

Beyond Their Comfort Zone: Koch Network Outreach to Latinos and Millennials

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Abstract

How do politically conservative organizations recruit and mobilize demographic groups that are not core constituencies of the Republican Party? In this paper, we investigate the efforts among organizations on the political right to reach out to Latinos and Millennials. We begin with a discussion about the importance of studying extra-party organizations on the political right. Using a unique dataset, we examine the outreach strategies of two Koch-funded extra-party organizations – The Libre Initiative and Generation Opportunity. Through an analysis of outreach events, our work shows that the two organizations have developed different strategies for reaching out to Millennials and Latinos. Libre, an organization that targets a group that is less aligned with the Republican Party’s agenda than Millennials, relies on soft outreach that requires little to no ideological commitment from attendees. It partners with Latino-serving organizations to build trust and get an audience with potentially weary attendees. Unlike Libre, GenOpp dedicates a greater share of its resources to engaging its target audience – Millennials – in political activities.

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1 Introduction

On October 25, 2014, Generation Opportunity (GenOpp), a non-profit that targets millennials, invited University of Central Florida college students in the Orlando, FL area to engage in Halloween festivities and learn about the Affordable Care Act (ACA) through a “Creepy Obama Carenival.” The organization described the event in the following way:

“Come one, come all! Come see the freakiest show on Earth! It’s no secret that Obamacare hasn’t lived up to the hype: All across the country premiums have spiked, millions have lost their insurance and their doctors, and, what’s worse, we’re continually being sold a bundle of lies about how great Obamacare has been for our generation! It’s time to expose Obamacare for the freak show that it really is.”

As the description above shows, the organization’s message is simple and clear: the ACA has not benefitted young adults. To further attract UCF students, GenOpp offered, “pizza, prizes, and swag.” Once at the Carenival, students could participate in or watch various “freakshows,” such as an acrobat trying to “bend the rules” of the Constitution, a juggler “juggling Obamacare,” or an eight-foot-tall Uncle Sam character, circulating to invade the privacy of attendees.¹ The Carenival traveled to over twenty other college campuses throughout the fall of 2014.

A year earlier, in the fall of 2013, GenOpp sponsored a controversial ad campaign addressing the same policy area. The ad personified the ACA using an Uncle Sam caricature, and warned of the impending invasion of privacy the government would engage in via the ACA. One ad displayed an Uncle Sam caricature preparing to give a rectal exam to a young adult male. An additional ad featured the same Uncle Sam caricature holding a gynecological speculum, preparing to give a pelvic exam to a young adult woman. These examples provide insight into how an organization targeting young adults has led an anti-Affordable Care Act campaign – both in person and on screen.

The Libre Initiative, a non-profit that targets Latinos across the United States, also engages in anti-ACA campaigns. In 2014, the organization sponsored several ads attacking two Latino Congressmen, Pete Gallego (D-TX) and Joe Garcia (D-FL).² Ostensibly, the organization attacks Gallego and Garcia for supporting the ACA. The ad features two young Latinas who say they are disappointed with the Congressmen’s support for the ACA – a policy that, according to Libre, is deeply hurting Latinos. Latinos are disproportionately and negatively affected by the ACA, the organization argues, largely because Latinos are a young, healthy population not in need of this healthcare law. Whether the attacks ads were genuinely about the Congressmen’s support for the ACA or not, both Gallego and Garcia were defeated in their House races.

Similar to GenOpp, Libre paired their ad campaigns with on-the-ground events. Yet, the framing and messaging is strikingly different. For example, in 2013, Libre co-hosted an event called “Reforma para la Salud para Empresarios y no Empresarios” or “Health Reform for Entrepreneurs and Non-Entrepreneurs.” This event, hosted in Miami, FL and in partnership

¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/posttv/politics/anti-obama-carenival-comes-to-town/2014/07/29/5dd65bb4-173c-11e4-88f7-96ed767bb747_video.html

² <http://keepthemaccountable.net/>

with Branches (formally, South Florida Urban Ministries) encouraged entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs to attend their event to learn about how the ACA might affect them. An excerpt from the event description reveals a neutral tone, with an emphasis on communicating information about the new policy.

