

Tejano pride of place

By Mike González

Leftist have been scratching their heads and rubbing their eyes in disbelief as [poll after poll](#) tell them that Latin voters are starting to tack rightward in significant numbers. Now along comes a poll that makes clear why that is happening, at least in Texas: that state's large Mexican-American population loves America; they're not the angry, resentful victims the left wants them to be.

In other words, liberals should be searching their souls. Tejanos aren't nursing grievances, and woke attempts to instill a sense of injustice among them amount not just to ugly, hate-pandering – they're also increasingly futile. Democrats are pushing on a string of resentment.

This is not new, incidentally. Mexican-Americans in the Southwest have been telling outside pollsters the same thing for decades. The left just thought it could dismantle their “false consciousness” with costly “consciousness raising” schemes.

Ain't happening. The results of a [poll](#) of 608 “Hispanic adults” who live in the Lone Star State, conducted in February by the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF), tell the story.

Asked whether they agreed with the statement, “The U.S. is a land of freedom and opportunity” 83 percent said yes, while 15 percent said no.

Respondents are also very proud to be Texans, with 84 percent responding in the affirmative, including 69 percent saying they were “very proud.” And they were even prouder Americans. To “would you say you are proud or not proud of being an American?” the results were even better, 87-9 percent.

Trust in government rose with proximity. A total of 58 percent said they trust the Federal Government, 62 percent trusted the Texas State Government, and 70 percent said they trusted their local government.

In what can only be good news for Republicans being seen increasingly as the party of educational rights, more than three quarters, 78 percent, said they support the type of school choice where the money follows the child, even if the parent puts him in a private school.

In more bad news for the Democrats, 73 percent agreed that there is a border crisis. In fact, in the list of issues that they found important for the Texas Legislature to address, border security tied at number one with immigration reform, and both were just one percentage point ahead of education.

And they are troubled about how hard it's becoming to realize their aspirations. More respondents (30 percent) think the American Dream is less accessible than think it's more accessible (22 percent).

None of this should surprise anyone who's bothered to look at long-term Mexican-Americans patterns in Texas. Though the TPPF poll referred to “Hispanics,” [85 percent of them in Texas](#)

are of Mexican origin—some of them recent arrivals, others whose ancestors have been there since at least the 1500s.

Even nationwide, Mexicans overshadow most other groups, making up 61.4 percent of the [62.1 million](#) people the [U.S. Census categorizes](#) as “Hispanics.” These Americans make up 19 percent of the U.S. population, so one of out every five of us. That makes this a national story with strong political implications.

Now, much balderdash is written about the “Hispanic” vote. Individual Americans have their own reasons to do what they do. But if we generalize at all, it is foolish to do so beyond the national-origin level, and even then, it must be cross-referenced by region.

Cuban-Americans from Dade County, Florida, for example, have always tended to vote Republican, and the turn to the hard left by the Democratic Party only accelerated that trend. However, Cuban-Americans in New Jersey have traditionally voted a bit more like their Garden State neighbors, electing Democrats like Sen. Robert Menendez and Rep. Albio Sires.

Mexican-Americans in Texas have their own peculiarity. And that goes double for those in the southern Rio Grande Valley, the heart of Tejano culture. They *are* Texas; their cultural imprint can be seen everywhere, from the language, to the dress to, well, Tex-Mex cuisine.

This has been the case for decades at least, if not a century and a half. In the late 1960s, the Ford Foundation paid UCLA researchers Leo Grebler, Joan Moore, and Ralph Guzman to conduct a study based on interviews with 1,550 residents of Los Angeles and San Antonio.

The researchers returned to the Ford Foundation with bad news: The report read, in part, “Prejudice has been a loaded topic of conversation in any Mexican-American community. Indeed, merely calling Mexican-Americans a ‘minority’ and implying that the population is the victim of prejudice and discrimination has caused irritation among many who prefer to believe themselves indistinguishable [from] white Americans.”

As I wrote in my book, [The Plot to Change America](#), “Their own survey had discovered that Mexican Americans’ lived experiences showed them that they weren’t passive victims of invidious, structural discrimination, much less racial animus. They felt they had agency, and they owned their own failures, which—their experience told them—were remediable through individual actions (such as dressing and speaking well), not group mobilization.”

That Mexican-Americans have deep pride in their cultural patrimony is evident instantly to anyone who visits, and the TPPF poll makes that amply clear. People with a proud legacy tend to want to conserve it, not transform it, and people who want to conserve, not destroy, are naturally conservative.

That is, they may vote Democratic at the local level because of a very strong Democratic machine. But as we saw in the 2020 elections, counties in the RGV [swung massively](#) toward Trump compared to 2016.

These voters may understand that Wokeism destroys cultural patrimony, not conserve it—as when they try to impose the nonsense term “Latinx,” when the term “Latin” itself is gender-

neutral. The job of the woke orgs is not to stoke pride, but the opposite, to implant grievances; it is actually hate mongering.

Don't believe me? Listen to how the leader of Voto Latino [described](#) her job: "The challenge with the work that I do at *Voto Latino* is that I can't get people agitated because often times they don't know the great harm that has happened under the structures that we have been raised by. But once they start understanding it and recognizing it, they act and react, and fight and run for office."

For them, this TPPF poll is a disaster. For the rest of us, it confirms what we already knew.