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*El Pueblo Unido: How Threats Increased Latinx Turnout in Arizona's 2020 General Election*

By Conner Martinez

A master's thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Political Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York,

2021.

El Pueblo Unido: How Threats Increased Latinx Turnout in Arizona’s 2020 General Election

by

Conner Martinez

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Political Science satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

May 4, 2021  
Date

Michael J. Fortner  
Thesis Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Advisor (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Alyson Cole  
Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Officer (Signature)

## ABSTRACT

El Pueblo Unido: How Threats Increased Latinx Turnout in Arizona's 2020

General Election

BY

Conner Martinez

Advisor: Michael J. Fortner

Latinx voter turnout in the United States has persisted to remain below White, Black, and Asian Americans. In 2020, county level data shows Latinx turnout reached historic levels in Arizona's 2020 general election (Pew Research 2020; Census 2020). But throughout the past two decades, Latinx's in Arizona have faced some of the harshest anti-immigrant policies in the nation.

Currently, the literature on Latinx mobilization shows mixed results on the impact of political threats on Latinx turnout (Jones-Correa et al. 2018). Through in depth interviews with Latinx organizational leaders who managed mass mobilization efforts in 2020, this paper explores the role threats had in increasing Latinx voter turnout in Arizona. To do this, interviews were conducted and then coded to examine the most salient narratives behind the growth in Latinx turnout. The results show two strong narratives: resource expansion allowing a threatened community to mobilize effectively, and threats creating a local impetus for building social capital and increasing turnout. These results both extend the literature on Latinx mobilization, provide a descriptive explanation for what happened in Arizona in 2020, and demonstrate the necessity for further research of political threats against Latinx people on a more generalizable scale.

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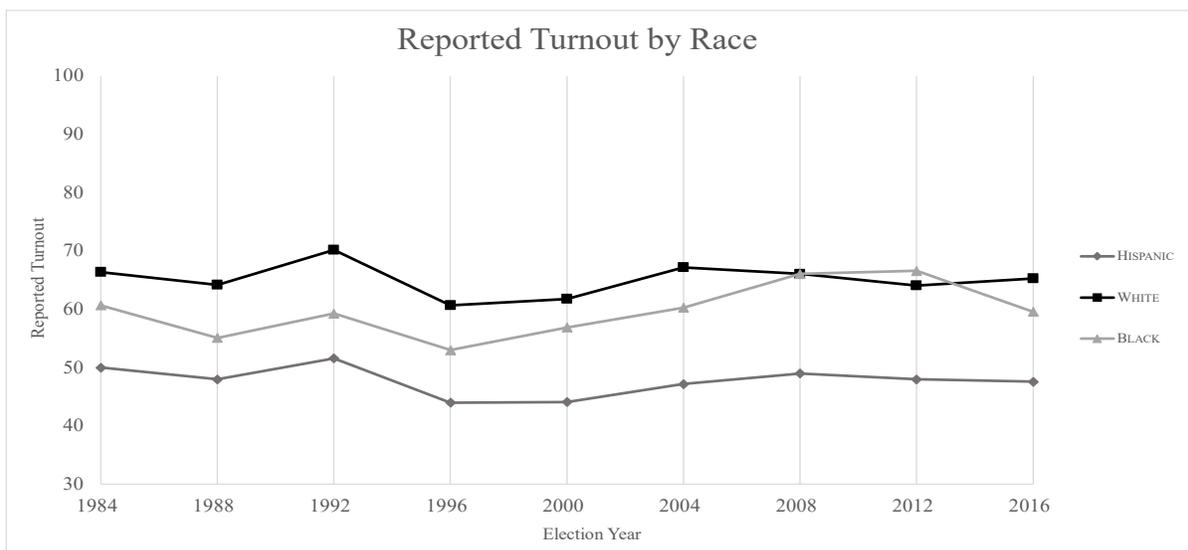
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## Introduction

When Donald Trump launched his campaign for President in 2015 at Trump Tower in New York City, his first speech as a candidate denounced immigration, and singled out Latinx immigrants specifically as a problem within the United States. “When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best,” Trump told the crowd (Phillips 2017). “They’re sending people that have lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people” (Phillips 2017). Trump’s speech also came with a barrage of policy promises, such as revoking the Obama-era program Deferred Action for Childhood Early Arrivals, and building a wall between the United States and Mexico. Trump’s candidacy might have seemed a likely cause of higher turnout among Latinx voters, and some scholars have shown that the threats made by Trump fostered a feeling of dread within the U.S. Latinx community (Cruz et al. 2018). But despite Trump’s threatening rhetoric, the overwhelming expectations of pundits and political forecasters of mass Latinx turnout in response to Trump’s candidacy did not come true. Latinx turnout in 2016 was virtually unchanged from 2012.



**Figure 1: Reported Turnout by Race (US Census 2020)**

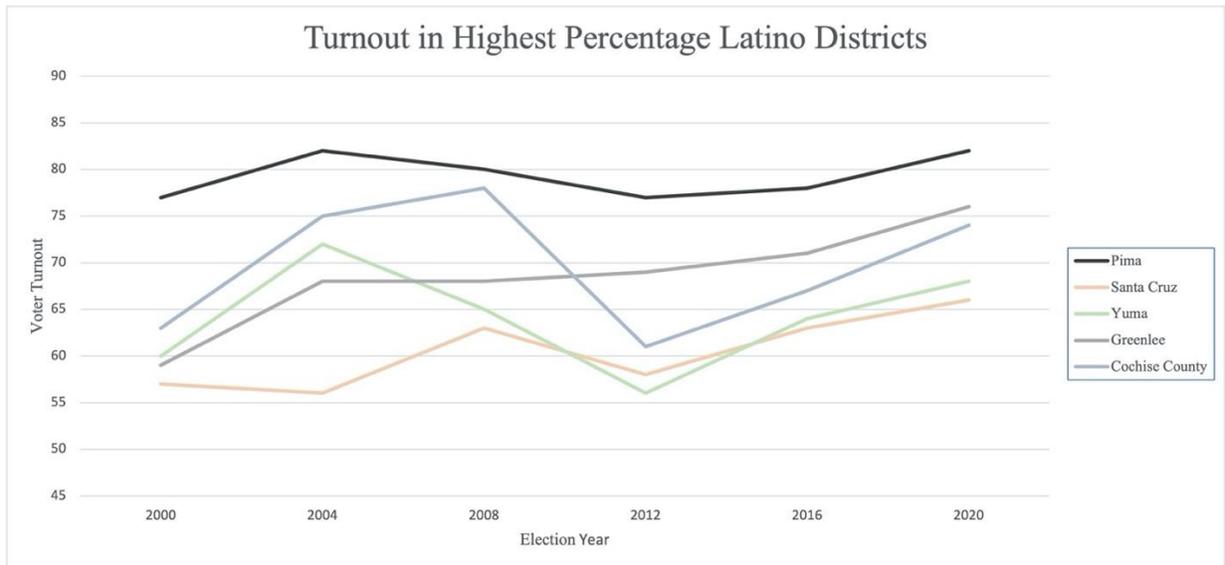
As data from the figure 1 shows, reported Latinx turnout has persisted lower than both white and black Americans for decades, and in 2016 the number of Latinxs who reported to have voted went down by .4%. Nearly unchanged from 2012, this number shows that the harsh anti-immigrant rhetoric of then candidate Trump was unable to bring the wave of turnout expected by pundits. But what the national story of Latinx turnout fails to reveal are some of the states where Latinx turnout was on the rise, specifically in states where Trump won the overall vote.