“As part of our goal to make events and inform our community about the Health Care Reform, during the next 2 months, The LIBRE Initiative and Branches, will host an event, in Spanish, on Thursday, December 5, 2013, from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM, called: Reforma de la Salud para Empresarios y no empresarios. A brief information about Branches: Branches, formerly South Florida Urban Ministries, has been providing vital services throughout our community since 1973.”

Despite explicitly focusing their outreach on the same policy, the two organizations vary in their messaging and nature of outreach. Libre does not politicize the policy. Further, by pairing with a non-profit organization that specializes in service delivery, the organization has set up an event that provides information about the policy itself. As the description above reveals, the event is hosted in Spanish – signaling that the audience may be Spanish-speaking immigrant entrepreneurs.

How are these two organizations – the Libre Initiative and Generation Opportunity – related to each other? Are these two organizations coincidentally doing outreach in the same state regarding the same issue? Libre and GenOpp are both part of the larger Koch Network, a system of political organizations and ultra-wealthy donors headed by Charles G. Koch and David H. Koch. Recent work by Skocpol and Hertel-Fernandez (2016) shows the Koch Network has used its expansive coffers to shift the GOP further to the right by funding far-right candidates, scholarship on the virtues of free-market economics, advertising campaigns touting conservative principles and policy approaches, and constituency mobilization. The Koch Network has also founded three constituency-based organizations: Concerned Veterans For America, Generation Opportunity, and The Libre Initiative. Since their founding in 2011, the three organizations have each received millions of dollars from Koch and Koch-related foundations. While we have conducted initial research on the strategies and organization of Concerned Veterans For America, we only briefly reference their work in this paper. We hope to incorporate them as examples of a more right-leaning constituency in future work.

GenOpp and Libre target Millennials and Latinos, respectively, two groups that have – in recent and past elections – been relatively unaligned with the political right in presidential elections. Despite their shared institutional origins and their shared fountains of revenue, GenOpp and Libre have taken different approaches in their work. What explains the divergence of these strategies? Why is an organization affiliated with the Koch Network even engaging in constituent outreach and policy education? What can we learn from Libre and GenOpp’s outreach to two politically salient, and left-leaning demographic groups? In this paper, we compare Libre’s outreach to Latinos with GenOpp’s outreach to millennials. We explore how politically conservative organizations recruit and mobilize demographic groups that are not core constituencies of the Republican party.

We begin with a discussion about the importance of studying extra-party organizations on the political right. We then discuss the literature regarding political outreach strategies to two key demographic groups – Latinos and millennials. Building on past literature, we develop a set of hypotheses regarding how extra-party organizations on the political right might reach out to these two key constituencies. Following this review, we further describe the two organizations – The Libre Initiative and Generation Opportunity – that are currently engaged

in outreach towards Latinos and millennials. After a discussion of the organizations, we present our empirical strategy and proceed to test our hypotheses. We conclude with a discussion of our findings and the usefulness of our empirical methods.

2 The Republican Party's Need for Extra-Party Organizations

We begin with a discussion about why it is important to study extra-party organizations on the political right. First, as we will discuss below, the Republican Party itself has incorporated extra-party outreach efforts into its plan to diversify its base. Secondly, in the past few years, new, well-financed and politically connected organizational players have entered the political terrain. Given the Party's reliance on extra-party organizations and the high resource levels of new extra-party organizations, it is then crucial to understand how these organizations reach out to constituencies – new and old.

2.1 The GOP Growth and Opportunity Report

In 2008, Obama took office on a wave of support from young people, African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. On the other hand, in 2008 and 2012 the GOP candidates fared unexpectedly poorly among black, Latino/a, young, and female voters. Projections of the U.S. population suggest that whites will lose their numerical majority status by the mid-century. Given the GOP's tenuous relationship with non-white voters, projected demographic changes have tremendous implications for the viability of the Party. Below, we discuss the Republican Party's assessment of recent elections, along with strategies it is perusing to build bridges into new communities.

In hopes of mitigating future electoral losses among these key groups, after the 2012 election, the Republican National Committee (RNC) commissioned a report to examine the state of the Party and its support base. Under the leadership of Chairman Reince Priebus, a panel of Republican strategists collected information from over 52,000 individuals, including racial and ethnic minorities, campaign experts, and ex-Republican voters. This effort resulted in the 2013 "Growth and Opportunity Project" report, known informally – and tellingly – as the RNC 2012 election "autopsy report." A close read of this report reveals not only what problems the Party perceives itself to have, but also what strategies the Party believes it can pursue to address them. Importantly, this report also sheds light on the legal, resource, and human capital constraints that the Party operates within.

