

CHICANO URBAN POLITICS:  
THE ROLE OF THE POLITICAL ENTREPRENEUR

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Chicano Urban Politics: The Role  
of the Political Entrepreneur

President Nixon's fiscal policies of the early 1970's and in particular President Reagan's "New Federalism" have contributed to the shifting of responsibilities of the domestic policy agenda away from the national government to state and local governments. As a consequence, interest groups traditionally mobilized at the national level have had to re-evaluate their mobilization strategies to consider how they can organize to best influence decision-makers at the subnational level. Chicanos represent one such group. The task of politically active Chicanos, then, is to find an appropriate strategy that will enable them to develop institutional structures at the subnational level for the advancement of residents of the barrios.

This paper suggests the use of a strategy that stresses and reinforces traditional ethnic politics in the urban political area. That is, the political machine will probably come to serve as the major vehicle in the barrios for addressing the problems of concern to their residents. Stressing the political machine as a means to acquire political advancement for Chicanos, in turn, places special attention on the "political entrepreneur" that will manage and direct that machine.

Mancur Olson has suggested that there are limits to collective action. Will the Chicano political entrepreneur necessarily find the barrio resident the narrow, self-interested,

rational actor described by Olson? If so, what incentives are available to the political entrepreneur in overcoming the "free rider" dilemma? If the political entrepreneur is successful in inducing the barrio resident to join a politically active organization, what strategies are available to the entrepreneur in forming and maintaining that organization?

In short, this paper suggests that those who seek to build neighborhood organizations may be successful if they attempt to organize the residents of the barrios around local, common problems, and self-interest in accordance with machine politics. Stressing machine politics in the Chicano neighborhood could well be an effective means to deal with the fiscal policies at the subnational level.

The argument proposed herein will be presented by first examining how federal-state relations have evolved in recent times. The emphasis here is to point out that the urban political environment has become the hub of political activity. Suggested, then, is that perhaps strategies directed at influencing decision-makers might well be played-out at this level of government. Second, an examination of machine politics will be offered. The central question here is: What characteristics of the old machine might be applied today by Chicano political entrepreneurs? Third of all, an overview of the political entrepreneur will be presented. Suggested here is that greater emphasis should be given to the Chicano politi-

cal entrepreneur in order to better understand the mobilization strategies of the Chicano. Reasons as to why the political entrepreneur is even important to understanding Chicano politics will be offered below.

#### New Federalism

Paul E. Peterson has defined federalism in the following manner:1

Federalism is a system of government in which powers are divided between higher and lower levels of government in such a way that both levels have a significant amount of separate and autonomous responsibility for the social and economic welfare of those living within their respective jurisdictions.

Federalism, as a form of government, was of course one of the major compromises reached by the framers of the Constitution in 1787: between the Federalists wanting a strong central government and the Anti-federalists wanting to keep as much of the "decentralist" features of the confederacy set-up under the Articles of Confederation. The framers of the Constitution--both Federalists and Anti-federalists alike--were fundamentally concerned with "limiting government," and they saw in federalism the means by which to "check and balance" the powers of government. Thus, so one or the other level of government would not totally dominate governance nor infringe on the rights of the individual, the framers of the Constitution divided powers between the two levels, giving each its own respective duties and responsibilities, and establishing, at

least in theory, two levels of government equal in power.

An historical account of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 is not the point of major concern here however. Rather, the point to be made is that federalism has dramatically and radically evolved over time. United States political society has experienced periods of "Dual Federalism," "Cooperative Federalism," "Creative Federalism," "New Federalism," and an innumerable amount of other "federalisms" throughout the history of this country. While a thorough examination of federal-state relations is unimportant for the purpose of this paper, an examination of contemporary federal-state relations does warrant close consideration. By "contemporary" is meant that historical period between the growth of the administrative state under Franklin D. Roosevelt to the present Reagan administration.

Overall, historical periods in the development of federal-state relations in the United States have paralleled changes in the role of the federal government in domestic public policy-making. The federal government became more involved in meeting the concerns and needs of its citizens as the nation became more complex and interdependent. But state and local governments under federalism had an independent, constitutional existence of their own. As the traditional governmental units for dealing with domestic problems, they could not be neglected in the federal government's move to consolidate its power, nor

could these subnational governmental units be ordered to carry out policy that was "national" in scope. Hence, as the federal role in society grew, a change in intergovernmental relations necessarily followed.