In the state of Arizona, where harsh anti-immigrant policies from political leaders predate the election of President Trump, the 2016 election represents another step in Arizona Latinx's further entrance into politics. In 2008, it was reported by the U.S. Census that 291,000 Latinxs voted in Arizona. That number then grew to 400,000 in 2012, and 550,000 in 2016 (Pew Research). So while the country saw Latinx turnout stall in the face of Trump's threats, Arizona provided a case where turnout was high in the context of long running threats. And while some of the higher voting numbers can be attributed to population growth, a thorough investigation to explain why the state has seen increases despite—or possibly because of—its history of threats to Latinxs is necessary.

Latinxs in Arizona are familiar with political leaders who threaten their everyday lives through discriminatory laws targeting undocumented peoples. In 2010, the notoriously anti-immigrant Arizona law Senate Bill 1070 (SB 1070), which required citizens to be prepared at all times to show proof of citizenship and deputized local law enforcement to determine individuals' immigration status during any stop, led to mass racial profiling and numerous arrests of innocent Latinxs (Rios 2016). Such policies have been shown to cause a sense of dread within Latinx communities, and have been linked with a decrease in mental and physical health (Cruz Nichols, LeBrón, and Pedraza 2018). In addition, Pedraza, Cruz Nichols, and LeBrón (2017) found in

their analysis of data from the 2015 Latinx National Health and Immigration Survey that increased immigrant enforcement at the community level decreases Latinxs likelihood of seeing a healthcare provider. Due to these insights, it would then make sense to begin building an understanding of how these threats impact Latinxs’ political participation. In particular, Arizona would then be an important case for investigation.

In 2020, the five counties in Arizona with the highest Latinx populations—Santa Cruz, Pima, Yuma, Greenlee, and Cochise County—each saw increases in voter turnout (U.S. Census 2010).<sup>1</sup> The largest was Greenlee, a county that is 47% Latinx and saw a 5% increase in turnout from 2016. Both Pima County, which holds a 37% Latinx population, and Yuma, which holds a 64% Latinx population, saw a 4% jump in turnout from 2016. And Santa Cruz county, with an 83% Latinx population, had a turnout increase of 3%.



**Figure 2: Turnout in High Percentage Latino Districts (State of Arizona 2020)**

<sup>1</sup> County data from Yuma shows a 4.3% increase (2,400 Votes). County data from Maricopa shows at least over 80 percent turnout, up from 74% in 2016 (roughly 480,688 votes). Data from Pima county is not fully available, but early ballot data shows turnout that is near 80 percent. Pinal county set a historic record for turnout with 75% turnout. Lastly, Cochise County voter turnout rose from 67% to 74% (AZ Central 2020).

As the data within Figure 2 shows, no district saw two successive increases in turnout from 2000 until the years 2016 and 2020. So although the increases are somewhat modest, they show the beginnings of a trend that arrives with the candidacy of Trump. In addition, survey data from a 15,200 person study in Arizona from Latinx Decisions shows that 62% of Latinxs believe that racial discrimination has increased since Trump's election. And mobilization efforts in Arizona also stand above the national level, with 44% of Latinxs nationally reported being contacted by supporters of the Democratic candidate, and 52% of Latinxs in Arizona reported being contacted in 2020 (Latinx Decision 2020). The results of the election and the increased mobilization efforts merit an explanation why Latinxs turned out to vote despite and within the context of major political threats.

This paper seeks to locate the impact political threats had on Latinx turnout in Arizona's 2020 general election. While this paper does not provide a full or conclusive examination of the effects of political threats on all Latinx voters, it will provide further evidence that threats can produce higher turnout among Latinxs. In addition, this paper provides a thorough look at the way Latinxs in Arizona have operationalized threats to build political power. Through coding and analyzing in depth interviews with six Latinx leaders working within organizations that managed mobilization campaigns in Arizona, I am able to show that Latinx turnout was increased by threats with three conditions present: resource expansion leading to adequate mobilization, increased social capital, and co-ethnic mobilization. The result of this study contributes to the literature on how threats impact Latinxs, showing that threats themselves may not simply be enough to spur turnout, but when accompanied with adequate mobilization they can impact turnout.

The rest of the paper will proceed as such: I will first review the literature on Latinx turnout, Latinx mobilization, and political threats. Next, I will explore the specific conditions within Arizona that make it an important case to study. Then, I will discuss the methodological approach of the paper and data collections process. After that, I will proceed with the results of the study and a discussion of its contribution to the literature. And lastly, I will conclude the paper.

### **Literature Review: Latinx Voter Behavior**

To understand the way threats increased Latinx turnout in Arizona's 2020 primary election, it is first important to map the existing literature on Latinxs' participation in elections, their experiences and responses to political threats, and what we know about the role threats have played in Latinx mobilization. Therefore, I will begin by providing a brief review of the literature on Latinx turnout, questioning the long held logic that socioeconomic status is the key determinant of participation. Then, I will explore the still underdeveloped literature on the way Latinxs have perceived and responded to political threats. And lastly, I will provide a review of the literature on Latinx mobilization, with a focus on the growing literature on threats impact on Latinx mobilization. What each respective part of the literature will show is a missing understanding of when threats can and have led to higher Latinx turnout.

### **Voter Turnout**

Voting in the United States is a critical part of democratic citizenship. Although there are many ways a person can participate in American politics—such as protesting, calling an elected official, or volunteering for a campaign—voting is one of the most common and critical participatory actions. While voting includes the process of registering, deciding who to vote for, and then either going to a polling location or mailing in a ballot, it is relatively lower cost than

many other time and resource consuming actions like volunteering or protesting. But even with the relatively lower cost of voting, around 40 percent of the voting age population within the US does not vote in a given election. As an ethnic coalition, Latinxs have been less likely to vote than the average American. Part of the reason for the group's low participation rates are the historical challenges of discrimination and language barriers (Fraga et al. 2012). In addition, threats to Latinxs everyday lives posed by anti-immigrant policies such as H.R. 4437 in 2006—which threatened to expand immigrant apprehensions away from the border and further criminalize associating with undocumented people—have made Latinxs' motivations for political participation less clear. Thought of as unlikely to vote, the increase in threatening policy and rhetoric provides a possible explanation as to why Latinxs may or may not decide to vote.

The literature on Latinx turnout has overwhelmingly declared that Latinxs are unlikely voters in comparison to their peers. While the Voting Rights Act of 1965—and the extension of this act in 1975 to include “language minorities”—helped dismantle many of the obstacles preventing Latinxs from voting, turnout levels amongst Latinxs are persistently lower than those of African Americans, Asian Americans, and whites. Persistent structural advantages along with low turnout numbers have been reason for many scholars to determine low Socioeconomic status (SES) as the main cause of low turnout. Using a 1967 NORC cross-sectional survey of 2,549 respondents, Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie examined individual level participation in elections, and found SES as a strong predictor for individuals' propensity to vote (Verba & Nie 1972). Therefore, Verba and Nie believe that low SES groups like Latinxs are unlikely to vote.

