Catholic social doctrine in profound ways and is a key principle of the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter, *Economic Justice for All*. The current boom in Pentecostal Christianity in America draws both from the original Azusa Street Revival of a hundred years ago and from more recent Latin American Pentecostalism, with rich cross-fertilization between the two.²¹ Latin American *mestizaje*, especially its Mexican version linked to the Virgin of Guadalupe, represents one religious approach to the emerging reality of multiculturalism in the United States. And the notion of a this-worldly spirituality linked intimately to religious faith but also to work for justice represents an important counterweight to the escapist and deracinated "spiritualities" so in vogue in American mainstream culture. In all these ways, but more importantly no doubt in a myriad of ways not foreseeable, Hispanic religiosity will shape the future of faith-based community organizing and American political culture.

Conclusion

This analysis of Hispanic engagement in faith-based community organizing suggests that scholars should adopt a broader lens than often used in studying Hispanic political engagement in the United States. Excellent studies exist of Hispanic electoral participation, including the work of Louis DeSipio (1996),

Harry Pachon (1992), F. Chris García (1988, 1997), and Christine Sierra (1985).²² But electoral participation among Hispanics continues to be muted, primarily because many are not citizens and because those Hispanics eligible to vote do so at less than half the rate of Anglos.²³ Faith-based community organizing represents one crucial venue of political engagement by Hispanics, both important in its own right and as a point of entry for Hispanic electoral participation. We should thus broaden our lens to view Hispanic civic engagement beyond the bounds of politics narrowly conceived, to understand all those non-electoral activities that hold promise to increase Latino influence and thus make American life more fully democratic.²⁴

Perhaps it is appropriate to conclude such an upbeat analysis with two strong caveats. This optimistic reading of the intersection of Hispanic faith and politics within faith-based community organizing assumes that the field of organizing will successfully engage the talents, political skills, and religious vision of Latino grassroots leaders, pastors, and, especially, organizers. Bringing more Latino organizers into the field and cultivating their talents represent continuing challenges, at which the networks have succeeded only partially and in specific geographic areas. To engage the Latino community fully, organizers must build on that progress.

Moreover, this optimism represents a challenge to talented young Latinos and those who work with them. As a professional career with wide-open growth opportunities and organic links into Hispanic communities, faith-based community organizing has a great deal to offer: professional wages, exciting work linked to their faith traditions, and real service to one's community. But it cannot offer the financial rewards of legal and corporate careers premised on uprooting oneself from low-income sectors of the Hispanic community.²⁵ Forming Hispanic youth with the wisdom to choose well is a challenge to all of us who have the privilege of working with them.

NOTES

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1. Though I understand the competing preferences within the community, I use "Hispanic" and "Latino" interchangeably here.

2. See Sanford Horwitt's *Let Them Call Me Rebel: Saul Alinsky—His Life and Legacy* (New York: Knopf, 1989).

3. For an excellent scholarly account of the COPS experience, see Mark Warren's *Dry Bones Rattling* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). For a popular, if somewhat hagiographic account, see *Cold Anger* by Mary Beth Rogers (Denton University of North Texas Press, 1990).

4. For a theoretical argument and case studies elaborating the importance of both contestation and compromise for effective participation in democratic institu-

tions, see Richard L. Wood, "Religious Culture and Political Action," *Sociological Theory* 17 (November 1999): 307-332.

5. These are listed in order, from largest to smallest. Full disclosure: my own research has been within PICO and the IAF. Although I have had costs of two brief research trips subsidized by each organization, I have received financial compensation from neither. Prominent smaller networks include InterValley Project in New England, RCNO in Los Angeles, and the Organize! Leadership and Training Center in Boston.

6. One reason for their relative anonymity is that these organizations carry different names in each local area: for example COPS in San Antonio, OCO in Oakland, BUILD in Baltimore, MICA in Milwaukee, SFOP in San Francisco. Again, the content of these acronyms vary, but most either spell out a prophetic figure from scripture (such as Micah) or include the word interfaith, "organizing project," "community organization," "organizing," "people together," and so on. The prior anonymity of the field in academic circles has changed with three books recently published: Richard L. Wood, *Faith in Action* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), Stephen Hart's *Cultural Dilemmas of Progressive Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), and Warren's *Dry Bones Rattling*.

7. These and the following figures are from a study sponsored by Interfaith Funders (Richard L. Wood and Mark R. Warren, "A Different Face of Faith-Based Politics: Social Capital and Community Organizing in the Public Arena," *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 22:11/12, [Fall 2002]: 6-54). This is the first study to gather data on the entire field of faith-based community organizing. All figures listed are approximations, projected as follows: The study managed to locate and interview the directors of 75 percent of the faith-based community organizations around the country that we could identify (network-affiliated or independent, with the criteria for inclusion being that they had to practice a form of organizing recognizable as faith-based community organizing and had to have at least one full-time staff member on the payroll at the time of the study). The numbers given were then calculated from data from the 100 responding organizations; weighted according to reflected network representation projected upward to the total universe of 133 organizations known to exist; and rounded off to reflect the preliminary and projected nature of the data.