#### Federalism: FDR to Reagan

Changes in the federal system have become commonplace in recent decades and are perhaps best dramatized by the radical changes beginning in 1933. Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal Program tilted the balance of the federal system toward the national government in an effort to deal with serious problems of national scope. This is to say, the Great Depression of the 1930s stimulated extensive national action on such issues as welfare, relief, health, unemployment, Social Security, and agricultural surpluses. The key element in federal-state relations was federal funding for programs administered primarily by state governments and indirectly by local governments. World War II, in turn, brought on greater federal involvement in the regulation of wages, prices, and employment, as well as national efforts to allocate resources, train manpower, and support ambitious research projects. After the war the national government assisted veterans and continued its support for university research. Important also is that the United States became the most powerful member of the free world and has had to maintain substantial military forces, expending great amounts of national resources in that effort.

In general, administrations following Roosevelt's have moved to consolidate their powers. President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society Program well illustrates how the fiscal foundations of federal-state relations have been further transformed. In practice, the Great Society Program entailed a new and greatly heightened level of federal intervention into state and local governmental affairs that had heretofore been handled by these subnational governmental units. Funds from the federal government readily flowed into such previously sacrosanct preserves of stated and local authority as education and law enforcement. Moreover, unlike the New Deal Program that indirectly affected local governments through the locational impact of its federal policies, federal funds provided by the Great Society Program often bypassed state governments and went directly to cities. In fact, as Jones pointed out, even city governments were sometimes bypassed through quasi-governmental bodies. He writes:<sup>2</sup>

. . . existing domestic programs led the President to propose, and Congress to accept, establishing the Office of Economic Opportunity separate from traditional departments of the federal government. At the local level, the act established "community action agencies" (CAAs) to mobilize community resources to attack poverty and provide services. The agencies were to be quasi-governmental organizations, consisting of government representatives (city government, school systems, and social welfare agencies), private groups (business, labor, religious groups), and neighborhood representatives, with "maximum feasible participation" by the latter. The community action agencies were to develop and administer community action plans for combating poverty.

The Great Society Program provides important insights including the fact that these programs had a strong urban emphasis. Second of all, Great Society legislation also strongly emphasized aid to the socially and economically disadvantaged. In developing more than two hundred new social and economic programs, the Johnson administration initiated enormous growth in federal involvement into the day-to-day affairs United States citizens. This enormous growth altered people's attitudes toward the national government, particularly the attitudes of the deprived. Generally, prior to the Johnson administration, the national government was viewed as a distant, even removed government; by the end of the 1960s, most people identified as closely with the national government as they did with their local governing authorities. Particularly for the socially and economically deprived, federal programs became identified as the means by which their vested interests could be promoted, defended, and expanded.

Yet, one can argue that like most trends, the trend toward federal expansion would most likely trigger a counteraction. By 1970, the concept of federalism under Johnson was under attack and at least partially discarded during the administration of Richard Nixon. The general philosophy of the Nixon administration was that financial assistance from the federal government to states and localities should continue, but that more policy-making and administrative functions be shifted

toward states and localities and away from the federal level. Simply put, President Nixon wanted to give as much leeway as possible to states and localities in spending federal monies, and to reduce the number of conditions attached to federal grants imposed under the Johnson administration. To this end, federal grants to the states were restructured in two principal ways: through the introduction of general revenue sharing programs, under which a certain portion of federal revenues was disbursed among the states; and special revenue sharing programs,<sup>4</sup> or the consolidation of many federal funding programs into broad block grants, under which states and localities were given greater discretion in putting the funds to use.

The concept of revenue sharing received widespread support among most state and local governmental officials. And while revenue sharing became a regular part of intergovernmental relations in the 1970s, it nonetheless had its critics.<sup>5</sup>

For example, a major concern was the pattern under revenue sharing for a disproportionate amount of monies ending up in well-to-do suburbs; while less money was being spent on poorer citizens and poorer communities. Another criticism was directed at the administration (or lack) of revenue sharing funds. That is, the lack of adequate record keeping and accounting at the state and local levels often led to corruption and blatant misuse of the funds. The complexity of the local government system with its innumerable amount of juris-

dictions, moreover, made the distribution of revenue sharing funds from the federal level a difficult and oftentimes futile and wasteful endeavor.