While Latinxs show clear disadvantages in SES variables, it is less clear why these measurements determine participation. Younger Latinxs in the US have some of the highest high school and college dropout rates of any ethnic group in the United States, and on average lower

levels of education in the household (García Bedolla 2014). And many of the existing resource disparities were further intensified by the global financial crisis of 2008, when poverty rates, unemployment, and home ownership were disproportionately intensified among Latinxs (Jones-Correa & Wallace 2016, Tran & Valdez 2017). So when scholars like Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen state that it is “the wealthy, the educated, and the partisan” who vote or participate in politics, it becomes clear why some scholars reason Latinxs are unlikely participants (Rosenstone and Hansen 2003). However, the SES model does little to explain why these disadvantages lead to low turnout. Even at a disadvantage, the issues being voted upon—such as immigration policies that will lead to discrimination—matter deeply to Latinx communities. As will be shown later in this paper, political threats materialized through anti-immigrant policies are one determinant in turnout that help provide a more full depiction why Latinxs do or do not vote, regardless of SES variables.

In addition, Brady et al. (1995) have explored the role of resources in explaining the SES model. Through a citizen participation survey conducted by phone, these scholars found that voting is primarily driven through interest, and somewhat by civic skills (Brady et al. 1995). And while education has been persistently connected with turnout—particularly within the literature on Latinx turnout (Fraga et al. 2012)—they believe that it is overrepresented, and that it acts more as a funnel towards political interest. As their survey data shows, political interest may be a key causal variable in determining turnout. Therefore political threats may serve as the basis of a groups interest in politics and motivation to vote. However, Verba et al. (1993) found in their examination of the Citizen Participation Study, a survey of Americans’ political activity designed to oversample African-Americans and Latinxs, that Latinxs are less likely to participate due to lower resources.

Studies focused specifically on Latinx participation have used mixed SES models along with sociodemographic factors to show how low income and education levels explain drop offs in Latinx participation specifically (Hero and Campbell 1996; DeSipio 1996). For example, DeSipio (1996) examined data from the Latinx National Political Survey and asserted that education was one of the strongest determinants of voting, and Fraga et al. (2012) also completed a survey of Latinxs in the 2004 general election to find that education and income are positively related to turnout. But within their mixed SES models, little attention is paid to the motivations behind resource expansion that can increase participation. For example, the expansion of resources to combat the persistent political Latinxs have faced throughout history. To provide a more complete view of why Latinxs do or do not participate, this paper will explore the possibility that threats are leading to resource expansion.

To overcome the socioeconomic disadvantages that have been linked with low political engagement, scholars have recognized group consciousness and group identification as the key determinants in Latinx mobilization (Zepeda-Millán 2016, Barreto et al. 2009). While Latinx group identification is complicated by its heterogeneity of national origin, geographic location, and religion (Lopez & Gonzalez-Barrera 2016), research has shown that contentious American debates around immigration have gradually led to higher levels of group identification among various ethnic backgrounds (Jones-Correa et al. 2018). For example, respondents to the 1989 Latinx National Survey (LNS) identified strongly with individual national origins (de la Garza et al. 1989, Jones-Correa & Leal 1996), but in 2006, Latinxs overwhelmingly reported a stronger connection with co-ethnics (Barreto & Segura 2014). While no study has found a direct causation, 2006 was also the year when Latinxs took to the streets in historic numbers to protest the anti-immigrant bill H.R. 4437 (Zepeda-Millán 2017). But for group identity and

consciousness to be effective as mobilizers, two preconditions must be met: individuals must see themselves as part of a group, and they must recognize the utility of working as a group (Miller et al. 1981; Omi and Winant 1995). It is important to note here, however, that group consciousness does not mean individuals are unable to make their own decisions, but instead that identity plays a fundamental role in their choices (Fraga et al. 2012, 78). Therefore, while there is strong evidence of the impact of group consciousness and linked fate on Latinx political attitudes, there is still room to understand how these impact political ideologies and mobilization, specifically in the context of political threats.

### **Mobilization**

Mobilization is an essential feature in American politics. According to Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), it is most likely performed by political parties, social movements, and electoral campaigns. The literature on racial and ethnic minorities in American politics states that Latinxs and Blacks show up to the voting booth in much smaller numbers than Whites (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, 77; Schlozman and Brady 1995: 234-235). Also, polling data has provided some evidence that Latinxs are less likely than other minority groups to participate in contentious politics (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Therefore, understanding why minorities do show up when facing major political threats is an important step for scholars of American politics.

### **Latinxs, Political Threats, and Mobilization**

Explanations for Latinx turnout centered on SES determinants like income and education have constructed a narrow understanding of the mechanisms impacting turnout. In particular, these models have failed to recognize the role threats have played in increasing turnout. As Jones-Correa et al. (2018, 219) have found in a review of the literature on Latinx politics, threats

impact on Latinx mobilization have been one of the “missing pieces” within the literature on race and politics. Much of this has been due to the limitations of the SES model, but also due to the persistent low turnout amongst Latinxs causing scholars to spend less time focusing on when and why Latinxs do vote.

While there has been a growing interest in Latinx politics more broadly, scholars have rarely directed their full attention to the impact of threats on turnout specifically. And when scholars have looked at the impact of threats, it has almost exclusively been through the state of California. For example, Pantoja et al. (2001) and Barreto and Woods both examined the impact of California’s hostile anti-immigrant policies in the 1990s—Proposition 187, which would have set up a citizenship screening system to prohibit non-citizens from using non-emergency services—and determined it increases Latinx immigrants’ motivations to naturalize. According to Bowler et al (2006), Proposition 187 was also a major factor in turning California permanently into a Democratic state as more Latinxs participated in politics and became more partisan. But only focusing on the state of California leaves scholars with a limited view of a state that is now deeply partisan, and with the largest and most organized Latinx population in the country (Pew Research 2016). Arizona provides a case where threats have played a major role in Latinx activism and political interest, and it is also a historically Republican controlled state with a conservative population. This makes it a useful case in exploring the role of threats more broadly, complimenting the study of California.

While limited, is also important to lay out the multiple ways of defining what is a political threat, and the ways they have already been inked to Latinx turnout. Ramakrishnan & Espenshade (2001, 893) explored data from the Current Population Survey Voter Supplements (CPS) and found that first generation immigrants in California—those who would likely be more

aware of the state's recent anti-immigrant Prop 187—were twice as likely to vote than other generations. The defining feature of a threat in their work is simply that it is “anti-immigrant,” legislation, which poses a threat to those of undocumented status and risks causing increased discrimination within Latinx communities. Similarly, Pantoja, Ramirez, and Segura (2001) found that anti-immigrant legislation has a positive impact on naturalized citizens likelihood of political participation in California. But despite the importance of each work in highlighting the impact of political threats, little is done to fully locate the variable within a legislative threat that motivates Latinxs to action.