The report identifies a physical and social disconnect between the GOP and the constituencies that supported Obama's election. The report finds that many, but especially racial and ethnic minorities, feel the Republicans "don't care" about them. For example, the reports points to a chasm between youth and the GOP, "we do need to make sure young people do not see the Party as totally intolerant of alternative points of view. Already, there is a generational difference within the conservative movement about issues involving the treatment and the rights of gays — and for many younger voters, these issues are a gateway into whether the Party is a place they want to be" (Growth and Opportunity Project Report 2013, 8). In response, experts recommend that the Party to "go to communities where Republicans do not normally go to listen and make [their] case" (Growth and Opportunity Project Report 2013, 6). The Party must campaign among Hispanic, black, Asian, and gay Americans, to "demonstrate [the Party] care[s] about them, too." Additionally, the Party

should reinstate an older organizational strategy to reach out to non-white constituents: The Growth and Opportunity Inclusion Council.³ The Council would be tasked with diversifying state parties, party leadership, spokespeople, and training these new members to represent the Republican brand. The Inclusion Council is tasked with educating and aiding Republican elected officials in tailoring messages that are “non-inflammatory and inclusive” to racial minorities (Growth and Opportunity Project 2013, 14).

This last suggestion is perhaps the most revealing. The Inclusion Council is tasked with helping Republican candidates understand the lived experiences of minorities and youth, yet the tension and mistrust pervade the relationships. In their own words, “[The Party cannot] expect to address these demographic groups if [the Party] know[s] nothing about them, this new organization should establish a training program available to all Republican candidates that would educate them on the particular culture, aspirations, positions on issues, contributions to the country, etc., of the demographic group they are trying to reach” (Growth and Opportunity Project 2013, 13). To do so, the Inclusion Council should convene national and state focus groups with non-Republican “ethnic groups” in an effort to gain insight into the “real and perceived issues” affecting these communities (Growth and Opportunity Project 2013, 13).

2.2 In Need of Extra-Party Organizations

While acknowledging these important next steps for the GOP, the report also documents and suggests constraints on the Party’s ability and capacity to execute on these tasks. First, the Party is relatively more resource constrained than it has been in the past (Skocpol & Hertel Fernandez 2016). Second, the party faces human capital constraints; since the Party is majority-white, it cannot draw on a large number of co-ethnics to reach out to minority groups. Extra, the party is politically constrained – it relies on a base that is increasingly moving to the right (Skocpol & Williamson 2011). This tug to the right forces the Party to perform an intricate dance of inclusion with racial and ethnic minorities, specifically Latinos, and youth.

Given the GOP’s constraints, how can it expand its base? The Growth and Opportunity Report offers a solution to this seemingly insurmountable problem: reliance on extra-party groups. The Party, strategists argue, must draw on “friends and allies” to expand and diversify its base (Growth and Opportunity Project 2013, 44). Extra party partners are independent of the political party committees and campaigns and thus operate on their own, with their own funding, and with their own sets of strengths and priorities. These groups range from advocacy organizations to think tanks to political action committees to SuperPACs to associations, and most of these extra-party groups are legally organized as 527s, SuperPACs or 501(c) (4) organizations. Targeted and well-organized extra-party organizations know how to best communicate, relate to, and mobilize individuals in the communities they work in. The report views these organizations as “valuable additions to the public discourse, as educators and helpers in the work of persuading Americans to believe in [the] Party’s principles, and as important conduits of [the] Republican messages and beliefs” (Growth and Opportunity Project 2013, 44).

³ The Inclusion Council stems from an earlier Party attempt to appeal to racial and ethnic minorities. In 1997, the RNC founded the New Majority Council. The New Majority Council, in partnership with state Republican parties and other Republican organizations, sought to capitalize on the Party’s national vision of inclusion, both locally and nationally.

The Report offers anecdotal evidence that extra-party groups can more easily connect with groups weary of the right, but on the whole this is an unproven strategy. Furthermore, it is unclear exactly how exactly extra-party groups can and do bridge the preferences of minorities and youth with the policies of the right. This raises an empirically testable question: how do extra-party groups persuade youth and minorities to support conservative policies?