Revenue sharing has had the effect of reinforcing the dependence of localities on the federal government for their revenue. More importantly, the fiscal policy under the concept of revenue sharing has also served to further strengthen the role of cities in our federal form of government. The framers of the Constitution never envisioned the significance of government at the local level, nor the intensity of urban politics that has ensued due to the changing federal-state relationship.

Federal-state relations have clearly changed since the 1930s. There has been a gradual transformation of the central, preeminent role played by the federal government to a more decentralized style of management in the sense that subnational governmental units are regaining their lost preeminence in conducting the affairs of the individual. Of critical importance for the purposes of this paper is the fact that urban policy priorities change with changes in control of the Presidency. In short, the urban political environment has become evermore important in one's understanding of United States government and politics.

Yet, perhaps the most far-reaching effect on the urban political environment has come since 1980; a year characterized by the election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency and the

Republican party control of the Senate. Jones suggests that the significance of the Reagan administration to urban policy concerns, in part, is that Ronald Reagan has come into the Presidency with a fundamental distrust of past federal-state relations, especially his underlying nonacceptance of the basic tenets of the domestic programs established since the 1930s.<sup>6</sup> Jones writes:<sup>7</sup>

President Reagan immediately set about formulating and presenting to Congress a set of proposals that would (1) reverse the increasing role of government in society, and (2) turn policymaking authority back to state and local governments. His proposals to restructure the intergovernmental grant-in-aid process would amount to a revolution in intergovernmental relations, if enacted intact.

Under the auspices of a Republican-controlled Senate, President Reagan was able to push through Congress many of his intergovernmental proposals. President Reagan's New Federalism initially appealed to many states and localities that enthusiastically anticipated their newly found responsibilities and power. However, many also realized that they would not have the financial capacity to oversee the programs that were to be shifted to the state and local level. There was significant opposition from the Democratically-controlled House of Representatives as well. All-in-all, reaction to the New Federalism proposals was mixed, preventing much of the program from being enacted.

Still, an examination of the reorganization of the grants-in-aid process under the Reagan administration is important.

In President Reagan's first term there was a clear shift in the federal-state relationship: the Reagan administration, through cuts in grants to states and localities, has won part of its battle to reverse the patterns of federal-state relations. Federal budget cuts in the early 1980s put considerable financial pressure on state and local governments, and most have responded by replacing the loss of federal money with their own "locally" generated revenue.

Most important is that more than ever, most of the nation's public business is conducted on the state and local levels. These political conflicts are settled and most public policy decisions are made and carried out at the local level. Groups and individuals traditionally mobilized at the national level must reconsider their political strategies aimed at influencing governmental decision-makers. This is not to say that the national government is unimportant in its role of providing necessary goods and services for groups and individuals. Moreover, the recent 1986 election bringing the Senate under the control of the Democratic party may well be a message that states and localities are sending to the federal government's preeminence cannot be overlooked. At the same time, people's attitudes toward the role of government in managing the socio-political order have once again been fundamentally influenced. To believe that the national government, at least in the near

future, will revert to its 1960s domestic policy agenda is naive. Today, the urban political environment is of critical importance.

### Machine Politics

United States cities were governed by a party structure often termed the "political machine." Today, some cities are still governed in that same manner. Allswang succinctly characterizes the political machine in writing the following:8

...it is a system hierarchical in structure, highly responsive to immediate needs of the electorate, strongly focussed on political control as an end in itself, and generally very partisan. But these characteristics permit tremendous variety of form and content.

Allswang, then, is suggesting that the political machine was a highly complex organization. For example, at times, these organizations were headed by "bosses" who were able to control both the party organization (that was at the roots of the machine) and local government. The late Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago is a recent example of a boss whose influence extended far beyond the city to the state capital and to Washington, D.C. At the same time, however, urban political machines disintegrated into intraparty squabbles among more or less coequal "chieftains;" none of whom could centralize influence within this party structure. In short, not all political machines should be characterized by the most common and not so precise image of "bossism."