The most precise study of political threats on Latinxs is Zepeda-Millán's (2017) extensive detailing of the effects of H.R. 4437—a law which further criminalized people's undocumented status, and imposed penalties against anyone supporting an undocumented person—on the record breaking 2006 immigrants' rights protests. Using a model created by Snow et al. (1998, 1-6), who argued that “the kind of breakdown most likely to be associated with movement emergence is that which penetrates and disrupts, or threatens to disrupt, taken-for-granted, everyday routines and expectancies,” Zepeda-Millán (2017) finds threats to then be conceptualized by four dynamics: sudden community disruptions, actual or threatened intrusions into culturally defined or private zones, an alteration of taken-for-granted subsistence routines or resources, and dramatic changes in structures of social control. With each of these four dynamics present in the results of H.R. 4437, he shows the process that developed a record breaking protest movement. Zepeda-Millán's model for threats will then be used within this paper to examine how threats impacted Latinxs in Arizona, but it will be extended to locate the ways these threats built the organizational capacity to mobilize Latinxs to the polls.

## **Methods: Case Selection**

This study uses the case of Arizona's 2020 general election as a location to make multiple observations of the way political threats impacted Latinx turnout. While scholars of qualitative methods such as King, Keohane, and Verba (1994) have claimed there is a fundamental problem for inference when using only one case, they are correct to recognize that a single "case" can hold many observations, meaning one measure of one dependent variable on one unit. In this study, the interview data collected provides multiple observations of Latinx mobilization in the case of Arizona. In addition, although this study is only interested in observing the case of 2020, multiple contacts within the study lead mobilization efforts over the past 10 years in Arizona, allowing their observations of this previous elections to contextualize this year's turnout. This context not only eliminates KKV's inference problem, but bolsters the interviews as reliable data.

The selection of Arizona as the singular case is also important. Due to the demographic changes and the increase in anti-immigrant policies in Arizona during mid 2000s through the 2010s, the state provides a pivotal opportunity to examine the impact of political threats on Latinx turnout. While scholars such as Barreto and Woods (2005) and Pantoja et al. (2001) have examined the effects of California's anti-immigrant policies in the 1990s, my work provides an expansion of our understanding of threats beyond California, a predominantly Democratic state that has a been overrepresented within the literature on Latinx mobilization. It also provides a case that occurs after the national movement for immigrants' rights in 2006, which although outside the scope of this paper, could provide a reason for the increased focus on national immigration politics within state level Latinx organizations and social movements. In addition,

the case can serve to increase the robustness of previous claims on the impact of threats, while providing new insights on the way threats work as political mobilizers.

## **Data Collection**

The analysis in this study relies on interview data collected between November 9, 2020, and January 15, 2021. Through multiple-entry snowball sampling, I conducted interviews with 7 political organizers in Arizona who held leadership positions within organizations that conducted substantial mobilization efforts in the 2020 general election. While interviews can be used at any point of a research project—from preliminary research to testing causal claims (Lynch 2013)—I use interview research as my data, with the goal being to record the role of political threats in increasing Latinx turnout in Arizona. It is the correct process of data collection for the question, recognizing that Latinx voters in Arizona are unique, with complex political and social identities, and deserve the ability to provide for a full range of explanations of why turnout increased so heavily since the election of Trump. As Reuel R. Rogers (2013, 227-228) has noted, much of the survey research on group identity and political action rely on the same concepts—group consciousness and linked fate—that came from understanding the significance of group identity among African Americans. And although group consciousness is important is important within past research and even within this paper, interview research will allow me to go beyond linked fate explanations of political actions to understand how individuals conceptualized the mobilization process in Arizona specifically. This is important because for many Latinxs in Arizona, there is no need to imagine what it would be like to be impacted by anti-immigrant legislation

The method of data collection was multiple entry snowball sampling. Snowball sampling—also known as the referral method, where contacts help the interviewer get in touch with other

important or interested contacts—provided me the best opportunity to collect a higher volume of data, and ensured I had a chance to interview the individuals I knew most critical to the questions, leaders of Latinx mobilization efforts in Arizona (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981; Geddes et al 2017).

To provide myself with a more robust opportunity for contacts and better chances of securing contacts, I used the multiple-entry method by making initial connections with those most easily accessible, and then allowed participants to lead me further. It is important to note that this kind of random sampling can lead to bias. For example, random sampling may lead to a collection of respondents within only one network of people (Martin 2013). Therefore, respondents might be liable to answer questions differently knowing the interviewer is an insider, or that their answers might be subject to comparison to others within the network (Martin 2013). In addition, my own search for particular contacts may be recognized as a bias. But within my project the respondents were targeted due to the fact there were a finite number of organizations that led major mobilization efforts in Arizona's 2020 election. So, while there may have been other organizations within the state of Arizona working on mobilizing potential voters for a candidate or party, selecting specifically Latinx focused organizations provided the most direct access to those mobilizers who engaged with Latinx voters. The practice of strategically selecting interviewees is common in elite level interviews. For example, Matthew N. Beckmann and Richard L. Hall (2013) have noted in their work that the case specific nature of elites' work makes selecting interviewees straightforward. In this study, the selection of interviewees was also simple: elite leaders in Arizona's most active Latinx mobilization efforts. Therefore, this context made snowball sampling the correct method, and made my more targeted approach also correct for the study.

I elected to choose interview contacts from Latinx organizations that were either native or currently based in Arizona, and participated in at least one of the mass voter mobilization efforts in the 2020 election. The groups I was successful in making contact with were: Mi Familia Vota, Living United For Change in Arizona (LUCHA), One Arizona, Puente Human Rights, ICONICO, and Mijente. One of the first strengths of this list is that through my stated intention for selecting contacts and the snowball sampling method I was able to generate a list of organizations with various partisan commitments, varying sizes, and organizations with both male and female leadership. To understand why Latinx voters showed up to the polls in such high numbers, securing a contact within Mi Familia Vota was critical. The organizations mobilization efforts were supported by at least \$10 million for voter outreach, and were the largest organization working within the state (Associated Press). The smaller groups, Punte Human Rights and Mijente, were included because of their supporting role in the larger mobilization efforts. As Puente Human Rights leaders Sandra Solis and Jovana Renteria told me, they used their organizational base to support the larger voter outreach efforts of Mi Familia Vota. And while groups like Puente, LUCHA, and Mi Famila Vota were highly partisan, I also spoke to the leader of the nonpartisan Latinx organization One Arizona. It must also be noted that no Republican oriented organizations were contacted. While this may be perceived to generate a bias, no group was interviewed because there were no substantial Latinx mobilization efforts on behalf of Republicans outside of the party. For these reasons, the organizations selected were the correct choice in data collection due to their relationship to the demographic and political changes thus described, their local roots in Arizona, and their ability to provide a direct link between the research project an

Each organization within the data collection played a role in mobilizing Latinxs in the 2020 election. Out of the 6 organization I selected for this study, two—Mi Familia Vota and LUCHA—were part of the coalition Mi Arizona, which had a stated goal to “mobilize one million voters of color and young voters in Arizona” (Mi Arizona 2020). These groups’ clear goal of mobilizing Latinxs provides an assurance of their strong contact with Arizona Latinx voters. The groups, Mijente, ICONICO, and Puente Human Rights were selected due to their emergence from the immigrants’ rights movement, roots in Arizona, and their role in supporting the efforts of the Mi Arizona coalition in the 2020 election. One Arizona was selected due to its own mobilization efforts, and its nonpartisan position. The interview process also provided outside views of each group, corroborating information online about their involvement with and contributions to mobilization efforts in the election.