3 Extra-Party Allies – A Look at Two Organizations

As discussed above, the RNC is increasingly seeking to partner with extra-party organizations to improve its image among non-traditional Republican constituencies. Meanwhile, a parallel party structure has been emerging, mostly funded by the Charles G. Koch and David H. Koch. Since 2002, resources have shifted on the center-right away from the Party and towards outside donor- and constituency-based advocacy organizations. In particular, the Koch network has absorbed most of the resources that once fed into the Republican Party (Skocpol and Hertel-Fernandez 2016). This network of right-wing organizations has become a significant player in building ties with youth and Latinos. Most interestingly, the Koch Network has engaged in formal outreach to these groups since 2011, an entire year before the 2012 election and the subsequent autopsy report. Given the growing importance of the Koch network on the right and their well-established attempts at minority and youth recruitment, studying Koch-related outreach efforts are an important lens into understanding the shifting terrain of the right.

In this section, and for the remainder of the paper, our goal is to shed light on the extra-party political organizing and mobilization that is currently taking place on the political right. In particular, we investigate the following central question: In a period when party politics has become increasingly racially polarized, how do extra-party conservative organizations recruit and mobilize demographic groups that have not traditionally voted Republican? Given the recent public perceptions that the Republican Party is out of touch with millennials and is an anti-Latino organization, how can extra-party groups bring young generations and Latinos into the Party? Furthermore, to what extent are extra-party efforts compatible and complementary to Party efforts? Lastly, how do recruitment and mobilization strategies differ by target demographic group?

To investigate these questions, we assemble an original dataset. Using our new dataset, we are able to shed light on extra-party recruitment and mobilization strategies. Ultimately, our work shows that the Koch network has developed tailored strategies for reaching out to youth and Latinos. Most impressively, we observe that the Koch network has erected a year-round, permanent organization committed to developing individual and organizational ties with Latinos, Latino leaders, and Latino-serving institutions. Furthermore, the Koch network is sponsoring a millennial-targeting organization that hosts well-funded social and political events that offer monetary incentives, alcoholic and leisurely activities, and tuition-related advice to college-going young adults.

3.1 Generation Opportunity

Generation Opportunity (GenOpp) was founded in 2011. Legally, the organization is a 501(c)(4), meaning it cannot engage in political lobbying or support specific political candidates. This ostensibly non-partisan organization is headquartered in Arlington, Virginia. The organization's scope and presence extends beyond Virginia and the U.S. South. As of December 2015, GenOpp has hosted events in twenty-one states across the country.

Evan Feinberg served as the founding Executive Director of GenOpp. Feinberg has a history of working with conservative political candidates and organizations. For example, after graduating college, Feinberg worked at the Heritage Foundation and then worked as a legislative assistant for U.S. Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) and U.S. Senator Rand Paul (R-KY). The Koch Network hired him after he ran an unsuccessful bid Congress in Pennsylvania's 18th District. During his time at the Charles Koch Institute – another Koch-funded 501(c)(3) – he worked as a program manager, with a focus on the Institute's talent development programs. Shortly after leaving the Charles Koch Institute, Feinberg became the founding director of GenOpp.

GenOpp's mission is to educate millennials on the value of economic deregulation and mobilize them to hold policy makers accountable for conservative economic policies. Their website states that GenOpp targets 18-34 year olds to “advance policy change, hold policymakers accountable ... and defend the freedoms of young Americans.” According to Feinberg, GenOpp aims, “to be where young people are and to engage them in ways that they're going to find entertaining and useful.”

GenOpp funding streams suggest it is almost entirely funded by Koch network-related organizations. According to tax records collected by OpenSecrets.org and The Center for Media and Democracy, GenOpp has received over \$7 million and almost 90% of its funding from the Freedom Partners and TC4 Trust organizations. Both of these organizations are linked to the Koch Network and donors.

3.2 The Libre Initiative

The Libre Initiative was also founded in 2011 and is also a 501 (c) (4). This “non-partisan, non-profit, grassroots organization” is headquartered in Mission, Texas, near the US-Mexico border. However, the organization's scope and presence extends beyond Texas and across the United States. Since of 2013, LIBRE has hosted events in the following states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Washington, DC.

