



# The May 1 Marchers in Los Angeles: Overcoming Conflicting Frames, Bilingual Women Connectors, English-Language Radio, and Newly Politicized Spanish Speakers

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## Abstract

In this article, we study protest participants in the May 2006 immigration rights marches in Los Angeles. Analysis of original survey data of 876 march participants yields five main results. First, despite substantial dispute among organizers on how to frame the marches, we find protest participants were similar across march locations organized by different coalitions. Second, we find Spanish-English bilingual participants seemed to benefit from being in two media environments, as they reported more information sources about the protest events than monolingual participants. Third, women reported hearing about the protest events from more information sources, and Spanish-English bilingual women reported hearing from more information sources than any other group, suggesting they acted as social connectors

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behind the massive participation. Fourth, we confirm the importance of Spanish-language radio as an information source, but our data also point to the significance of television and English-language radio. Finally, analyzing data of first-time protesters, we estimate the immigrant rights marches newly politicized 125,000 people in Los Angeles who spoke Spanish and not English.

**Keywords**

immigration rights protests, Los Angeles, bilingual, social movements

**Introduction**

On May 1, 2006, an estimated half million people participated in two marches in Los Angeles, one of the largest outpourings in the city's history, as part of a historic nationwide movement for immigrant rights that resulted in the largest wave of street protest in the United States since the 1960s. This article is the first to statistically describe actual march participants in Los Angeles, based on a survey we conducted of 876 march participants in three locations in the city. The primary contribution of this article stems from the study population. Whereas existing research relies primarily on survey respondents' self-reports of participation after the protests, our study interviewed respondents in the course of the protest.<sup>1</sup> Using these responses, we also examine how the dynamics of mass protest have changed since the well-documented movements of the 1960s.

We present five main results. First, we find that although the two marches were organized by rival groups, the first advocating a work and school walk-out and a consumer boycott and the second opposing the walkout and boycott, participants had similar characteristics in both marches. In other words, participants overcame organizers' conflicting frames and redefined the two marches into one unified event. Second, march participants who spoke both Spanish and English reported hearing about the marches from more sources, including media and friends and family, than those who spoke Spanish and not English and those who spoke English and not Spanish. In other words, Spanish-English bilinguals seem to have benefited from being in two media and also two social environments. Third, women reported hearing from more information sources than men; Spanish-English bilingual women were in this sense most informed and might be considered the social "connectors" behind the mass participation on May 1. Fourth, we confirm, as others have argued, that Spanish-language radio was important in mobilization, but we also find that television was also important and that English-language radio was also significant; for example, Spanish-English bilinguals were more likely to have

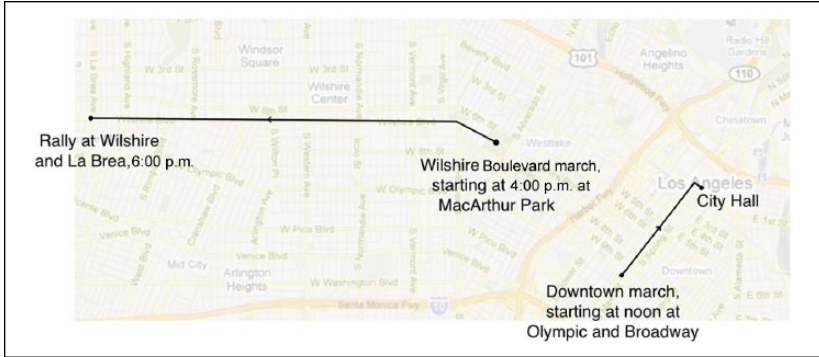


Figure 1. The two marches in Los Angeles on May 1, 2006.

been informed by radio than people who spoke Spanish and not English. Fifth, we find that first-time protesters, those who had not previously participated in a similar event, were more likely to speak Spanish and not English; we extrapolate that 125,000 people in Los Angeles who spoke Spanish and not English were newly politicized on May 1.<sup>2</sup>

In other words, our results call into question the importance of consistent, unified framing for mobilization and indeed whether the opposing frames of “elite” organizers mattered at all. Our results suggest the political potency and “bridging” potential of bilingual skills (and multilingual skills) in mass mobilization. Our results point out the lesser-known contribution of English-language radio. Finally, our results characterize the impact, in terms of new politicization, of the May 1 marches as strongest among people speaking Spanish and not English.

### The Two May 1 Marches in Los Angeles

The first May 1 march took place downtown, starting at noon at the intersection of Olympic Boulevard and Broadway, proceeding north along Broadway, and ending at Los Angeles City Hall, a route of about 1.3 miles (see Figure 1). This first march, called “A Day Without An Immigrant” and also “The Great American Boycott,” was organized by the March 25 Coalition. Earlier, on March 25, 2006, the March 25 Coalition had mobilized a half million people in downtown Los Angeles to urge the U.S. Senate to pass a more liberal immigration bill. Unlike the protest on March 25, the May 1 downtown march called explicitly for participants to boycott consumer goods and walk out from their workplaces and schools. The boycott and walkout were organized by Jesse Diaz, a doctoral student in sociology at University of California,

Riverside; after hearing that members of the Minutemen militia shouted that illegal immigrants burdened the economy, Diaz wanted to prove them wrong (Taxin 2006). The downtown march was intended to demonstrate immigrants' economic contribution and might.

The second march started at 4:00 p.m.<sup>3</sup> in MacArthur Park on Wilshire Boulevard and proceeded west along Wilshire to an end-of-the-day rally at 6:00 p.m. at the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and La Brea Avenue, a route of about four miles (see Figure 1). This second march, designed to start late enough so that working people or students could demonstrate for immigrant rights without engaging in a walkout, was organized by the We Are America Coalition, composed of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles along with labor unions and local civic associations. The organizers of the second march did not endorse the boycott and did not link immigrants' economic impact to their human rights.

The disagreement between the March 25 Coalition and the We Are America Coalition on whether to boycott was deeply felt (Lopez 2006; Powers 2006). The choice of holding another mass protest so soon after the incredibly visible March 25 demonstration, the choice of holding it on a weekday, and the choice of an economic boycott were all highly contentious decisions; many felt that enough momentum had already been gained from previous demonstrations. The tactics employed by the March 25 Coalition encouraged the We Are America Coalition to organize a second march as a means of counterbalancing the radical message of the boycott. Despite this disagreement, the marches did not directly compete with each other: People supporting the March 25 Coalition could march during business hours, and people supporting the We Are America Coalition could march after work and school. In the course of collecting data, we observed marchers participating in both.

Leaders mobilizing participation for May 1 framed the different rallies as representing different ideologies on the benefits of an economic boycott, creating what Benford (1993) referred to as an intramovement frame dispute: an internal dispute among movement supporters, in this case, supporters of immigrant rights. If the success of participant mobilization relies on movement framing efforts (Snow and Benford 1988), can the unprecedented mobilization of rally participants in Los Angeles on May 1, 2006, be attributed to the movement leadership's successful framing of the rallies? In this article, we seek to substantiate whether the frame dispute among the social movement's leadership shaped protesters' participation. If leadership can shape mobilization, we would expect distinct populations protesting at the different demonstration locations. More specifically, we should find that protesters at the Downtown march and rally to be distinct from the protesters at the MacArthur Park and La Brea events.