### **Interview Design and Process**

The interviews were conducted over the digital video conferencing platform Zoom, over the phone, or in person. While in person interviews are ideal for building rapport, the limitation posed by the Coronavirus pandemic made them impossible. In all but one interview, which was conducted outside Puente offices after a foodbank event in which I was a part of, interviews were done through Zoom or by phone. Each lasted over 50 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed to ensure accuracy. Each respondent was made aware they were being recorded, and that they were participating in a study on Latinx mobilization in Arizona.

The interviews were designed to provide each participant the opportunity to tell their story about how and why Latinxs mobilized so strongly against President Trump in 2020. Their narratives how Trump’s threats and Arizona’s history of political threats might have played a

role in higher turnout, and what changes more broadly led to the growth in Arizona's Latinx organizing infrastructure.

In all interview research, the designing of questions is a critical step (Mosley 2013). Questions not only structure data collection, but they set the pace and focus of the conversations too. For this study, the questions are particularly important due to the use of answers as observable data. With either too few or too many questions, or the wrong questions all together, the data collection process will be a failed endeavor. However, structured questions should also not be the only way of gathering data. Therefore, each interview I conducted followed a predetermined script of questions, but allowed participants to expand on the narratives they felt most important, and additional questions were always included when important to the context of the conversation or interviewee's story. As Leech (2013) has stated, semi structured interviews allow for a quantification of interview data, an important step for this study. Therefore, discussion in this study was allowed to move organically towards themes suggested by interviewees, with the questions directing the conversation towards three major themes: the strategy behind organizations mobilization efforts, the issues that were most salient with Latinx Arizonans, and the role threats played in the organizing and mobilizing of the Latinx community in Arizona. I believe that these themes along with the semi-structured fluidity of the interviews allowed for the best collection of data for this project.

### **Coding Interviews**

Interested in determining the role of political threats on Latinx voter turnout, this study utilizes a method of narrative interviewing to gather data and extend the conceptual knowledge on political threats. Narratives, while sometimes associated with fiction, are elemental in the way we structure desperate facts (Patterson and Monroe 1998). As Somers & Gibson (1994) have

suggested, “causal emplotment” is feature of the narrative method in which critical elements are located within a plot to establish causal relationships. While this study will not make any causal claims, it will find critical elements within the narratives to further expand the understanding of threats impact on Latinx turnout. In examining these relationships , the data provides a rich descriptive context of the conditions that allow threats to become operationalized—meaning the way threats became the impetus for effective mobilization efforts—by Latinx organizers.

The data collection process included recording each respondents narrative of Latinx mobilization efforts and turnout in Arizona’s 2020 general election. In the past, alterations of this method have been used by political scientists to examine how Democratic Party activists interpreted the 2016 election (Masket 2020), and to explore the reasons Latinx people join the border patrol (Cortez 2020). Also, as mentioned previously, questions that involve ethnic identity—such as the Latinx identity in Arizona—are better supported through the descriptive power of interview research (Rogers 2013, 227-228). Therefore, organizing interviews to find salient narratives provides the best opportunity to record the complex decision making process that led to many Latinx Arizonans voting in 2020.

Through interviewing and transcribing each contacts narrative of strategy for organizing, what interactions were like among organizers and potential voters, and the role threats played in mobilization efforts and turnout, I found two salient narratives of Latinx turnout in 2020:

1. **Resource expansion allowing a threatened community to mobilize effectively:** The efforts deployed in the 2020 election to mobilize Latinx communities in Arizona were the highest point along a decade long pattern. Expanded resources both locally and from national supporters provided to Latinx community organizations allowed for the

persistent threats on everyday lives due to anti-immigrant policies—today represented by Trump—to provoke a groundswell of Latinx voters.

2. **Threats creating a local impetus for building social capital:** Latinxs in Arizona have been responding to threats to their everyday lives by building social capital to make their communities safer. This process built the infrastructure that mobilized Latinxs in 2020.

What the interview data will show is that Arizona’s past history of threats have left a lasting impact on Latinxs. And that lasting impact coupled with the threat of Trump’s second term as President led to mass mobilization of Latinxs. Although the two narratives are similar, they describe two concurrent processes witnessed by the people most involved in Latinx voters’ decision to vote. The narratives provided by the data will show these processes and provide the case that threats do impact voter turnout in Latinx communities. Instead of a simple scale measure of their opinion on the impact of threats—such as could be done through a survey—the method of capturing a narrative allows for thick descriptions of the mobilization process’ relationship with threats, and provides those involved the agency to tell their own story, which can then be supplemented with possibly contrasting narratives.

### **Narrative 1: Resource expansion allowing a threatened community to mobilize effectively**

The first narrative I will showcase and examine is that the expanded resources at both the local and national level allowed for Latinx communities in Arizona to be effectively mobilized against the threats posed by President Trump. After reviewing the interview data, this narrative stood out immediately. Each contact in some way or another mentioned how this election cycle was different for Latinxs in Arizona. As one respondent put it, “we are past some of the hardest times,” which he believed were during the Obama administrations when resources were low and there was a feeling like everyone was just waiting for things to change from the top down. While

much of the literature suggests that voter turnout amongst Latinxs will remain low as long as socioeconomic factors stay the same (Verba & Nie 1972; Rosenstone and Hansen 2003), this narrative shows that resources are an important impetus for effective mobilization. And as Verba et al. (1993) have shown, group's level of political participation depend upon the availability of resources. So, this narrative shows in the case of Arizona, Latinx communities respond to the threats from Trump—which they felt they had already faced for over a decade—by using expanded resources to mobilize voters.

After an informal conversation with the Arizona Democracy Collaborative Director Flavio Bravo, I had the opportunity to conduct a more formal interview with him over Zoom. Bravo, who is a 27 year old political organizer born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona, was involved with the mobilization efforts of Mi Familia Vota. His specific goal was planning for what comes after the election for member organizations of the Arizona Democracy Collaborative, which includes: All Voting is Local, Arizona Advocacy Network Foundation, Arizona Center for Empowerment, Arizona Coalition for Change, Chispa Arizona, Mi Familia Vota, and State Innovation Exchange. His responsibility and commitment to such a large number of Latinx groups in Arizona allowed for our conversation to span a wide range of topics related to mobilization strategy, and it also made him a great contact due to the trust others have put in his work, and his proximity to expanding my own number of contacts. But despite focusing much of his attention on the trajectory of Latinx groups in the long run, he told me that getting involved in the immediate mobilization efforts was impossible to stay away from. “Being there, I naturally got involved,” he said. In his involvement, he not only witnessed an unprecedented level of resource expansion, but helped create a direct expansion of Mi Familia Vota's resources, which he believed helped play a major role in generating new voters.