8. On the PICO California Project, see Wood, *Faith in Action*; on the Texas IAF, see Warren, *Dry Bones Rattling*.

9. See Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

10. See Wood and Warren, "A Different Face." Unfortunately for our purposes, the study collected data only on *institutions* participating as members of local organizing groups, not on *individual* participants. Interpreting what these data mean about individual-level involvement of Hispanics is problematic: on one hand, many of the Hispanic-majority churches may have sizeable non-Hispanic minorities; on the other hand, many of the other 80 percent of congregations may have sizeable Hispanic minorities not reflected in the survey.

11. This interpretation is based on (1) three years (1992-1995) of intensive ethnographic work inside the PICO network for my dissertation; (2) nine years of subsequent continuing contact with PICO; (3) three years (1997-2000) of contact with the IAF; (4) periodic interaction with organizers or clergy from these four networks and smaller regional networks linked to the InterValley Project, RCNO, and the Organize! Leadership and Training Center; and (5) longstanding contacts with scholars and fun-

ders connected with all these networks. Though this positions me, I believe, as the scholar with the best breadth of contact across the high barriers between networks, note that my primary ethnographic exposure has been within PICO and the Southwest region of the IAF—both of which may over-represent Latino involvement.

12. For this critique, see Gary Delgado's *Beyond the Politics of Place: New Directions in Community Organizing in the 1990s* (Oakland, CA: Applied Research Center, n.d., [c. 1993]).

13. Ibid.

14. No full list of Hispanic lead organizers exists, but a partial listing includes Elizabeth Valdez, Joseph Rubio, and Ramón Duran in Texas; Liz Calanche, Gina Martínez, Manuel Toledo, and Julia Lerma in California; Ana García-Ashley in Wisconsin; Sister Consuelo Tovar in St. Louis, Missouri, and Denise Collazo in Florida, and Petra Falcón in Arizona. A total of about seventy-five Hispanic professional organizers work in faith-based community organizing around the country.

15. About 35 percent of member religious congregations are Catholic; about 34 percent are liberal or moderate Protestant (in order of concentration: United Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and United Church of Christ); about 16 percent are Baptist congregations, including many Missionary and other African American Baptists; the remaining 15 percent are other Christian, Jewish, Unitarian, and "other non-Christian" congregations.

16. See the Interfaith Funders study (Wood and Warren, 2002, Table II). In addition to this national money, local branches of CCHD often fund local faith-based organizing work.

17. The best scriptural and theological work connected with this effort is that of Robert C. Linthicum, especially *City of God, City of Satan: A Biblical Theology of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991).

18. Faith-based community organizing has received about a third of *all* the funds distributed by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development in recent years. In fiscal year 1999 this came to more than \$3 million.

19. Of course, this is too facile a summation of complex Hispanic political and economic interests. As a summary, it holds historically—and broadly—today, but it does not adequately reflect (a) the changing economic interests of Hispanics as they move up socioeconomically, (b) Hispanics' changing cultural values as they are more fully influenced by consumer culture, or (c) the diminished appeal of the GOP to some Hispanics, as some party strands back anti-immigration legislation.

20. This political profile parallels that of African Americans in the mid-twentieth century, following the Great Migration from the South. As Douglas McAdam argues, the changed political opportunities occasioned by this profile was crucial in generating the civil rights movement. See McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

21. Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano. "Iglesia y Liberación Humana: Los documentos de Medellín." Barcelona: Editorial Nova Terra, 1969; National Conference of Catholic Bishops. "Economic Justice for All: Pastoral letter on Catholic social teaching and the U.S. economy" Washington, DC: NCCB, 1986.

22. Full details are available in Louis DeSipio, *Counting on the Latino Vote: Latinos as a New Electorate* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996); F. Chris Garcia, ed., *Latinos and the Political System* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988); F. Chris Garcia, ed., *Pursuing Power: Latinos and the Political System* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997); Harry Pachon and Louis DeSipio, "Latino Elected Officials in the 1990s," *Political Science and Politics* 25

(1992): 212–217; and Christine Marie Sierra, “Latino politics in the Eighties: Fact, Fiction, and Fantasy,” presentation at Colorado College, Department of Political Science, Colorado Springs (1985).

23. See U.S. Census Bureau, *Voting and Registration in the Election of November 1992*, as analyzed in Jeff Manza and Clem Brooks, *Social Cleavages and Political Change: Voter Alignments and U.S. Party Coalitions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 305.

24. All the more so, given that “social connectedness” appears to be a primary factor determining voter participation (Ruy Teixeira, *The Disappearing American Voter* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1992); thus, anything that spurs social connectedness both within the Latino community and between it and other communities and institutions (that is, “bonding” and “bridging” social capital) holds promise to increase Latino electoral influence.

25. Of course, young African Americans and Anglos/whites, as well as other racial and ethnic groups, face the same set of choices—and the same challenge.