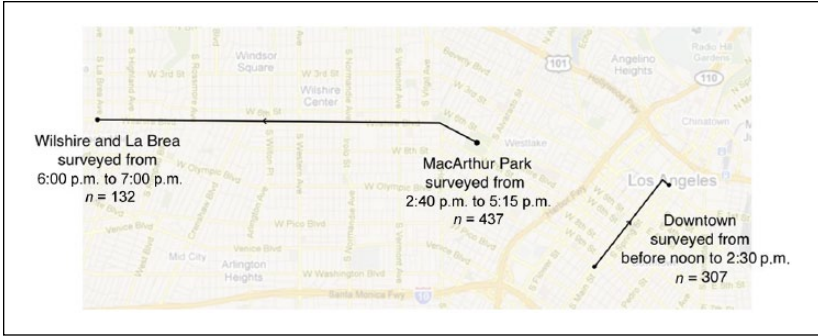


Figure 2. Survey locations and times.

### Our Survey of March Participants

Thirteen University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) student and faculty volunteers surveyed 307 march participants downtown, 437 in MacArthur Park, and 132 people at the rally at Wilshire and La Brea (see Figure 2). In downtown, we surveyed people mainly near the intersection of 1st Street and Broadway and the intersection of 7th Street and Broadway. In MacArthur Park, we surveyed people in all areas of the park.

The survey was written in four languages on a single card, with Spanish and English versions on one side of the card and Korean and Tagalog versions on the other side (see Figure 3). Survey respondents, not interviewers, selected the response language. Participants were asked how they heard of the event (from newspapers, radio, television, organizations, friends, family, etc.), how many of their friends and family were also at the event, where they would otherwise be if they had not participated, their zip code, gender, age, the language(s) they spoke at home, and whether it was their first time at an “event like this.” The resulting data are available at <http://ucla.ps269.googlepages.com>.

### How Participants Differed by Survey Location

As shown in Table 1, slightly fewer women than men participated; among the people who specified their gender, overall 46% were women and 54% were men, and this was roughly the same over the three survey locations. We should note that 165 participants, 19% of the total, did not specify their gender (probably because the gender question on the survey was not located prominently and was easy to overlook), although at Wilshire and La Brea only 7% did not specify their gender. A broad range of ages was represented, with little variation across locations except for Wilshire and La Brea having

### Proyecto de una Clase de UCLA

¿Cómo oyó usted sobre este evento?  
(COMPRUEBE TODO EL QUE APLIQUESE, CIRCUNDE EL MÁS IMPORTANTE.)

Periódico: \_\_\_\_\_  Internet  
 Estación del Radio: \_\_\_\_\_  Aviador/Cartelera  
 Estación de la TV: \_\_\_\_\_  Amigos  
 Organización: \_\_\_\_\_  Familia  
 Teléfono/Mensaje de Texto  
 Otro: \_\_\_\_\_

¿Cuántos de sus amigos y su familia están aquí hoy? (CIRCUNDE SOLO UNO POR FAVOR.)  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9+

¿Si usted no estuviera aquí hoy, dónde usted estaría?  
 Casa  Trabajo  
 Escuela  Otro: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ocio

Código Postal: \_\_\_\_\_ Género: V/M Edad: \_\_\_\_\_

¿Qué idioma(s) hablan en su casa? \_\_\_\_\_

¿Es su primer vez en un evento como este? S/N

*Gracias por responder. Este encuentro es un parte de un proyecto de una clase graduada de UCLA.*

**UCLA**

### UCLA CLASS PROJECT

How did you hear about this event?  
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY, CIRCLE MOST IMPORTANT.)

Newspaper: \_\_\_\_\_  Internet  
 Radio Station: \_\_\_\_\_  Flyer/Billboard  
 TV Station: \_\_\_\_\_  Friends  
 Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  Family  
 Phone/Text Message  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How many of your friends and family are here today? (CIRCLE ONE ONLY PLEASE.)  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9+

If you weren't here today, where would you be?  
 Home  Work  
 School  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Recreation

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M/F Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) spoken at home: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first time at an event like this? Y/N

*Thank you for responding. This survey is part of a UCLA graduate course project.*

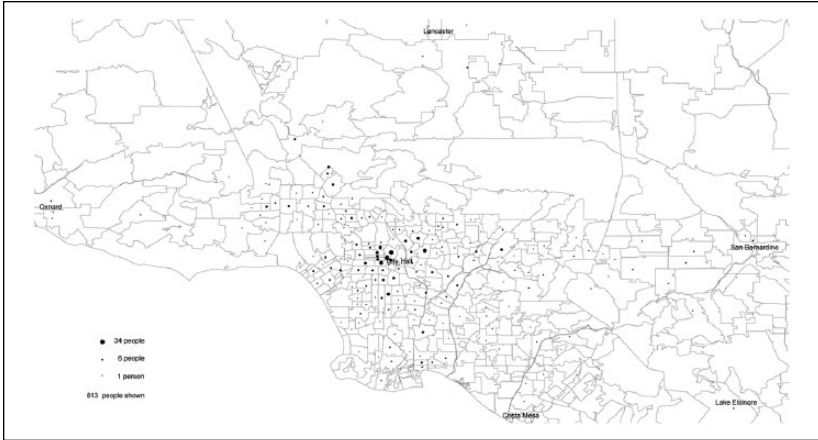
**UCLA**

**Figure 3.** The Spanish-English side of the survey (Korean and Tagalog were on the reverse).

**Table 1.** Participant Demographics.

	All Locations (N = 876)	Downtown (n = 307)	MacArthur Park (n = 437)	Wilshire and La Brea (n = 132)
% female/male	38/44	36/43	37/43	44/49
Median age	30	31	28	31
% 50 years old or older	9	9	7	<b>16</b>
18 years old or younger	11	10	12	11
% Spanish spoken at home	81	81	<b>85</b>	<b>67</b>
English spoken at home	45	44	<b>41</b>	<b>64</b>
Other language spoken at home	4	4	2	<b>7</b>
Spanish and English spoken at home	30	30	29	33
% filled out survey in Spanish	61	59	<b>66</b>	<b>48</b>

Note. Percentages in bold are those significantly different from those in the entire sample of 876 people, at 95% confidence level (two-tailed test).



**Figure 4.** Participant zip codes.

a higher percentage of people 50 years or older. In Table 1, and all other tables in this article except for Table 7, percentages shown in bold are significantly different from those in the entire sample of 876 people, in a two-tailed test at a 95% confidence level.

Language spoken at home varied more across locations. Participants at Wilshire and La Brea were less likely to speak Spanish and more likely to speak English or languages other than Spanish or English (among the 876 people surveyed, other languages reported were Mandarin Chinese, Taiwanese, French, Tagalog, German, Armenian, Latvian, Gujarati, Burmese, Urdu, Punjabi, Cantonese, Korean, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Hebrew, Slovak, Creole, Sign Language, Cebuano, Filipino, and Zapoteco). Similarly, a smaller percentage at Wilshire and La Brea filled in the Spanish version of the survey as opposed to the English version (all but 8 people in total, 1%, filled in either the English or Spanish version).