In the past, registration and turnout in Arizona lagged behind many other states with large Latinx populations. California, New Mexico, and Texas all had a larger percentage of Latinxs registered to vote in 2012 (Latinx Decisions 2012). But according to Bravo, the longstanding work of Latinx organizations managed a massive expansion of registered Latinxs. As he told me, the increased availability of coalitions reaching out to work with Mi Familia Vota directly increased the organizations ability to register new voters:

I was forwarded an email by Free Speech for the People, and they believed we had a case to extend the voter registration deadline. And because I was director of this coalition, I was able to see that if MFV [Mi Familia Vota] had just taken up that case as a plaintive, it would not have gone anywhere, because just the Latinx community versus everyone else in Arizona doesn't make sense. But we were able to partner with groups like Arizona coalition for change led by Reginald Boldin, who is the only black member of the legislature on the house side. We put forward some very powerful testimony about how COVID pandemic had impacted our groups and we won that lawsuit... which resulted in an addition 35,000 voters registered.

The power to bring forward and win an appeal to extend voter registration dates was major step in in Latinx politics in Arizona, and showcased new resources Bravo believes Latinx organizations gained in 2020. The gained resources—powerful testimonies, legal aid, and public attention through coalition support—led to a direct expansion of registered voters.

In any mobilization effort, the funding to simply carry out operations is crucial. So, with the funding received by Latinx organizations being described by Bravo as “unprecedented,” it is again clear that the 2020 election provided Latinx organization the opportunity to mobilize voters. What drove this expansion of resources was the organizations’ abilities to prove their strength on the ground. Organizations like LUCHA and ACE, which both started in direct response to the threat posed by SB 1070, were some of the groups able to gain major support for their efforts to mobilize Latinx voters. As Bravo states, these groups provide the premier

example of what more resources provided to an organization protecting a specific ethnic community can do:

The case study that's sweeping the nation is with LUCHA and ACE, who are part of the Democracy Collaborative. And I think that they gained a lot of trust, the group LUCHA had two years prior led a movement to increase the minimum wage. And they[LUCHA] were a group that was able to leverage their name nationally, and they received more support than any Latinx group had in Arizona ever...There are groups as old as the civil rights movement in Arizona that did not receive as much as they did.

The expanded resources provided to LUCHA and ACE—groups formed in response to the threat of SB 1070, each with the focus of preventing Trump from reelection—helped both groups register and mobilize more voters in 2020 than ever before. And LUCHA's mobilizing mission was clear, "Being a voter this year is the best way to protect you and your family" (LUCHA 2020). The word protection here being a clear response to the threats Trump poses to Latinx communities.

In addition to Bravo, Eduardo Sainz, the Arizona state director of Mi Familia Vota, spent considerable time describing to me about the wealth of resources expanded to Latinx groups in the 2020 election. His organization raised and spent \$10 million in total, \$7 million of that being directly spent on get out the vote efforts.<sup>2</sup> The campaign, which was named #BastaTrump (Stop Trump), was a clear response to Trump's threats to the Latinx community. Mi Familia Vota's executive director, Hector Sanchez, even called President Trump "the biggest threat for the Latinx community, probably in the history of this nation" (AZ Central 2020). Again, the direct expansion of monetary support was crucial to the ability to stop the threat of President Trump.

Montserrat Arredondo, the executive director and founder of One Arizona, a nonprofit Latinx organization that led a massive voter outreach campaign in 2020, spoke similarly of new

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<sup>2</sup> This is a calculation that was reported to me by Eduardo Sainz during our conversation. The same claim has been made by other members of Mi Familia Vota, and it has been reproduced in local reporting done by AZ Central (2020).

resources supporting organization formed to protect a threatened Latinx community. The first thing Arredondo did in our conversation was to remind me that “this election occurred during the anniversary of Arizona’s SB 1070.” A fact she told me that “people have not forgotten,” and that she along with many others Latinx Arizonans see Arpaio—Arizona’s past Sherriff notorious for enforcing racial discrimination—as the same as Trump. But while in the past she said that many Latinxs were asking question like “does my state or country care about me” due to discrimination, many people today are “optimistic” about the possibilities for change. And that optimism came from over a decades work of expanding organization capacity, which she described as “providing our communities confidence.”

Throughout the years leading up to this campaign and during, political threats to Latinxs have played a major role in the work of groups like Mi Familia Vota, LUCHA, and One Arizona. “We had every canvasser there on Friday, 6 feet apart, and we would bring in a speaker before we gave them food and then they would be on their way,” Bravo told me. “I heard so many members of the state legislature, members of Congress, and local activists who kept bringing up SB 1070 and 10 years ago,” he said of their weekly pep talks. But while organizers found the state’s discriminatory history to still be “a powerful truth,” according to Bravo, the younger organizers wanted to ensure that this narrative includes the major strides Latinxs in Arizona have won within the past few years. “If you just keep hearing about how ugly your state is and that’s all you hear, even if you're having a better experience than those before you, you're going to start thinking, wow this state is messed up and it’s not for me,” Bravo told me.

While the resource model of Verba et al. (1995) examined a wide range of resources, such as individual resources like education and command of the English language, or group resources like churches, coalitions are an important addition. As the details of Bravo’s narrative show,

coalition support made a direct contribution to voter registrations and turnout. But as the overarching narrative states, the expanded capacity of organizations to mobilize threatened Latinx communities generated a ground swell of voter registration and turnout. The most critical resource in each narrative were the organizations—much like the church groups from Verba et al. (1995)—which used monetary and coalitions support to mobilize.

## **Narrative 2: Threats creating a local impetus for building social capital**

The second narrative is that Latinx organizers have been building social capital in response to threats for over a decade, and the increase in turnout was a direct result. While the process of building social capital is interconnected with expanding resources, it is a distinct point in the process that led to an increase in Latinx turnout represented heavily in interviews, and is critical to their narrative of development. A fundamental part of the story of Latinx organizations' ability to expand resources in 2020 is the work they did building social capital in the wake of SB 1070. For example, Bravo spoke with me about the success of LUCHA and ACE—groups founded in response to SB 1070—coming from their work on a local campaign to increase the minimum wage being the bases for their national clot. But as other narrative show, even before this campaign the organization had begun a long process of building social capital on the ground. As these narratives will then show, the process of building social capital is a critical component to Latinx communities responses to threats, and an important part of the process that led to historic turnout in the 2020 general election.

Within each narrative shared below, it is important to first note that social capital will be understood as “features of social life—networks, norms, and trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared interests” (Putnam 1995, 664-5). The reason for this definition is because it best represents social capital as described by contacts. Staying true to

their narrative will provide the best opportunity to further the understanding of the mobilization process in Arizona.

For many interview respondents, their own personal involvement in political organizing began as a response to witnessing a threat disrupt their own lives. Eduardo Sainz, the previously mentioned Arizona Director of Mi Familia Vota, was himself impacted by political threats growing up in Tucson, Arizona. When I asked Sainz about why he became politically active, he first described to me what it was like growing up when SB 1070 passed: “I was able to see family members who I truly loved packing everything that they owned because of the law, and leaving the country or going into other states, and that fear sparked my activism into building community power.” In response to the constant threat SB 1070 had on his family’s life, he began looking for a way to fight back. “I started looking for avenues to build political power by volunteering at my local church, and then I was able to find an avenue to fight for political power with Mi Familia Vota,” he told me. The process described by Sainz aligns with what Verba et al. (1995) described of political participation decades ago, but the key motivating factor was the threat to Sainz’s everyday life. While active within the church before SB 1070, it was the threat which led Sainz to turn his actions towards building “political power.”