Banfield and Wilson have further characterized the political machine by defining it as a "party organization that depends crucially upon inducements that are both specific and material."<sup>9</sup>

A specific inducement is "one that can be offered to one person while being withheld from others."<sup>10</sup> A material inducement is some inducement to which "value" is attached.<sup>11</sup> Banfield and Wilson then distinguish between a material and non-material inducements in defining the latter as one including:<sup>12</sup>

. . . especially the satisfactions of having power or prestige, doing good, the "fun of the game," the sense of enlarged participation in events and a pleasant environment.

This is an important insight offered by Banfield and Wilson. While the political machine is a complex, diverse organization, a common characteristic of all political machines is their reliance on incentives to induce party members to contribute to the organization. I might add that the machine offers a combination of these inducements to motivate members and potential members to participate in machine politics.

The nature of inducements offered above suggests, moreover, that the range of inducements reach from concrete benefits (such as money or jobs) to less concrete rewards like "satisfaction" (deriving from the act of participation itself) to those rewards that stem from the accomplishment of goals of the organization not tied directly to the individual member's self-interest. In other words, the range of inducements span

self-interest and common interest. All the while, "patronage" is the key to understanding the delivery and acceptance of these rewards and benefits.

Finally, Banfield and Wilson suggest that political machines existed in and were characteristic of a certain social milieu and political structure.<sup>13</sup> On the one hand, political machines appealed mostly to working-class people, the newly-arrived ethnic Irish, German, Italian, Pole, Russian, "Negro," etc. that were unfamiliar with United States ways and customs. This is to say, these ethnic groups lacked the "ethos" that stressed "public-regarding" attitudes and values of good, clean, professional, and efficient government. As one might expect, the "Yankee" or Anglo-Saxon Protestant mid-to upper-class non-immigrant was the antithesis to the "ethnic" cleavage; thus, machine politics rarely worked in these neighborhoods according to Banfield and Wilson. On the other hand, the political structure needed to change such lack of public-regarding motives in government was one that stressed "reform."<sup>14</sup> That is to say, a structure of government that would legitimately allow for the concept of democracy to be played out; where "decisions ought to be made on the basis of reasonable discussion about what the common good requires."<sup>15</sup> Structurally, the reform movement advocated the manager form of government and at-large and nonpartisan elections.

While the above is clearly not a thorough investigation of

the political machine, nor does it make value judgements as do Banfield and Wilson on the good or evil of the machine, some characteristics of the machine are in order. A machine is a form of party organization that induces its members to participate primarily through benefits and incentives. Members and potential members of the machine, or party organization, are led by the promise of jobs or services; participants (primarily voters) are induced to support the party because they believe that they will be favored with government services if their party holds power; and, leaders contribute because they can advance to better positions if their party is electorally or otherwise politically successful. I am further suggesting that the "ethnic factor" may be of considerable importance in mobilizing members of the machine to the extent that machine politics adequately met the needs of the poor, which were mostly members of various ethnic groups. Clearly, the power broker, the politically astute entrepreneur, is a central figure that directs the machine will determine the success or failure of that organization. Attention is now directed at the political entrepreneur.

#### The Political Entrepreneur

Terry Moe has defined the political entrepreneur as: a hypothetical individual who exploits profitable opportunities by providing, or promising to provide, services designed to attract support from individuals who might find services of

value.

The political entrepreneur, for Moe, is important as an explanatory factor of why individuals join groups and how individuals are maintained as members once having joined that group. His analysis is based on the rational model of individual choice that assumes that: 1) the individual is a rational actor, 2) the individual premises decisions on specified types of information, and, 3) the individual evaluates alternatives on the basis of specified kinds of values.<sup>17</sup> His analysis of interest groups, then, is based on the underlying assumptions of rationality, information, and values.

Moe, first of all, is critical of the position held by pluralists that individuals join groups out of common interest and their pursuit of agreed upon group goals. He instead agrees with Mancur Olson<sup>18</sup> who argues that the economic self-interest of the rational individual is the motivational force behind group membership. Given Olson's notion of "collective goods" which helps explain how an individual receives benefits without contributing him/herself to the provision of that good, Moe questions why an individual would contribute voluntarily to the provision of a collective good. At the same time, he is not in total agreement with Olson, suggesting instead that the extent of rationality depends upon the nature of other assumptions operating in conjunction with the idea of rationality.<sup>19</sup> Consequently, when these other assumptions are allowed to vary,

so too will one find different models of rationality. For example, Olson assumes that the rational actor is perfectly informed about marginal costs and benefits, and about the amount of cost supplied by others in the provision of any good or benefit.