Participants' zip codes were very widespread, as shown in Figure 4. The great majority of zip codes in the Los Angeles area were represented and participants came from cities as far away as Lancaster, San Bernardino, Costa Mesa, and Oxnard, as far as 60 miles away from City Hall (a total of 813 people are shown; not shown are zip codes reported from Chicago, Salt Lake City, Chandler, Arizona, and the Bay Area town of El Cerrito, California, as well as 42 people who did not report a zip code and 15 who wrote a number not recognizable as a zip code). There is also significant centralization. The zip code with the highest number of participants (34 participants) was 90026, which neighbors 90057, the zip code that contains MacArthur Park and had the second highest number (32 participants). These two zip codes along with

**Table 2.** Characteristics of Participants' Zip Codes.

	All Locations (N = 813)	Downtown (n = 288)	MacArthur Park (n = 397)	Wilshire and La Brea (n = 128)	LA Times Festival of Books (N = 270)
Household income	\$35,028	\$37,065	\$32,777	\$37,429	\$53,617
% Hispanic or Latino	54	53	56	50	28
White	42	44	40	42	63
Black	9	8	10	11	6
Asian	12	13	11	13	12
% foreign-born	44	42	45	43	29
% born in Latin America	30	28	33	28	13

Source. U.S. Census 2000.

the four other zip codes neighboring 90057 together had a total of 150 participants, 18% of the total shown in Figure 4.

If we made three more zip code maps, one for each of the three survey locations, they would be roughly similar to Figure 4, except that participants surveyed at Wilshire and La Brea, although still widely dispersed, were much less likely to come from far flung locations such as Oxnard and Costa Mesa. In other words, the difference between Wilshire and La Brea participants and those at the other two locations was mainly that Wilshire and La Brea had almost no participants from the extended periphery.

Table 2 shows characteristics of the participants' zip codes, compiled using 2000 U.S. Census results on each participant zip code and then averaging over all participants. For example, to get the \$35,028 household income number, we took the median household income in each of the participants' zip codes and averaged this over all participants shown in Figure 4. Table 2 does not say anything directly about participants themselves; we did not ask participants about their income or race. The main result here is simply that participants surveyed at the three different locations came from roughly similar parts of the Los Angeles area, at least in terms of household income, race, and nativity.

As a comparison, the last column of Table 2 shows zip code characteristics of 270 people at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books held on the UCLA campus on Sunday, April 30, 2006, the day before the May 1 protests (we surveyed 283 people in total at the book fair, but 13 did not report valid zip codes). We did this survey as a pilot, to test our survey form and make corrections. The Festival of Books, a yearly event, draws people throughout



**Table 3.** How Participants Heard About the Event.

	All Locations (N = 876)	Downtown (n = 307)	MacArthur Park (n = 437)	Wilshire and La Brea (n = 132)
% who heard from TV	59	56	60	61
Radio	58	56	59	58
Friends	35	32	36	39
Newspapers	34	34	32	39
Family	27	26	27	27
Internet	19	16	19	<b>29</b>
Organization	15	15	16	14
Flyer/billboard	9	7	11	9
Phone/text message	7	5	7	9

Note. Percentages in bold are those significantly different from those in the entire sample of 876 people, at 95% confidence level (two-tailed test).

the Los Angeles area, and Table 2 shows that its participants came from areas with higher incomes and a higher percentage of whites, and a lower percentage of foreign-born and Latinos, compared with the areas where May 1 participants came from. The Festival of Books likely appealed to a more middle-class and English-speaking public but was still a widely advertised community event and not at all “exclusive” or “upscale”; thus especially in comparison with the Festival of Books, the differences among the three May 1 locations were small.

Respondents were asked to check off all the various ways that they heard about the May 1 marches, and Table 3 shows the results. Television and radio dominate and friends and newspapers are also important. Just more than one-fourth heard from family and roughly one-fifth heard through the Internet. The responses were very similar across the three survey locations, except that participants at Wilshire and La Brea were much more likely to have heard through the Internet.

As a comparison, Benjamin-Alvarado, DeSipio, and Montoya (2009) found that email, the Internet, and text messages were crucial for organizing immigrant rights actions that took place in Nebraska on April 10, 2006, including a march of 15,000 in Omaha. In Los Angeles on May 1, however, these “newer” forms of communication were less important than the “older” mass media of radio, television, and newspapers.

In our survey, we unfortunately did not include a specific “Church” check box. In interviews with Latino activists nationwide who organized immigrant

**Table 4.** Where Participants Would Have Been Otherwise, Friends and Family, and First-Time Participation.

	All Locations (N = 876)	Downtown (n = 307)	MacArthur Park (n = 437)	Wilshire and La Brea (n = 132)
% who would have been at work	54	<b>62</b>	54	<b>36</b>
Home	30	<b>22</b>	30	<b>51</b>
School	15	14	15	15
Other	4	3	3	5
Recreation	1	1	1	1
% with four or more friends and family	66	<b>63</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>65</b>
% with nine or more friends and family	32	<b>34</b>	31	30
% first-time participants	44	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>42</b>

Note. Percentages in bold are those significantly different from those in the entire sample of 876 people, at 95% confidence level (two-tailed test).

rights actions in the spring of 2006, Rim (2009) found that activists publicized marches and rallies in churches, in particular Catholic churches. The Catholic Church was perhaps the most important institution in the mass mobilization of Chicago's Mexican-Americans (Davis, Martinez, and Warner 2010). Similarly, in a 2006 survey of Latinos nationwide, Barreto et al. (2009) found that Catholic Latinos were more likely than non-Catholic Latinos to have participated in immigrant rights marches. We did have a check box for "Organization," and a church might be considered an "organization," but we do not know how many of our respondents thought so. Of the 39 respondents who wrote a specific organization name on the survey form, only one person wrote "Church" and one person wrote "Iglesia" ("church" in Spanish), as compared with, for example, three people who wrote CHIRLA (Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles) and three people who wrote MIWON (Multiethnic Immigrant Workers Organizing Network). We also had an "Other" check box; among the 37 respondents who wrote an entry in the "Other" field, two people wrote "Church," one person wrote "Church group," and one person wrote "Bishop." So we did not find strong evidence for the importance of mobilization through churches, although perhaps we did not find it because we did not ask for it.

As shown in Table 4, the majority of survey respondents Downtown (whom we surveyed from noon to 2:30 p.m.) and at MacArthur Park (whom

we surveyed from 2:40 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.) would have been at work had they not been at the marches, compared with just 36% of people at Wilshire and La Brea (whom we surveyed from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.). People at Wilshire and La Brea were more likely to have been home otherwise. At all locations, roughly 15% would have been at school otherwise. Only 8 out of 876 people surveyed would have engaged in recreation otherwise; very few people saw the protest as a trade-off with recreational activity.