When I then asked Sainz about what kinds of actions he thought would lead to political power, he told me that it was the same work they’re doing today: “registering our communities to vote, getting community members to become naturalized citizens so they can participate in our democracy, and then organizing young people to become the next generation of Latinx leaders that we need to run for office and run organizations that advocate for our communities.” Through this process—which is representative of building social capital—Sainz and those working with him helped build the organizational infrastructure and social capital that was used to mobilize the

Latinx community in 2020. Some of the processes include making democratic participation a norm, and providing younger Latinxs the ability to learn leadership skills. This is something other contacts noticed while canvassing and phone banking. As Sandra Solis, the Co-Director of Puente Human Rights told me: “The people I was canvassing with were a lot of black and brown Latinx youth, which was really exciting. It was not only folks from the Puente, but from the Latinx community or immigrant community talking to voters.” The democratic culture—one that was also importantly not just about electoral politics, but engaging Latinx youth in community based projects—had a direct impact on the mobilization effort in 2020. It was also an effort fundamentally based upon protecting a community from well understood threats.

As Sainz story shows, the project of building social capital was also not something that started recently, but was the result of a community under constant threat of discrimination and disruption. Talking about the impact of Arizona’s anti-immigrant history, Sainz told me that: “those 10 years of organizing[since SB 1070] have led to now flipping the state into a democratic nominee, and being able to elect a Latina in the city of Tucson to serve as a mayor.” And in 2020, the results of their efforts were clear. According to Sainz, estimates from *Mi Familia Vota* show that Latinx turnout was raised by as much as 20 percent in some Latinx-majority precincts.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to Sainz, the conversation I had with Luis Avila, the president and founder of ICONICO, told me a similar story. But for Avila—a loquacious local leader and podcast host—the story goes back much further than a decade. Before even beginning with my first question, Avila asked me if he could first provide some context to what is going on in Arizona Latinx politics. “Sometime when people ask me questions about what has happened in the past ten years

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

I like to give them some historical perspective,” Avila told me. His story was of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when there was a large number of Latinxs in Arizona working in the mines who were then blamed for the economic depression due to “the nativist narratives” also common today. The importance of this story is that it created a “new generation of leaders,” much in the way we are seeing today. In addition to this, Avila then told me about how “in the years from 2001 to 2003, around half of the Latino population were actually voting for anti-immigrant legislation,” and that “when it becomes about race and no longer about status, and they start seeing discriminatory legislation or things like Arpaio stopping people for how they look, that becomes a galvanizer for Latino identity to start being created in Arizona.” So for Avila, the process we are witnessing now is a cyclical process. It is a response to threats to the community—in this case the policies from Sherriff Arpaio and now Trump—and the response is unique to the moment. A “new Latino identity in Arizona” was shaped by threats, and as the narratives from leaders like Sainz shows, this is an identity focused on expanding social capital in Latinx communities.

Avila also told me that Latinxs in Arizona showed the nation how to handle Trump when they voted out Sherriff Joe Arpaio, and what was important to him in this process was the leadership that movement built. In fact, this has become of special interest to Avila, who now has a podcast where he speaks with Latinxs around the country simply asking: “what do you do?” In addition, this election was different according to Avila. In the past, he told me that Latinx voter “typically were voting “altruistically, because they never thought politics effected their lives.” But in this election, “Latinos are voting because it is actually determinative of their everyday lives.” For Avila, “that is why we are seeing such high participation numbers in Arizona, and we have been setting records for a decade.”

The threat of Donald Trump was what led to mass mobilizations in 2020, but the process of getting Latinxs involved began with building social capital for over a decade. This process shows the way threats to Latinxs in Arizona activated an identity now rich in social capital. The norms and new leaders created by Latinx organizers over the past decade have been made visible. “We as a community felt that we are a community that is resilient,” Sainz told me. “We either ourselves or our parents migrated to this country to thrive, and as we were looking at these racist policies that were trying to get implemented, we realized we had so much power within our hands, and that’s when we started to create coalitions that truly sparked the hope in Arizona.” It was through those networks that Latinxs built social capital, and mobilized historic numbers in 2020.

### **Why Threats Matter**

The Latinx community in Arizona faced threats to their everyday lives long before the Trump administration increased ICE raids in Latinx communities, or tried to roll back DACA (Merle 2019). For example, Arizona’s former Sheriff Joe Arpaio led a campaign of immigration raids that have since been recognized by federal prosecutors as discriminatory.<sup>4</sup> And as Solis told me—“our[Arizona] Trump 10 years ago was Arpaio”—the threats in Arizona’s past represent the start of a local process of organizational momentum. Across the US many Latinx people have now experienced a tumultuous period of time similar to the one Arizonans faced in 2010. Therefore, Arizona provides an excellent case to help scholars better process what the future of Latinx mobilization may look like. While the effects of threats on Latinx voters are yet to be fully determined (Jones-Correa et al. 2018), the evidence presented within the interview data

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<sup>4</sup> Throughout Joe Arpaio’s tenure as Sheriff he conducted raids of Latinx neighborhoods with no probable cause (ACLU 2013). Those raids led to the state of Arizona paying over \$1 million in legal fees to settle in court over charges of discrimination made by Puente Human Rights and the ACLU (Kiefer 2018). After the lawsuit, Puente’s founder Carlos Garcia had this to say, “the fight continues. Arpaio’s tools are now being deployed at the national level. And his legacy will live on here in Maricopa County so long as ICE is still allowed in the jails” (Kiefer 2018).

reveals that in this case threats became an impetus to build social capital and mobilize Latinx voters.

While low SES within Latinx communities has long been considered the cause of low voter turnout (Verba & Nie 1972; Rosenstone and Hansen 2003), resources extended to the organizations leading Latinx mobilization and projects to build social capital can provide a context that overcomes low SES to increase turnout. Also, the social capital built in Arizona due to the persistence of threats helped increase turnout by creating a network within the community, as described by Sainz, who told me the process is not only about getting Latinxs to vote, but organizing “young people to become the next generation of Latinx leaders that we need to run for office and run organizations that advocate for our communities.” This and the evidence throughout this paper bolsters the work of scholars who have looked beyond SES to explain political participation. Brady et al. (1995) have stated that education itself was not the variable driving turnout, but education's ability to drive interest. And if political interest is key to mobilizing voters, then a major event such as the talk of a threat or the presence of an actual life-changing event will provide someone a strong interest in voting. This was shown throughout the interviews with each respondent, and was an important conversational piece in the canvassing process in 2020. But what the interviews also tell us about this process is that generating interests amongst racial groups such as Latinx voters may require an abundance of effort and resources on the part of activists and political organizers. As Arredondo told me, many Latinx voters used to ask questions like “does my state or country care about me?” But now they don't, and that is because the social capital and organizational capacity within the state has provided some voters confidence in their role as voters.