However, a different model of rationality is reached if one restricts such rigid assumptions and assumes that the individual is imperfectly informed, arrives at estimates (as distinguished from perfect calculations), and that rational choices derive from these estimates. The question for Moe then becomes: under what perceptual conditions will individuals have incentive to contribute to the provision of a public good?20 Moreover, "noneconomic" incentives may also play a role in motivating an individual to join a group. Moe points out that individuals also may be led to believe to have a perception of political efficacy whether or not his or her efficacy is justified by an objective context.

A rational model based on imperfect information about costs, benefits, and level of supply offers a new means for the group leader in his or her attempt to induce members; the political entrepreneur can purposely manipulate some of that information in order to attract members and contributions. The political entrepreneur need not leave the estimation process to chance, but rather he or she can play an active role in shaping how individuals arrive at decisions. For Moe, both group goals

and "selective incentives" can serve as membership inducements for attracting members. He writes:<sup>21</sup>

The key to group membership does not rest solely with congruence of member interests and group goals, as pluralist contend; nor does it rest with the singular role of economic selective incentives, as Olson claims.

Inducements, then, come into play in two fundamental but different ways: 1) selective incentives, and 2) group goals. The former requires the individual to whether contribute on the basis of whether his or her gain will exceed the cost of the contribution; the latter requires the individual to perceive that his or her contribution will make a difference for the group's success, resulting is a net gain for him/herself. While the latter means is close to pluralist thought, it differs in that the individual has performed a rational calculation (imperfect as it may be) rendering altruistic behavior to a secondary status.

Still, while selective incentives are less significant as Olson would prefer, they nonetheless retain an advantage over group goals. This is so because the assumption of imperfect information, which leads to estimates and perceptions, does not eliminate the problem identified by Olson intrinsic to the individual's collective good calculus. This is to say, the individual will not voluntarily contribute to the provision of a collective good if he or she knows that the collective good will nonetheless be provided to him or her due to the contribu-

tions and efforts of others.

Moe then identifies three conditions necessary for a group to emerge and survive: 1) the entrepreneur must offer potential managers a salient set of benefits, 2) some of these members must be willing to buy or contribute towards some of those benefits, and 3) the costs and benefits involved must be such that both the entrepreneur and members continue to expect net gain on their respective exchanges.<sup>22</sup> The task of the entrepreneur is to find strategies to initiate "exchange relationships" and to maintain existing ones. The entrepreneur's problem is to find these strategies given his or her own limitations on information, skills, and resources.

For Moe, the important explanatory factors for the success of the entrepreneur include: 1) communication skills, 2) administration of selective incentives, 3) administration of collective goods, 4) bargaining skills, and 5) adeptness in managing "outsider"--governmental officials, nongovernmental groups and organizations, and rival entrepreneurs--who might influence the internal dynamics of the group. While an elaboration of these internal and external factors of group formation and maintenance is not in order for the purposes of this paper, suffice it to say that the entrepreneur has at his or her disposal alternative strategies, and the creativity of the entrepreneur is an essential ingredient in the success of his or her organizational endeavors.

Moreover, that the entrepreneur must integrate these factors, or options, in ways that his or her resources are most beneficially allocated among them introduces the leadership component. That is, any organization is vulnerable to failure without the direction of a leader who is able to meet the selective incentives and group goals of the membership.

All-in-all, a distinguishing feature of Moe's analysis is that while acknowledging the predominance of economic self-interest as the motivating factor behind group membership, he points to the fact that values other than economic self-interest are important determinants of individual behavior. He assumes that individuals have "heterogeneous value structures."<sup>23</sup> For example, loyalty, friendship, beliefs about right and wrong, religious beliefs, racial prejudice, and so forth, account for the view that individuals have a complex system of values. The important insight, as suggested above, is that in deciding how much to contribute toward a collective good, individuals will be concerned with more than just economic gain. The individual may derive a sense of satisfaction from the very act of contributing! In fact, Moe would agree with Banfield and Wilson that specific (selective incentives) and material (noneconomic) inducements can motivate an individual to join an organization. The entrepreneur has at his or her disposal the potential for mobilizing a political machine.

