

for systematic quantitative analysis of group formation. The discussion of the incentives that black state legislators face in deciding whether or not to create a caucus—including information dissemination, coordination, and psychological benefits—are clearly discussed, the data and analysis are appropriate, and the conclusion, that “once around 17 blacks serve in the legislature, black caucuses are more likely to exist than not” (p. 65), important. While the chapter shares its structure with the others in the book, this chapter, standing alone, is an important contribution to political scientists’ understanding of collective action in general and black caucuses specifically.

Ultimately Clark’s book represents a valuable contribution to a number of sub-fields in the study of American politics. For scholars of race and ethnic politics, *Gaining Voice* articulates clear theory and presents evidence for the importance of black representation in state legislatures for important policy concerns, and for how black descriptive representation can shape the political activity and beliefs of African Americans in the electorate. These latter results, in particular, offer a clear basis for prioritizing research on and advocacy for descriptive representation in state legislatures. For scholars of state politics, *Gaining Voice* serves as a valuable reminder of the centrality of race in American politics and the importance of state-level institutional variation for shaping the opportunities that less-advantaged groups have both for gaining political power and effecting meaningful policy change.

***Latinos and the Liberal City: Politics and Protest in San Francisco.* By Eduardo Contreras. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019. 328 pp. \$45.00 (cloth)**

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Eduardo Contreras’ *Latinos and the Liberal City* is a welcome new addition to the history of Latino politics in California. In this timely study, we learn that not only were Latinos politically active early in the twentieth century,

but they grappled with the same issues that engage the community today including unionization, anti-racism, attacks on immigrants, cross-racial alliances, unemployment, and the dynamics of constructing a pan-Latino identity. Contreras extends his analysis through the 1960s and 1970s, when Latinos were an integral part of newly emerging struggles over gentrification, gay rights, gender and sexuality, socioeconomic inequality, homophobia, and rent control. Finally, Contreras examines the role that Latinos played in local electoral politics, paying special attention to labor organizing and gentrification. The book offers a rich account of forces driving Latino politics around national identity, working class status, ideology, and religion, and describes the opposition progressive Latino activists faced from local business, anti-tax proponents, and land speculators. An important lesson is that there are ample precedents for the problems facing Latinos today, albeit on a far larger scale. Contreras is also careful to demonstrate that there are no easy answers. Skilled and determined organizers brought Latino issues to the forefront of San Francisco politics, and achieved some remarkable victories—but also suffered bitter setbacks. His insights into tensions involved when cobbling together a working urban coalition provide a valuable analysis, potentially useful to scholars and activists alike.

The book's major contribution is the close attention paid to assessing Latino participation in San Francisco's key political struggles and mobilization campaigns. Contreras demonstrates that the city's reputation for progressive politics is only partly deserved. Strong and well-organized opposition to Latino empowerment emerged at every turn and often stalled or effectively stopped their initiatives. The book also documents a relentless drive to urban redevelopment and how it drove out affordable housing in the Mission District, undermining a culturally rich Latino community. This analysis offers a deep insight into the reasons why Latinos are still plagued by disproportionate levels of poverty and unemployment, and are forced to spend an increasing percentage of their incomes on substandard housing. An added benefit is Contreras' textured interpretation of history that illuminates what life was like for poor working-class Latinos, and what it took to organize and fight back.

Missing from the narrative is a theoretical mapping of events and actors that would define the way Latinos negotiated the city's complex web of race, class, and culture. Contreras argues that "though political life has long been marked by diversity and contestation, it consistently involved and reckoned with the ideological denominators of liberalism and *Latinidad*." By liberalism he means the "principles of an activist government, social reform, freedom, and progress" (7). The parameters of this thesis are so broadly construed

that it is sometimes difficult to tease out where Latino interests, those based on their racial and ethnic status, are at play and how those interests converge or are overridden by other loyalties. For example, labor's story is well developed and explained. Latinos were recruited to work for low wages and faced widespread racial discrimination in the workforce, and when organizing against these injustices they often had the full support of their white counterparts. Moreover, Latinos freely participated in labor organizing and served as union officers. In 1946, for example, when California unions promoted a statewide citizen initiative, Proposition 11, to ban racial discrimination in employment, San Francisco's racially diverse unions strongly supported the effort; its longshoremen's and other maritime unions provided the largest number of precinct workers for the initiative. In this case, working class interests and racial equality were coterminous. In Contreras' words, "such actions affirmed unionists' devotion to the democratic process, street-level mobilization and civil rights" (87). Statewide, the initiative lost by a large margin but in San Francisco, workers of all races stood together in solidarity against workplace racial discrimination.

Alongside San Francisco's multi-racial labor movement, however, were other actors that complicate Contreras' account of Latino organizing. Religious organizations like the Catholic Council for the Spanish Speaking (CCSS) worked in the community to solve socioeconomic and educational challenges facing the community, but also reinforced traditional social values and gender relations. Religiously based organizations wanted to guide Latinos toward regular attendance of mass, promote Christian values as the foundation of family life, and reject birth control. Other conservative value-based groups emerged in San Francisco politics. Latino homophobes were active in the 1970s, relying "on religious dogma to cast homosexuality as immoral, arouse residents, and bring them into the campaign" (223). At the same time a small, but not insignificant, number of Latino voters identified as Republicans and supported their party's presidential candidates as early as the 1950s.

A closer examination of the ideological underpinnings motivating these activists would have added clarity to the story. Contreras sometimes attaches labels to activists without explaining the ways they might differ on fundamental issues like individual volition, the power of racial discrimination, and free market capitalism. Terms such as old liberalism, new liberalism, Alinsky style organizing, conservatives, and radicals are introduced without clear reference to their meaning. This omission is unfortunate especially since these groups were central players in struggles important to the Latino community like rent control, racial conflict, displacement,

and civil rights protection. The same problem emerges in Contreras' account of gay and transgender civil rights, given his observation that culturally conservative Latinos often found themselves at odds with progressive efforts to eliminate repression in sexual life. Readers will want to know more about these potentially conflicting world views and how or if they are part of a distinct Latino agenda. These are serious concerns, but they should not detract from the value of this important new book. Contreras' contribution to the literature will spark new debate and reflection on the historic roots of today's Latino identity and politics.

***In a Classroom of Their Own: The Intersection of Race and Feminist Politics in All-Black Male Schools.* By Keisha Lindsay. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2018. 192 pp., \$24.95 Paper.**

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With the goal of helping black boys become academically proficient, some liberal and conservative groups have promoted the creation of All-Black Male Schools (ABMS). Keisha Lindsay critically evaluates this unusual alliance, while identifying numerous fallacies behind arguments to establish schools open *only* to black boys. *In a Classroom of Their Own* offers abundant evidence that, contrary to the ABMS logic, (1) the educational needs of black girls are also being ignored; (2) black girls are being falsely identified as the cause of black boys failing; and (3) black female teachers are unfairly described as unwilling or unable to effectively teach Black boys.

Both the liberal and the conservative ABMS advocates assume that black girls are doing fine in school, ignoring evidence that black girls also struggle in the K-12 system. In addition, Lindsay cites evidence that just like black boys, black girls are being mis-labeled and placed in special education programs they do not need, are achieving low standardized test scores, and are dropping out of school due to unfair disciplinary treatment including, for example, suspensions for clothing styles said to be "too tight." Lindsay reports that ABMS supporters frequently assert that