In the future, an understanding of the impacts on threats will require a further examination of their impact on youth. As national census data shows, the Latinx population is younger than many other ethnic populations (Pew 2020). While partially recognized in the literature on Latinx politics, the abundance of youth within the Latinx population is something that is often overlooked in the literature on political threats. Young adult Latinxs who grew up in states like California in the 1990s and Arizona in the 2010s faced major threats to their communities as kids. Today in Arizona, the impact of those threats may be starting to surface. Take for example Bravo, who received a first-hand lesson from his Mexican immigrant grandfather about threats: “I remember when my Grandfather told me that we should get in the car right now to go to Guadalupe, because he said I guarantee they're going to pull us over.” His grandfather was correct, and they were pulled over by the police not long after leaving the house. And when the sheriff asked his grandfather what he was doing and where he was going, he replied that “he was showing his grandson racism 101.” This was a moment where Bravo gained interest in politics, and something he told me he will remember forever.

Sainz had a similar interaction as a young man. Talking about his path to becoming an activist, Sainz told me, “I started my activism because of SB 1070 in Tucson. I remember walking out of school, and protesting outside of the Arizona state building, and that was the day Jan Brewer had the option to sign 1070 or veto it, and I remember a white women who came out with a sign that said haha she signed it.” His experience was another instance where a threat impacted his political trajectory as an adult. Canvassing in 2020, Solis and Renteria recognized the emerging influence of youth who grew up watching their parents live through threats to their everyday lives. Renteria told me that, “everything that happened in 2010, the raids and all of that, their children are now turning 18, and they are all citizens and able to vote. So they have first-

hand experiences with everything that happened, and they're going to vote and end that cycle of horror politicians feel entitled to do." A full understanding of this process is outside the scope of this paper. However, it is clear that the literature has been directing scholars to examine it further. As Hui & Sears (2017) states of Barreto and Woods (2005) study of the impact of threats on Latinx turnout in Los Angeles, the changes occurred over a longer period of time. Therefore, it would make sense that the effects of threats should be studied long term, with particular attention being placed on how threats impact youth. Possibly, an examination of the households within counties where raids have been most prevalent should be done to examine how those threats impacted individuals too young to vote at the time, but now have are of legal age to vote. Survey research of certain age groups and interview research would also provide excellent tools to explore this topic further.

Also, while scholars such as Zepeda-Millán (2017) have shown that threats can lead to mass disruptive mobilizations like protests, my paper has shown how there is also a desire among Latinx community leaders to act within the formal political process. That is also true amongst groups with different ideological positions. Four respondent spoke about the need for people in power who are Latinx, and will be sure to have the interests of Latinxs in mind. This evidence is instructive for scholars' need to better our understanding of the way threats may increase candidate emergence as well. In this area, scholars may be best suited to look at Latinx candidate emergence on both the local and national level as it may be caused by political threats.

The results of the interview data provided are not conclusive in the role threats play universally in the United States, but does show the salient narratives of Latinx turnout amongst Latinx organizational leaders. In addition, the results provide a new scholarly impetus to expand and rethink our research on the impact of threats on Latinx political participation.

## Conclusion

Despite the longstanding threats Latinxs have faced in American politics, researchers have just started building an understanding of how threats impact turnout. While some scholars have recognized threats mobilizing Latinxs in California (Barreto and Woods 2005), little research has been done outside of the heavily Democratic state. The research on threats as a mobilizer has also been questioned by the possibility of their effect in chilling voters and lowering political participation (Chavez 2013, Menjívar 2006). What Street et al. (2015) recognized is a more accurate portrayal, that threats do not uniformly impact Latinxs. Instead, what the results of this paper show is that Latinxs do respond to threats by voting when the context allows them to do so. In addition, it is not simply those with high SES that show up. Threats can have the impact of building community organizations that set out to protect Latinx communities through building social capital, and waging their own mass mobilization efforts each election.

Drawing from evidence gathered through interviews using multiple entry snowball sampling of Latinx organizational leaders in Arizona, this study provides further evidence of the way threats are operationalized to increase Latinx turnout. What the interviews reveal is that threats may lead to higher turnout when there are two conditions present: resource expansion leading to adequate mobilization, and the creation of a local impetus to build social capital. While each of these conditions may stand alone in linking threats with higher turnout, the narratives presented show they are also deeply interconnected. The organizations who have been building social capital in Arizona—in the case of this study: Puente, LUCHA, One Arizona, Mijente, ICONICO, and Mi Familia Vota—led or participated in the largest mobilization efforts in state. While further research must be done—most importantly a national measuring of counties

exposure to specific threats, and the possible connections to higher turnout—this paper extends the understanding of threats with fresh evidence that they can serve as mobilizing factors.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Interview Protocol

At the start of each interview I began by thanking each contact for taking the time to speak with me, reminded them that I was working on a research project examining the role threats played in voter turnout, and asked a few questions to establish rapport. No introductory moments were the same, but the mission in each was to simply allow for the interviewee and myself to become comfortable. After that, I asked each respondent if it would be acceptable for me to record out interview for clarity, and then began the formal interview. Within each interview there was a set list of questions I had planned to ask. However, within each interview I asked additional and unique questions. Below is a list of the questions I used to guide my conversations.

1. Demographic/Identification Questions:

- A. What is your name, and could you tell me a bit about your background?
- B. What is your age and identified gender?
- C. Where were you born/raised in Arizona?

D. Do you currently live there now?

E. Could you tell me a bit about how you got involved in political organizing? How do you feel your experience relates to others Latinx community members in Arizona?

**2. Family Life/Background Questions:**

A. Growing up, what were some of the issues you saw or faced within your community?

B. Do you remember having any experiences with ICE or other immigration agencies?

C. In [current place of residence], have you witnessed immigrant rights protests? Have you personally ever participated in any kind of immigrant rights demonstration? And if so, why?

**3. Mobilization**

A. What was the general mood of Latinx voters like in Arizona this year (angry, scared, motivated)? What drove these feelings? Do any one stories from your time engaging with voters stand out?

B. What made the biggest difference this year in getting Latinxs in Arizona registered?

C. What issues would you say resonated most with Latinx Arizonans this year?

D. Could you walk me through what a typical script sounded like for your organization this year?

E. How do you believe unique history impacted voters and mobilization efforts in 2020? What about on organizers?

F. What Changed between the 2008, 2012, 2016, and then 2020 elections?

G. How do these changes relate to turnout, or do they not?

**4. Mobilizing for the Future**

A. What does the future of Latinx politics in Arizona look like for to you?

- B. What was the lesson you took from the 2020 election on mobilizing the Latinx community?
- C. What should researchers and those interested in Latinx politics be reviewing after this year's election?

To wrap up each interview I again thanked each participant and also provided them one last opportunity to say anything they would like. When each interview was finished, I then transcribed them to ensure accuracy.

### List of Interviewees

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date of Interview</u>
Bravo, Flavio	Director, AZ Democracy Collaborative/ Organizer, LUCHA	November 24, 2020
Sainz, Eduardo	National Field Director, Mi Familia Vota	December 3, 2020
Solis, Sandra	Co-Director Puente Human Rights	December 9, 2020
Renteria, Jovana	Co-Executive Director, Puente Human Rights/ Organizer, Mijente	December 9, 2020
Arredondo, Montserrat	Director, One Arizona	January 12, 2021
Avila, Luis	Founder, ICONICO	December 9, 2020/January 7, 2021

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