Table 4 also shows that the May 1 marches were very “social”: Roughly two-thirds of participants had four or more friends and family at the event, and roughly one-third had nine or more, with little variation across locations. Across all three locations, only 20 respondents (2%) came to the protest alone. As a comparison, among the people we surveyed at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, only 32% had four or more friends and family at the event, only 3% had nine or more friends and family, and 7% came alone. Finally, 44% of all participants said that this was their first time at an event like this, with little variation across locations.

To summarize, although the two May 1 immigration reform marches were separate events organized by different coalitions and were framed quite differently, the two marches had similar populations. People surveyed Downtown, the location of the first march, and in MacArthur Park, where the second march began, were similar in almost all respects. People surveyed at Wilshire and La Brea had more English speakers and fewer Spanish speakers, had more people 50 years old or older, were more likely to have heard about the marches through the Internet, and were less likely to have taken off from work. In all other ways, people at Wilshire and La Brea were similar to people at the other two locations. As the Wilshire and La Brea rally and the march beginning at MacArthur Park were organized by the same group, all participant differences across locations can be understood as differences among participants organized by the same group. For example, the greater proportion of English speakers and people 50 and older at Wilshire and La Brea might be explained not because they were mobilized differently but because the Wilshire and La Brea rally had English-language speeches and involved less walking.

## **How Different Subgroups Heard About the Event**

Table 5 shows how men and women and different language groups heard about the May 1 marches. First, women participants were more likely to hear about the event, from all sources, than men participants. The female–male difference was particularly large for friends, family, the Internet, and flyers and billboards. Women also were more likely to attend the marches in larger groups; 38% of women had nine or more friends and family at the event, as opposed to 29% of men.

**Table 5.** How People Heard About the Event, by Sex and Language.

	All (N = 876)	Women (n = 329)	Men (n = 382)	Spanish and Not English (n = 445)	English and Not Spanish (n = 136)	Spanish and English (n = 262)	Spanish and English Women (n = 114)
% who heard from TV	59	61	57	62	<b>40</b>	65	68
Radio	58	61	57	59	<b>40</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>69</b>
Friends	35	<b>43</b>	32	<b>29</b>	38	<b>42</b>	<b>48</b>
Newspapers	34	36	34	<b>29</b>	<b>43</b>	38	38
Family	27	<b>33</b>	24	23	24	<b>35</b>	<b>43</b>
Internet	19	<b>26</b>	18	<b>10</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>36</b>
Organization	15	19	12	12	19	18	<b>22</b>
Flyer/billboard	9	<b>13</b>	7	<b>6</b>	9	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>
Phone/text message	7	8	6	6	6	9	11
% with nine or more friends and family	32	<b>38</b>	29	34	<b>23</b>	35	39

Note. Percentages in bold are those significantly different from those in the entire sample of 876 people, at 95% confidence level (two-tailed test).

Spanish speakers and English speakers substantially overlapped: 37% of participants who spoke Spanish at home also spoke English and 66% of participants who spoke English at home also spoke Spanish (only six people in our survey spoke neither English nor Spanish at home, and 27 people did not report a language). Thus, we divide participants into people who speak Spanish and not English, people who speak English and not Spanish, and people who speak both. Table 5 shows that people who spoke Spanish and not English reported TV and radio relatively more often and people who spoke English and not Spanish reported newspapers and the Internet relatively more often.

Some respondents indicated the specific media sources from which they heard about the marches. Of the 43 people who indicated specific TV stations, 79% indicated Spanish-language TV stations; of the 60 people who indicated specific radio stations, 68% indicated Spanish-language radio stations; finally, of the 30 people who indicated specific newspapers, 57% indicated Spanish-language newspapers. In other words, based on this small subset of the sample, the relative influence of Spanish-language versus English-language media was greater for TV and radio than newspapers, which corresponds with Table 5.

One interesting result in Table 5 is that people who spoke both Spanish and English reported hearing from more information sources than people

who spoke Spanish and not English and people who spoke English and not Spanish. In other words, Spanish-English bilinguals seemed to benefit from being in two media environments; compared with people who spoke English and not Spanish, they benefited from TV and radio, and compared with people who spoke Spanish and not English, they benefited from newspapers and especially the Internet. On top of this, they were also more likely to have heard from friends and family than the other two groups, benefiting perhaps from being in two social environments. (We take the liberty of using the term “Spanish-English bilingual” to refer to people who speak Spanish and English at home, even though nine people reported speaking a third language, for example, French, Italian, Cantonese, or German, in addition to Spanish and English at home.)

Several scholars, along with protest organizers and both prospective and retrospective media coverage of the May 1 marches, have argued for the primacy of Spanish-language radio in mobilizing participants (Pedraza, Segura, and Bowler 2011; Ramírez 2011), and Table 5 confirms this. However, a similar number of respondents, for all language groups, also heard about the protests from television.<sup>4</sup> Also, even among people who spoke English and not Spanish, radio was the third most important factor, only slightly behind newspapers and television (39.7% heard from radio, 40.4% from television, and 42.7% from newspapers). Putting this another way, Spanish-English bilinguals were somewhat more likely to have heard from radio (68%) than people who spoke Spanish and not English (59%). It is possible that speaking English makes you more interested in Spanish-language radio, and it is also possible that Spanish-English bilinguals simply consume more media of all kinds, but this result points to the additional importance of English-language radio.

The tendency of women to report more information sources and the tendency for Spanish-English bilinguals to report more information sources combine when we look at Spanish-English bilingual women. Spanish-English bilingual women reported more information sources than all other groups in Table 5, the sole exception being that people who spoke English and not Spanish were more likely to have heard from newspapers. Spanish-English bilingual women in particular were more likely to hear from friends, family, and the Internet compared with the other groups, and were more likely to have had nine or more friends and family at the marches. We can therefore reasonably conjecture that Spanish-English bilingual women are “connectors” who occupy central positions in friendship and family networks and are also more connected to media of all kinds. Another possible conclusion (which is not necessarily opposed) is that Spanish-English bilingual women needed more “support” compared with other groups; in other words, a monolingual man might have shown up at the march having heard from only one media source, while a bilingual woman might have required information

**Table 6.** How People Heard About the Event by Age and Where You Would Be Otherwise.

	All (N = 876)	Age 50 and Older (n = 79)	Age 18 and Younger (n = 99)	School Otherwise (n = 129)	Work Otherwise (n = 470)	Home Otherwise (n = 265)
% who heard from TV	59	62	65	53	59	63
Radio	58	52	62	54	59	61
Friends	35	<b>22</b>	<b>48</b>	42	31	38
Newspapers	34	36	34	<b>42</b>	33	32
Family	27	<b>13</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>33</b>
Internet	19	15	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>16</b>	20
Organization	15	17	12	17	16	14
Flyer/billboard	9	6	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	7	10
Phone/text message	7	7	<b>13</b>	10	6	7
% with nine or more friends and family	32	27	<b>44</b>	<b>47</b>	31	28

Note. Percentages in bold are those significantly different from those in the entire sample of 876 people, at 95% confidence level (two-tailed test).

from many sources, and many accompanying friends, before she participated. But the difference in women's and men's participation was not large: among participants who reported their gender, 46% were women. In a national survey of Latinos, Barreto et al. (2009) found that men and women participated in 2006 immigrant rights rallies at the same rate. Thus, it is plausible to conclude that Spanish-English bilingual women were the "connectors" behind the massive participation in the May 1 marches.