Out of necessity, attention is now directed at how astute

political entrepreneur may mobilize Chicanos around a political machine. In other words, what generally, in the Chicano historical experience, and what, specifically, in the nature of Chicano political behavior justifies an examination of the political machine as a possible means of mobilizing this group around both the group members' rational self-interest and group goals?

#### The Chicano Political Entrepreneur

From the outset, allow me to qualify the analysis to follow. The analysis to follow is offered as "food for thought," and is an area that requires further research and empirical investigation. Variables that might explain the emergence of the political machine as a tool in Chicano urban politics and variables requiring strict empirical inquiry include: "barrioization," bloc voting, issue saliency, party identification, family orientation, political culture, and leadership orientation. Each is addressed in turn.

A first major variable that suggests that the political machine may be useful in mobilizing Chicanos and inducing Chicanos to join the machine is the group's historical experience with "barrioization." Camarillo points out what is seemingly an oversimplification: Chicanos are an economically deprived and segregated group.<sup>24</sup> His thesis may be stated thusly:<sup>25</sup>

A subordinate working class status together with the process of barrioization shaped, to a great extent, the urban Chicano experience during the twentieth century.

What I am suggesting here is that like the classic political machine boss, the political entrepreneur of today has a concrete, well-defined and identified boundary that encompasses the "target" group to be approached. Management of the machine was made possible, in part, because of the ethnic distinctiveness of the immigrant ghettos of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century United States cities. These early immigrants were segregated. The machine, moreover, functioned in a situation where relative economic deprivation existed. One need not point to the economically deprived status of the Chicano; it is well documented by students of the subject and well realized by Chicanos that live the reality of poverty and economic stagnation in the United States.<sup>26</sup> In "barrioization" lies the first consideration for Chicano political mobilization.

A second variable for consideration is that political machines functioned where mass suffrage existed. The Chicano, while not fully utilizing this privilege, certainly has a right to vote. This too might sound like an oversimplification, but Chicanos tend to vote in blocs, as did the early Irish, German, Italian, Russian, etc. voter. As observed above, critical to the success of the machine is its ability to elect individuals that will in turn provide the benefits and incentives necessary for the formation and maintenance of viable political organiza-

tions. The empirical evidence provided by de la Garza and Brischetto suggests that the Chicano can be viewed as a cohesive electorate. They provide these important insights: 28

This cohesiveness may be interpreted as reflecting the fact that, for so long, Mexican Americans have as a people experienced socioeconomic discrimination and political exclusion. Those historical experiences, which have only recently begun to be alleviated, may have influenced these respondents more than whatever individual personal experiences they may have had because of their education, job, religion, or age. To mobilize Mexican Americans, then, it may be important to keep that collective experience in mind. It may be, in other words, that Mexican Americans evaluate public policy and become politically involved out of a sense of collective well being. If this is correct, then they may be expected to support candidates and policies that they define as serving the best interests in such a way that what is good for the Mexican American community is good for them as individuals. This may be why among respondents factors such as educational level and income explain so little of the respondents' political orientations and policy preferences.

The political entrepreneur, therefore, has readily at hand an important component for electoral success: a cohesive vote. Moreover, de la Garza and Brischetto imply that Chicanos perceive noneconomic benefits and incentives to be as important (if not more) as individual gain and advancement. In fact, one might argue that the entrepreneur can appeal to the whole range of inducements that motivate individuals to join organizations.

Brischetto, in an earlier study, introduces a third variable for consideration: issue saliency.<sup>29</sup> Employing extensive survey research, Brischetto found, for example, that the major issue of concern for the Chicano was unemployment followed

closely by their concern over inflation. Concern over crime, dissatisfaction with government, excessive government spending, international problems, moral decline, and energy, 24 make up a far-behind second tier of issues. Brischetto's study suggests two relevant points for this analysis. First, Chicanos are rational actors in the sense that members of this group have studied and calculated issues salient to their needs. It goes without saying that many Chicanos experience poverty because of unemployment. Second, the political entrepreneur has ready information for affecting the mobilization of the Chicano. That is, if the Chicano entrepreneur is to represent adequately the interests of his or her members, the entrepreneur must know how Chicanos view the issues affecting their daily lives. As rational actors, the Chicano can be viewed as an issue-voter.