The Libre Initiative and its leaders have been hesitant to disclose their ties to the Koch Network and the Republican Party. A detailed investigation of Libre's website fails to reveal any explicit allegiances to the Republican Party or the Koch Network. Despite the explicit relationship, Libre's funding and event details reveal a clear pattern. In fact, several sources point to the clear connection between the organization and the Koch brothers. For example, according to tax records, as of late 2015, Freedom Partners, an umbrella organization for Koch network donors, has provided the Libre Initiative with \$15.8 million in funding.⁴

As the Executive Director of the Libre Initiative, Daniel Garza has become the public face of the organization. Garza began his public service career as a congressional staff assistant for Republican U.S. Congressman Richard “Doc” Hastings (R-WA District 4). Garza was later elected as a councilmember for the City of Toppenish, Washington in 1996. In 2001, Garza was tapped by the George W. Bush Administration to serve as Deputy Director of External and Intergovernmental Affairs in the Office of the Secretary at The Department of Interior, and was appointed in 2004 to Associate Director of the Office of Public Liaison in the White House. In 2006, Garza became President of Televisa's Hispanic PODER Group overseeing editorial, commercial, and promotion of publications. Shortly thereafter, Garza joined

⁴ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/us/politics/libre-backed-by-the-kochs-aims-to-raise-gop-standing-with-hispanics.html>

Univision to host and co-produce “Agenda Washington,” a weekly Spanish-language news talk show covering issues impacting the U.S. Hispanic community.

While Garza’s career achievements have provided him the experience to serve as the leader of an organization that targets Latinos living in the United States, it is perhaps his personal lived experiences that provide him with the legitimacy to do so. In a Libre-sponsored YouTube video titled “Daniel Garza’s American Experience (Share the Dream),” Garza describes his experiences growing up as part of a Mexican farmworker family.⁵ The video opens with a scene from Garza’s hometown, a visibly low-income neighborhood with unpaved streets. Garza opens with a discussion of his family, “My parents were immigrants from Mexico with nothing but a 4th grade education. We were so poor. My siblings and I would often miss school to work in the fields. Our home was the size of a tool shed ... we had no running water.” However, even amid this poverty, Garza proudly asserts, “My father never took welfare because he didn’t want to depend on anyone, or lose his dignity.” According to Garza, his family’s intra- and inter-generational mobility is rooted in the United State’s economic freedom, “My family and I have succeeded by following the path of freedom.” Garza’s narrative merges a traditional immigrant narrative – one of sacrifice, independence, and hard work in pursuit of the American dream – with a traditional conservative narrative—independence from welfare.

According to Garza, Latinos – especially immigrants – are natural champions of economic freedom, “[Hispanic immigrants] don’t just believe in the cause, they’ve lived it.” However natural the connection between the lived experiences of immigrants and the principle of economic freedom, the challenge, according to Garza, is that “most Hispanics never even heard about [the term] economic freedom.” Accordingly, the organizational mission of the Libre Initiative is to develop a network of Hispanic pro-liberty activists across the United States so that the organization’s message reaches every corner of the country. To address economic disadvantages facing Hispanics in the United States, the Libre Initiative developed a two-pronged strategy. Firstly, the organization provides a range of services to Hispanics. Secondly, the organization educates Hispanics on the principles of economic freedom. To achieve their central missions, Libre hosts a variety of community events and conducts research and policy initiatives. Thus, the organization consists of both an education component and an advocacy arm.

As the advocacy arm, the Libre Initiative is comprised of 51 full-time staff members. As the education arm, the Libre Institute is comprised of 7 full-time staff members. 79% of Libre leaders and staff members are Latinos/as and 35% of them are women. These figures are outstanding. While a majority of Libre staff are U.S.-born Latinos, at least 21% were born in other countries, including: Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Italy, Mexico, and Venezuela. Additionally, 21% of the U.S.-born staff has one or more parents that were born in a different country. Thus, approximately half of the organization is staffed by 1st and 2nd generation immigrants. Using staff biographies on the Libre Initiative’s website and public LinkedIn profiles, we have evidence to show that 40% of staff members have ties to the Republican Party, while only 2% have ties to the Democratic Party and 2% have ties to the Libertarian Party. That is, Libre leaders and staff have extensive experience working with state and national Republican candidates and even the Republican National Committee

Central to their mission, the organization seeks to convince Latinos that there is an inherent asymmetry between the Obama Administration’s policies and the principles of economic freedom. Therefore, the organization’s position is not only that the Obama’s

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2Z2P48ye70>

Administration actions' undermine economic freedom, they argue that the Administration's policies are anti-Hispanic. This raises an important question, given the the historically and currently troubled relationship between the Republican Party and Latinos, can the Libre Initiative successfully bring in Latinos into the Republican Party?