Table 6 looks at how different age groups and how people with different alternatives (whether a person would be at school, work, or home otherwise) were mobilized. People aged 50 and older differed from the average person in that they were less likely to hear about the marches from family members and friends. People 18 and younger were much more likely than average to hear from family and friends; they were also more likely to have heard through "low-tech" flyers and billboards as well as Internet and phone and text message. Television and radio were important for both old and young, and despite rapidly declining newspaper readership among the young in recent years (Peiser 2000), people 18 and younger were just as likely as the average person to hear about the marches from newspapers. For people who would have been at school otherwise, reliance on newspapers (and also the Internet and flyers and billboards) was even stronger. People who would have been at work otherwise were mobilized similarly to the average person,

**Table 7.** How People Age 25 and Above Heard About the Event, by Sex and Language.

	Age 25 and Above (n = 615)	Women Age 25 and Above (n = 221)	Men Age 25 and Above (n = 256)	Spanish and Not English Age 25 and Above (n = 299)	English and Not Spanish Age 25 and Above (n = 107)	Spanish and English Age 25 and Above (n = 179)	Spanish and English Women Age 25 and Above (n = 72)
% who heard from TV	57	60	53	61	<b>42</b>	62	67
Radio	58	61	58	59	<b>41</b>	<b>68</b>	68
Friends	30	<b>36</b>	26	<b>24</b>	36	35	38
Newspapers	34	36	35	31	42	35	35
Family	20	24	17	16	18	<b>28</b>	<b>33</b>
Internet	16	<b>22</b>	14	<b>7</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>31</b>
Organization	15	18	12	12	20	17	<b>24</b>
Flyer/billboard	6	9	4	<b>3</b>	6	9	11
Phone/text message	5	5	5	5	4	4	3
% with nine or more friends and family	29	<b>36</b>	24	31	21	32	38

Note. Percentages in bold are those significantly different from those in the sample of 615 people age 25 and above, at 95% confidence level (two-tailed test).

except they were less likely to have heard from friends and family. People who would have been home otherwise also were not particularly distinctive except that they were more likely to have heard from family.

As younger people are much more likely to hear from family and friends and consume more of almost all media, it is reasonable to consider whether this fact explains our conjecture that Spanish-English bilinguals, especially Spanish-English bilingual women, were “connectors.” It is true that Spanish-English bilinguals were generally younger than people who spoke English and not Spanish: among Spanish-English bilinguals, 32% were younger than 25, while among people who spoke English and not Spanish, only 21% were younger than 25. (Among people who spoke Spanish and not English, 33% were younger than 25.) Spanish-English bilingual women were even younger: 37% were younger than 25.

However, Table 7 considers only people age 25 and older, and we get the same pattern as in Table 5 before, although not quite as strongly. (In Table 7, percentages in boldface are those significantly different from those in the sample of all people age 25 and above; in other words, it is as if we did not survey anyone under the age of 25.) Again, among people 25 and above, women are more likely than men to hear from all media and friends and

family. Again, among people 25 and above, Spanish-English bilinguals, compared with people who spoke English and not Spanish, benefited from TV and radio. Again, among people 25 and above, Spanish-English bilinguals, compared with people who spoke Spanish and not English, benefited from newspapers and especially the Internet. Spanish-English bilinguals were more likely to hear from family than the other two groups, although people who spoke English and not Spanish were slightly more likely to have heard from friends. Among people 25 and above, as before but not quite as strongly, Spanish-English bilingual women, compared with all other groups in Table 7, were more or roughly equally likely to have heard from all media sources (with the exception that people who spoke English and not Spanish were more likely to have heard from newspapers), were more likely to have heard from friends and family, and were more likely to have nine or more friends and family at the marches. Thus, our conjecture that Spanish-English bilingual women were the “connectors” behind the May 1 marches is not merely a result of Spanish-English bilinguals, and bilingual women, being younger.

## **How First-Time Protesters Differed from Repeat Protesters**

A large fraction of our participants, 44%, said that this was their first time at an event like this. We interpret this to mean these respondents did not participate in the March 25 protest or other protests, demonstrations, or marches. How do these “first-time” protesters differ from the “repeat protesters,” 46% of our participants, who said they had been to an event like this before? (Ten percent did not answer whether it was their first time or not.) Compared with a person who has attended a similar event before, a first-time protester faces additional costs, including the risk of publicly exposing one’s immigration status for the first time, the risk of alienating an employer for the first time, and simply the “psychic” cost of doing something unaccustomed (Walgrave and Verhulst 2009).

Thus, we might expect that a person is more likely to be a first-time participant if she has lower additional costs to participating or greater benefits from participating. For example, a person who would otherwise be at home as opposed to work would not lose a day’s wages and, thus, might be more likely to protest for the first time. A person who lives close by, with lower transportation costs, and a younger person, who is less likely to support a family, might be more likely to protest for the first time. Also, a person with greater social support, who has many other friends and family at the marches, or who hears about the marches from friends and family, might be more



**Table 8.** First-Time Protesters Versus Repeat Protesters.

	All (N = 876)	First-Time (n = 384)	Repeat (n = 402)
% female	38	39	40
Male	44	44	47
Gender not reported	19	16	<b>13</b>
Median age	30	30	29
% 50 years old or older	9	8	11
25 years old or younger	34	35	34
18 years old or younger	11	11	12
Spanish and not English spoken at home	51	<b>57</b>	<b>44</b>
English and not Spanish spoken at home	16	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>
Spanish and English spoken at home	30	29	33
% filled out survey in Spanish	61	<b>67</b>	<b>52</b>
% who heard from TV	59	63	55
Radio	58	58	61
Friends	35	33	<b>40</b>
Newspapers	34	<b>29</b>	<b>40</b>
Family	27	24	<b>32</b>
Internet	19	17	<b>24</b>
Organization	15	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>
Flyer/billboard	9	8	11
Phone/text message	7	7	6
% with nine or more friends and family	32	32	35
% who would have been at work	54	54	52
Home	30	30	30
School	15	13	17

Note. Percentages in bold are those significantly different from those in the entire sample of 876 people, at 95% confidence level (two-tailed test).

likely to protest for the first time. Finally, a person who greatly values the act of protesting, who has a large “affinity” to the issue of immigrant rights, might be more likely to participate for the first time. A repeat protester, who incurs lower costs, might protest even if his affinity to the issue is not particularly strong.

Table 8 shows the differences between first-time protesters and repeat protesters. It turns out that first-time protesters were not generally younger than repeat protesters and were not more likely to hear from friends and

family about the marches or have lots of friends and family at the marches. They also did not have lower transportation costs; their zip code distribution looks very similar to the zip code distribution of all participants shown in Figure 4, with many widespread zip codes represented. They were also not more likely to otherwise be at home.