In the same study, Brischetto also found that a majority of Chicanos identified with the Democratic party.<sup>30</sup> Chicanos did not only identify with the Democratic party, but voted accordingly. A fourth variable for consideration, then, is party identification. As a strategy, the Chicano political entrepreneur can, on the one hand, maintain the internal organization around Democratic politics and policy orientations; on the other hand, the entrepreneur can align the organization to and support the "outsiders" of, for lack of better term, the "Democratic persuasion." This admittedly is a problematical strategy as a Democrat cannot be easily identified according to his or

her policy positions. Democrats are social liberals, but economic conservatives; or, they are social conservatives, but economic liberals; or, conservative, liberal, progressive, humanist; or, any combination of the above. Party identification, nonetheless, is an important variable to consider as it is a fact of Chicano political development and behavior.

A fifth variable for consideration is of an anthropological nature: the family orientation of the Chicano. Murillo provides valuable insights on the Chicano family.<sup>31</sup> He points out that while there is no Chicano family "type," one can control for over generalizations by discussing cultural values from a "probabilistic approach." In explaining his probabilistic approach, Murillo writes:<sup>32</sup> That is,

every value I attribute to a Mexican American person or family should be understood basically in terms of there being a greater chance or probability that the Mexican American, as compared with the Anglo, will think and behave in accordance with that value.

How then does Murillo characterize the Chicano family?

Murillo believes that for the Chicano,<sup>33</sup>

. . . the family is likely to be the single most important social unit in life. It is usually at the core of his thinking and behavior and is the center from which his view of the rest of the world extends.

Furthermore, Murillo feels that:<sup>34</sup>

The family maintains its position of prominence within the psychological life space of the Chicano individual, I believe, primarily by virtue of its ability to provide emotional support, guidance, food, or money expects and is expected to turn to

his family first in order to have such needs met. Only in unusual circumstances, dire need, or when there is no alternative will a Chicano or his family attempt to seek help from others.

Also, Murillo writes:35

The strength of the family, resting as it does on the foundation of providing security to its members, is sometimes expressed through a sharing of material things with other relatives even when there might be precious little to meet its own immediate needs.

What implications do these quotes have for this analysis? I am suggesting that Chicanos have different conceptualizations of "individualism" and "self-maximization" than those offered by Olson. That there is a sharing or a collective pool of resources that the Chicano can draw from means that the "economic ideal" described by Olson is not met when accounting for the collective nature of the Chicano family. The solidarity of the family is instead based on noneconomic rewards. If Murillo is correct, the psychological and emotional security offered by the family are of much greater importance in explaining why a Chicano would strive for the benefit of the whole before he or she would consider the self.

In again quoting Murillo at length, a further point is made:36

Within the Chicano or Mexican American concept of the family there are two sub-concepts. There are the nuclear family, consisting of husband, wife, and children, and the extended family, which encompasses grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. . . . In addition to these members, the extended family concept also includes compadres who are the god-parents of the children. For each child there may be a different set of compadres.

The relationship between parents and compadres is very similar to that between the parents and other adult relatives where there is mutual respect and interchange of help and advice. Among extended family members there is often much communication, visiting, sharing, and closeness of relationship. Such family members are expected to call upon one another and help one another whenever there is a need.

What is apparent here, I suggest, are three mutually functioning and reinforcing social institutions, or at the least, three important "cultural components." These components are the nuclear family, the extended family, and compadrazgo. "Compadrazgo," is better viewed as a linkage of friendships because it involves much more than just baptismal godparents of one's children. Most importantly, these institutions constitute a network; a broad and far-reaching linkage system whereby numerous individuals are connected to each other for the purpose of communication, exchanging help and advice, and sharing. One has, in essence, an expanded collectivity of resources. When taken together, these three cultural components contribute to the make up of el pueblo, like la familia, that stresses the solidarity of the Chicano community and the supreme concern for the community. One finds in the concept of el pueblo a people looking out for themselves; one finds a fundamental variable for uniting Chicanos around shared hopes and aspirations.

Another variable to consider in a Chicano political entrepreneur's attempt to mobilize the Chicano community is the group's political culture. Vigil provides evidence to suggest that the Chicano is quite adaptable to the patronage system of

the political machine.<sup>37</sup> In developing his views on Chicano political culture, Vigil points out that Chicanos have had a historical experience with patronage (first with Spain and later with Mexico). Borrowing from Almond and Verba's The Civic Culture,<sup>38</sup> Vigil suggests that Chicanos can be characterized by "subject" political orientations as Almond and Verba have observed about the Mexican citizen.<sup>39</sup> By "subject" political orientation is meant, in short, a particular set of political attitudes and behavior attributable to a pattern of hierarchical political rule. This pattern of hierarchical political rule can be found in more contemporary and basic components of Chicano political culture, including the patron system, a patriarchal tradition, and the extended family.

A final variable warrants consideration: the political orientation of Chicano leaders. In an extensive study examining the political socialization of Chicano "elites"--including including, elected or appointed public officials at the federal, state, and local levels of government, and other local party and community activists, and labor organizers--de la Garza and Vaughan found that these Chicano elites became oriented toward and involved in politics primarily as a result of discriminatory experiences associated with their class background.<sup>40</sup> They refute the traditional notions or explanations of elite socialization that suggest that education, occupation, and family orientation toward politics best account for an

individual's likelihood of becoming politically active. De la Garza and Vaughan end their study in the following way:41

These findings suggest that Chicano elites should differ from Anglo elites in significant ways. We would hypothesize that they will define their roles differently, that they will advocate policies directly aimed at correcting the abuses which they have experienced, and that overall they will attempt to insure that Mexican Americans will no longer be the victims of discrimination in either the public or private sector. Subsequent studies will test these hypotheses. The results presented here, however, should help persuade Chicano constituents that this new generation of leaders understands the Mexican American historical experience and became politically involved in order to change it. In time, we will know if they have achieved their objectives.

Viewing the Chicano elites identified by de la Garza and Vaughan as political entrepreneurs, Moe's argument that the political entrepreneur must meet his or her own self-interest while meeting the needs of the members of the organization comes to light. If the political entrepreneur has a two fold task of meeting self-interest and meeting the need of the members, would it not follow that those two tasks are more simple to accomplish if the ends are congruent ones? As Moe would suggest, it is quite rational to meet one's own self-interest while meeting the needs of the groups. Self-interest and the common goals of the group need not be viewed as diametrically opposed objectives; clearly, they can be compatible.



Chicano Urban Politics: A Summation

Barrioization, bloc voting, issue saliency, party identification, family orientation, political culture, and leadership orientation were presented as possible explanatory variables of the emergence of the political machine in Chicano barrios. Suggested was that these variables are generally compatible with those found in the political machines of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. A major point of contention has been that since the machine reinforced ethnic politics in the urban political arena, the Chicano political machine today can use to its advantage the strong tendency of Chicanos to identify with their ethnicity. A major difference between the machine of old and the Chicano machine of today is that the benefits and inducements directed at members of the Chicano political machine are not nearly as particularized or directed at single individuals. As evidenced especially by the family orientation of the Chicano and the leadership orientation of the Chicano elite, pursuit of self-interest and group goals are compatible ones in the milieu of Chicano politics.

Generally, the narrow, economically self-interested, rational actor described by Olson is not an anthropological fact for the Chicano. Moreover, a plausible hypothesis would suggest that the historical experience of the Chicano has contributed to the "coming together" of the group. This implies more than what the process of barrioization has accomplished,

and suggests instead that a sharing of hardship and neglect has led to a sharing in a collective effort to remedy such an oppressive historical reality.

Stressing the political machine as a means to garner political advancement for Chicanos places special attention on the political entrepreneur that will manage and direct that machine. The task of the Chicano entrepreneur is to find an appropriate strategy that will mobilize the Chicano, and, in turn, enable the group to influence public policy decision-makers (or enable the group to elect their own decision-makers). This is no small task. Nonetheless, argumentative and debatable as it may be, those who seek to build barrio organizations may be successful.

If they attempt to organize the residents of the barrios around local, common problems, and self-interest in accordance with machine politics. Stressing machine politics in the barrio could well be an effective means to deal with the fiscal policies of the national government and the shifting of the domestic policy agenda toward the subnational level, and in particular to the city. The study of Chicano urban politics warrants an investigation of the hypothesis offered above.

## Endnotes

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