The largest difference between first-timers and repeat protesters was that first-timers were more likely to fill out the survey form in Spanish. Similarly, first-timers were more likely to speak Spanish and not English at home. In other words, if the May 1 marches mobilized and politicized an entirely new group of people, the impact was strongest among people who spoke Spanish and not English.

This result is consistent with the interpretation that people who speak Spanish and not English, who are possibly more likely recent immigrants, cared more about immigration rights relative to the other language groups, and this was enough to overcome the additional cost of participating in a march for the first time. After all, the May 1 marches were organized in response to the passage of HR 4437, the "Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005," in the U.S. House of Representatives. Although this proposed bill would have affected immigrants to the United States from all countries, it specifically targeted immigration from countries south of the border; for example, a major topic of debate about the bill was the construction of a 700-mile fence along the U.S.–Mexican border. Rim (2009) argued that the bill's explicit focus on Latinos explains in part why many more Latinos than Asian-Americans participated in May 1 actions nationwide: although they would have been materially affected, Asian-Americans were not targeted with specific language in the bill.

Table 9 separates the first-timer versus repeat protester distinction across language groups. In all three language groups, first-timers were more likely to have been mobilized by television than repeat protesters, but this difference was largest by far among people who spoke English and not Spanish. If we look at people who spoke Spanish and not English, first-timers were less likely to have heard from newspapers as well as social sources such as friends, family, and organizations. Repeat protesters who spoke English and not Spanish were the most "organized" of all six subgroups in Table 9, with 27% hearing about the marches from an organization. Among Spanish-English bilinguals, the difference between first-timers and repeat protesters was partly media consumption (repeat protesters were more likely to have heard from newspapers and radio) and partly social (repeat protesters were more likely to hear from family members). In other words, if we explain the difference between first-timers and repeat protesters in terms of television versus other media, this explanation best applies to people who speak English and not Spanish. If we explain the difference in terms of sociality,

**Table 9.** How People Heard About the Event, by Language and First-Time Versus Repeat Protesters.

	Spanish and Not English First-Time (n = 218)	Spanish and Not English Repeat (n = 175)	English and Not Spanish First-Time (n = 45)	English and Not Spanish Repeat (n = 84)	Spanish and English First-Time (n = 112)	Spanish and English Repeat (n = 134)
% who heard from TV	65	61	53	<b>35</b>	64	63
Radio	59	62	<b>31</b>	<b>43</b>	66	<b>72</b>
Friends	<b>26</b>	36	38	38	42	<b>45</b>
Newspapers	<b>25</b>	34	38	<b>44</b>	29	<b>46</b>
Family	<b>19</b>	29	24	25	33	<b>40</b>
Internet	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	24	<b>38</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>
Organization	<b>8</b>	16	7	<b>27</b>	14	<b>22</b>
Flyer/billboard	6	6	4	12	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>
Phone/text message	5	6	4	6	11	8
% with nine or more friends and family	34	37	<b>18</b>	25	34	<b>40</b>

Note. Percentages in bold are those significantly different from those in the entire sample of 876 people, at 95% confidence level (two-tailed test).

this explanation best applies to people who speak Spanish and not English. If we explain the difference in terms of organization, this explanation applies well to all three language groups, although most strongly for people who speak English and not Spanish.

In any case, the main story in Table 9 is simply the 218 people, one-fourth of all the people we surveyed, who spoke Spanish and not English and showed up for the first time. If we extrapolate to the estimated half million people total participants in Los Angeles, then roughly 125,000 people who spoke Spanish and not English were newly politicized in Los Angeles on May 1.

## Study Limitations

### Survey Design and Sampling

A more detailed survey might have revealed more differences across locations. We designed the survey on Friday, April 28, 2006, tested it at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books on Sunday, April 30, and revised it in time for Monday, May 1. To make it easy to take, the survey was brief, impersonal, and apolitical, with no questions about respondents’ ethnicity, socio-economic status, immigration status, political beliefs, or their specific reasons for participating. We can be confident that those households that spoke only Spanish were likely Latino and that households that spoke both Spanish and English could be multigenerational Latino households or biracial households,

but the English-speaking households in our sample could be Latino or non-Latino. We did not ask respondents for their country of origin and, thus, cannot say whether the protests mobilized a pan-Latino population (Barreto et al. 2009; Pallares and Flores-González 2010) or had differential impacts across subgroups of different national origin (Mohamed 2010). We also gathered data solely on participants and therefore cannot talk about differences between participants and nonparticipants.

Our study neither can substantiate whether the intramovement frame dispute on the economic boycott reduced participation overall nor can it evaluate whether the framing efforts had an aggregating effect on mobilization. However, because the data demonstrate similarities of rally participants across event spaces divided by the internal frame dispute, we contend the rival frames on the boycott did not result in differential mobilization across event spaces, questioning the effectiveness of leadership in prescribing specific strategies of protest. Nevertheless, we cannot rule out the overall success of the multiple framing strategies of the movement's leadership in motivating overall participation (Snow and Benford 1988) because our survey did not capture data measuring whether one frame or another resonated with rally participants.

Systematic methods for collecting random samples of protest participants have improved in recent years.<sup>5</sup> Another study of May 1 protests in Chicago used a multistage block sampling technique to give respondents an equal chance of being selected for the study (Pallares and Flores-González 2010). Unlike the Pallares and Flores-González (2010) study, our study did not have a systematic sampling procedure to ensure we collected a representative sample. However, at each protest site, we distributed surveys from locations that were likely to reach a representative sample of the protest population. At the morning protest, interviewers surveyed participants from two locations on the march route. At the afternoon protest, interviewers were positioned at the start of the march route. Finally, at the Wilshire and La Brea celebration, interviewers conducted surveys near the stage where the second march ended and new participants congregated for speeches and live entertainment. Furthermore, at each location, interviews were conducted for several hours, allowing access to broad swaths of protestors.

### *Interviewer Bias*

An interviewer's personal characteristics might have influenced the set of people she interviewed. For example, a woman interviewer might have been more comfortable asking women to take the survey. Recall that the main difference between the three interview locations is that people at Wilshire and La Brea were more likely to speak English and less likely to speak Spanish.

**Table 10.** Percentage Who Speak Spanish and Not English at Home by Interviewer.

Interviewer	<i>n</i>	Downtown ( <i>n</i> = 307)	MacArthur Park ( <i>n</i> = 437)	Wilshire and La Brea ( <i>n</i> = 132)
KD and MQ, Spanish-speaking women; HQ and MB, Spanish-speaking men	203	51.7		
KG, Spanish-speaking woman; GG, Spanish-speaking man; MC, not-Spanish-speaking man	104	49.0		
KD and MQ, Spanish-speaking women; HQ and MB, Spanish-speaking men	150		59.3	
KG and RD, Spanish-speaking women; GG and MK, Spanish-speaking men; MC, not-Spanish-speaking man	199		58.8	
AS, not-Spanish-speaking woman	42		33.3	
RE, not-Spanish-speaking man	46		54.3	
RD, Spanish-speaking woman	63			31.7
DD, not-Spanish-speaking man	46			39.1
RE, not-Spanish-speaking man	23			26.1

This result could possibly have been driven completely by interviewer bias, because none of our 13 volunteers interviewed people at all three locations. In this section, we consider two kinds of bias, language and gender. Of course, if all of our interviewers were biased to the same degree, this bias would not be detectable using our data alone; however, we can check whether a given interviewer may have selected more women or more Spanish speakers, for example, relative to other interviewers.

Not all interviewers spoke Spanish (all spoke English), and this might affect an interviewer’s ability to communicate particularly with respondents who spoke Spanish and not English. Table 10 shows this percentage of respondents who spoke Spanish and not English by interviewer.

In Downtown, the surveying was conducted by two separate teams; unfortunately, we did not keep track by individual interviewer. Among the two teams, all interviewers but one spoke Spanish fluently. At MacArthur Park, two more individuals, MK and RD, joined one of the teams and also two new individuals, AS and RE, started surveying. At Wilshire and La Brea, only one of the three interviewers spoke Spanish.

Looking at Table 10, there is little difference between the two teams, which is perhaps reassuring. The largest outlier is AS, who did not speak Spanish: 33.3% of the people AS surveyed at MacArthur Park spoke Spanish and not English at home, a much lower proportion than among the people the two teams and RE surveyed. Also, at Wilshire and La Brea, interviewer DD had a lower percentage and interviewer RE a higher percentage, compared with the mean at that location (33.3%). To raise AS's percentage to the MacArthur Park mean (56.1%), AS would have to survey an additional 22 people who spoke Spanish and not English. This would be a large "correction" for AS, who surveyed a total of 42 people, but it would be only 2.5% of our total 876 people surveyed. Similarly, for DD to raise his percentage to the mean at Wilshire and La Brea, he would have to survey three more people who spoke Spanish and not English, and for RE to lower his percentage to the mean, he would need to survey four fewer people who spoke Spanish and not English. In other words, if individual interviewers were biased, their bias only affected the relatively small number of people they surveyed, with small effects on the total sample. Finally, if we consider interviewer RE, the only person for which we have individual data at more than one location, his data alone is consistent with our finding that people at Wilshire and La Brea were less likely to speak Spanish than at MacArthur Park.

Table 11 shows the percentage of women and men by interviewer (recall that 19% of our 876 total respondents did not report their gender). In Downtown, again the two teams had similar results. At MacArthur Park, among the people the first team interviewed who reported their gender, 46.4% were women, and among the people the second team interviewed who reported their gender, 46.7% were women. In other words, the gender ratio among the people interviewed by the first team and the people interviewed by the second team was roughly the same; the first team had a higher response rate for both genders, possibly due to greater prompting by the first team's interviewers. Among the MacArthur Park interviewers, the man RE interviewed more men than average and the woman AS more women than average. Among the Wilshire and La Brea interviewers, the woman RD interviewed more women than average and the man RE again interviewed more men (as did the man DD, to a lesser degree). Again, there is strong evidence for gender bias, but the impact on the overall sample is small. For example, RD's percentages at Wilshire and La Brea could be brought to the Wilshire and La Brea mean (43.9% women and 48.5% men) by surveying 15 additional men.

## **Conclusion**

Despite rivalry among organizers on how to frame the protest in Los Angeles (pro-boycott vs. antiboycott), we find that protest participants were similar

**Table II.** Percentage Women/Men by Interviewer.

Interviewer	<i>n</i>	Downtown ( <i>n</i> = 307)	MacArthur Park ( <i>n</i> = 437)	Wilshire and La Brea ( <i>n</i> = 132)
KD and MQ, Spanish-speaking women; HQ and MB, Spanish-speaking men	203	36.0/42.4		
KG, Spanish-speaking woman; GG, Spanish-speaking man; MC, not- Spanish-speaking man	104	36.5/44.2		
KD and MQ, Spanish-speaking women; HQ and MB, Spanish-speaking men	150		38.7/44.7	
KG and RD, Spanish-speaking women; GG and MK, Spanish-speaking men; MC, not-Spanish-speaking man	199		35.2/40.2	
AS, not-Spanish-speaking woman	42		40.5/40.5	
RE, not-Spanish-speaking man	46		32.6/47.8	
RD, Spanish-speaking woman	63			50.8/36.5
RE, not-Spanish-speaking man	46			37.0/60.9
DD, not-Spanish-speaking man	23			39.1/56.5

across protest sites organized by different groups; participants at the concluding rally at Wilshire and La Brea were different in some ways, but this rally was organized by the same people who organized the march starting at MacArthur Park. The finding that the two marches had similar participants has two important implications. Other studies of immigration rights actions nationwide in the spring of 2006, including Rim (2009) and Barreto et al. (2009), rely heavily on interviews of organizers and other “elites.” As march participants themselves transformed the day’s two separately organized events into “one big march,” the first implication is that we should be skeptical sometimes of elite representations. Second, coherent and unified framing is usually considered crucial to a movement’s success (e.g., Snow and Benford 1988). But despite the “frame dispute,” a historically large number of people participated, with few differences across event spaces, making us question whether organizers’ differing frames had any impact at all.

Some elites may have helped unify rather than divide. For example, Eduardo Sotelo, host of the radio program “*Piol’in por la Man’ana*,” who had a large following in the Latino community in Los Angeles, originally supported only the antiboycott march from MacArthur Park to Wilshire and La Brea, but changed his mind just days before and on the morning of May 1, canceled his morning show, and joined in the downtown rally (Cantania 2006).

Social movement participation often depends heavily on preexisting networks of friends and family (Fernandez and McAdam 1988; McAdam 1986), and the May 1 Los Angeles marches fit this pattern, with 32% of participants having nine or more friends and family also attending. Even among the “loneliest” subgroup we find, first-timers who spoke English and not Spanish, 18% had nine or more friends and family at the marches; in comparison, at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books a day earlier, only 3% had nine or more friends and family also at the event. We did not get any data on networks of friendships among participants, but we can speculate based on what we do know. Except for people 18 and younger and people who otherwise would have been at school, whom one might expect to attend with many friends and family, the most “connected” subgroup we detect is Spanish-English bilingual women. Spanish-English bilingual women heard about the marches more often from almost all media sources, as well as from friends and family, compared with other gender and language subgroups, and were the least lonely: 39% of Spanish-English bilingual women had nine or more friends and family also attending. The greater connectedness of Spanish-English bilinguals and Spanish-English bilingual women in particular remains even when we consider only people age 25 and above.

Our findings on the greater connectedness of Spanish-English bilingual women and their varied sources of information have a few implications that go beyond the scope of our study but are ripe for future research. First, our study is limited in examining one form of political participation: engaging in a public demonstration. If Spanish-English bilingual women contribute to mobilizing street marches, they can also impact mobilization efforts for other forms of participation (i.e., voting, contacting government officials). Relatedly, these connections can facilitate transfer of political knowledge. If Spanish-English bilingual women are more connected, they may have a unique opportunity to craft and deliver messages transmitting political knowledge. In addition, the greater exposure of Spanish-English bilingual women to multiple sources of information on the demonstrations is suggestive of the benefits of exposure to multiple (and potentially distinct) communication outlets as transmitters of political knowledge or as factors in opinion formation and subsequent political participation (e.g., Dawson 2003; Harris-Lacewell 2006).

It is perhaps obvious that greater language ability allows you to connect with more people. But this result suggests the political potency of being bilingual (and multilingual), especially in social mobilization. In an analysis of women activists in the Civil Rights Movement, Robnett (1996) argued that because men excluded women from titled leadership positions, women, such as Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and Diane Nash, instead became “bridge leaders,” organizers who crucially communicated and mediated between



“official” leadership and rank and file participants. Robnett argues that women, and a few men, played this role because they were excluded, but it is possible that women were also better at it; in other words, if women have better interpersonal communication skills than men, they might take on “bridging” roles even in the absence of sexism. Saying that bilingual participants in the May 1 marches were movement “leaders” would, of course, not be warranted, but we still can acknowledge that bilingual skills permits greater opportunities of bridging among different groups, for several possible reasons, including greater cross-cultural understanding as well as language ability. Robnett (1996, p. 1684, quoting from Crawford 1987) quoted Matthew Suarez as saying that Mississippi activist Annie Bell Robinson Devine “acted like a go-between with black male leaders [notably preachers] and young folks [who resisted their authority] . . . Mrs. Devine was a country diplomat.” Diplomats are conversant in multiple languages. Perhaps even more relevant to the population mobilized in the May 2006 marches, Beltrán (2010) has chronicled a long history of Chicana women educating fellow movement participants. Our findings on the connectedness of Spanish-English bilingual women are consistent with this history.

We can compare the May 1, 2006 marches in Los Angeles and the 2011 mobilization in Tahrir Square in Cairo, which were both of a very large scale, with roughly one-half to one million participants. The Tahrir Square mobilization reportedly relied heavily on Internet communication, such as Facebook and Twitter, while the May 1 marches relied on traditional media, TV, radio, and newspapers, with only 19% of participants saying that they heard about the marches through the Internet and 7% by phone or text message. In Cairo, traditional media were, of course, state-run, so organizers had little choice but to use the Internet, while in Los Angeles, the traditional media were supportive overall.<sup>6</sup> Unusually, and in a manner similar to how newspapers mobilized 300,000 people for the White March in Brussels in October 1999 (Walgrave and Manssens 2000), newspapers including the *Los Angeles Times* published the start times and locations of the May 1 marches in advance (Watanabe, Gorman, and Cleland 2006).

In Los Angeles, language was important in hearing about the marches from the Internet: The percentage of people who heard from the Internet was 32% among people who spoke English and not Spanish and 28% among Spanish-English bilinguals but only 10% among people who spoke Spanish and not English. In a 2005 survey, Bendixen and Associates found that only 24% of Hispanics had Internet access, as compared with, for example, 49% of African-Americans and 67% of Asian-Americans, while 38% of Hispanics were primary consumers of ethnic (presumably Spanish-language) television, as compared with 14% of African-Americans and 13% of Asian-Americans. In other words, in 2005, Latinos were more

oriented toward the traditional media, TV, and radio and less toward the Internet. But now in 2014, it is hard to imagine a march of similar scale in Los Angeles without the Internet having a much greater role; for example, Univision Networks president César Conde stated in 2011 that “Latinos have adopted social media at a faster rate than the rest of the population” (McGirt 2011). Future scholars may look back at the time period between 2006 and 2011 as the historical transition from old media to Internet-based media for mass mobilization and might conclude that it was not older Internet tools, such as email and static web pages, that were decisive, but social networking platforms, such as Facebook (available to the general public in September 2006) and Twitter (launched in July 2006), that enabled people to publish messages easily and frequently and perhaps create both the “local” common knowledge and the widespread “reach” necessary for mobilization (Chwe 1999; Goldstone 2001).

In the May 1 marches, radio played an important role, in possibly this last hurrah for old media. If Spanish-language radio was crucial, the significance of English-language radio should not be underestimated. As mentioned earlier, for people who spoke English and not Spanish, radio was the third most important information source, slightly behind the most important, newspapers (39.7% heard from radio and 42.7% from newspapers). Also, as mentioned before, Spanish-English bilinguals were more likely (68%) to have heard from radio than people who spoke Spanish and not English (59%). Finally, 61 people wrote down specific radio stations. La Nueva 101.9, a Spanish-language radio station that hosted Eduardo Sotelo’s program, was most commonly mentioned (14 mentions) but a close second (13 mentions) was KPFK 90.3, a Pacifica Network station broadcasting mainly in English. In third and fourth place were Spanish-language radio stations La Raza 97.9 (9 mentions) and Super Estrella 107.1 (9 mentions).

In Los Angeles on May 1, 2006, marchers chanted and held banners saying, “Hoy marchamos, mañana votamos”—“Today we march, tomorrow we vote,” in response to the U.S. House passage of HR 4437. Previous anti-immigrant legislation in California led to an increase in Latino voter turnout (Barreto and Woods 2000), increased naturalization of Latino immigrants (Scott 2000), and the mobilization of newly naturalized Latinos to vote (Pantoja, Ramírez, and Segura 2001). Thus, we can expect that the May 1 marches newly politicized participants into voting and further activism. First-time protesters were more likely to speak Spanish and not English; as mentioned earlier, we can extrapolate that roughly 125,000 people who spoke Spanish and not English were newly politicized in Los Angeles in a single day. First-time protesters were informed mainly by television and radio; to get them to show up again as repeat protesters, our findings suggest the

importance of social sources including organizations and friends and family.

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### **Notes**

1. See also the study reported in Pallares and Flores-González (2010), which includes survey data of protest participants gathered at the May 1 protest in Chicago.
2. We suspect our estimate is conservative given the possibility that first-time participants may have been less likely to participate in our study, leading to an undercount of newly politicized Angelenos.
3. All of the event times mentioned here are very inexact. Watanabe, Gorman, and Cleeland (2006) reported the downtown march was scheduled to begin at noon, but a graphic printed in the same newspaper stated the start time was 11:00 a.m. In the downtown march, people started marching down Broadway well before the event was expected to start, and many people congregated in MacArthur Park well before the start of the second march at 4:00 p.m.
4. Survey data from the Chicago study reported more than half (56%) of protesters heard about the march via television, compared with 49% reporting to have heard via radio and 28% reporting to have heard via newspapers (Flores-González et al. 2006). Given the limitations of our survey instrument and the convincing narrative on the influence of radio disc jockeys (DJs) mobilizing support, we do not go so far as to say television was equivalent in importance as radio in Los Angeles.

Media coverage of the March 25 protest credited radio DJs for mobilizing the vast majority of participants. It is possible that television coverage of the May 1 marches focused on Spanish-language radio DJs as mobilizers. If this is true, then radio DJs would be the primary driver not only of protest coverage but also its content.

5. See Walgrave and Verhulst (2011) for a review of surveying protesters and an innovative research design proposal.
6. See also Aparicio (2010) for more on the role of the news media (mainstream and Latino) in Chicago's immigration mobilization.

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