4 Literature Review

The literature on partisanship and political mobilization in political science is vast. In this section, we focus on one central question: how have political candidates and political organizations reached out to Latinos and Millennials?

4.1 Political Outreach to Latinos

The growing Latino electorate presents an opportunity for political parties to not only win over new voters, but also to solidify the allegiance of this group. Key features of this population make it especially politically attractive. First, Latinos are not yet fully politically captured by a single party. Although estimates of the Latino electorate's support for Democratic presidential candidates have generally hovered around 60 percent for the past thirty years (Schmal 2004), a majority of Latinos report being independents or uncertain about their partisan preferences (Hajnal and Lee 2011). Second, much of the Latino population is geographically concentrated in battleground states and those with large totals of electoral college votes (Abrajano 2010). In each of the five states of California, Texas, Florida, Illinois, and New York, Latinos constitute between 20 and 25 percent of the statewide population. These five states alone account for 168 total electoral votes, which is more than half of the vote needed for victory in a presidential election. Latinos similarly make up a sizeable segment of the statewide population in battleground states such as Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and New Mexico. Furthermore, in the politically important U.S. South, the Latino population is growing faster than in any other region of the country (Marrow 2011). Thus, the geographic concentration of Latinos in key states, along with their lack of solidified political partisanship, heightens their attractiveness to political candidates and political parties.

Given these features of the Latino population, how have political candidates and political parties reached out to Latinos in the US? When deciding what campaign messages to use, there is evidence that political candidates and political organizations tailor their messages to specific target audiences and consider how likely these voters are to respond to their appeals. For example, when devising political ads with particular racial/ethnic groups in mind, there is evidence that political strategists assume that membership in a racial demographic carries with it shared concerns, interests, and experiences (Shea and Burton 2006). With advances in communication and technology, especially database technology, demographic targeting "has become a routine part of campaign operations" (Shea and Burton 2006, 56).

Recent work shows that when political candidates produce political ads targeting Latinos, they create ads that are both in English and in Spanish (Abrajano 2010). However, there are content disparities between these ads. Using data from the Wisconsin Advertising Project, Abrajano finds that Spanish-language ads, relative to English-language ads, are more likely to offer simple candidate introductions, feature at least one Latino in the ad, or reference Latino ethnic identity. In general, Spanish-language commercials provide significantly less policy content than English-language advertising. In the presidential ads, nearly twice the percentage of English-language ads featured complex policy messages, as compared to the Spanish-language ads. Additionally, candidates at greater ideological distance from their median voters

were more likely to broadcast policy appeals that were relatively simple and had a normative focus. Abrajano explains this difference saying, “candidates perceive that the Spanish-speaking community will be receptive to messages that refer to their immigrant background or to candidates’ characters” (Abrajano 2010, 82). This evidence suggests that ads and the messages they contain are intentionally designed by candidates to not jeopardize support among voters who may disagree with their policy views. Relatedly, research also shows that in-person co-ethnic contact can have an effect on political attitudes and political behaviors. For example, Barreto and Nuño (2011) find that contact from a Latino Republican significantly increases the likelihood that a Latino will support a Republican candidates and Republican issue stances. Surprisingly, Democratic contact did not have a significant effect on support for Democratic policy, which remained very high among Latino voters.

Research has also shown that there are striking differences between how the two major U.S. political parties represent themselves to Latino voters during Presidential campaigns. As a scholar of political communication, Stacey L. Connaughton (2005) focuses on the 2000 presidential election to investigate how two political organizations – the Democratic Party and the Republican Party – tailor their messages to directly target the Latino electorate. Using a series of in-depth interviews with political campaign strategists and political analysts, Connaughton finds that while the Democratic Party want Latinos “to remember where they and the Party have been,” the GOP wants Latinos “to envision where they and the party are going.” Connaughton describes Democrats as “traditionalists” and Republicans as “innovators.”

Breaking away from their perceived inattentiveness to Latinos during the 20th century (Subveri-Vélez 1992), the GOP entered into the new millennium with a strategy to foster future relationships with Latino voters. The strategy was goal-oriented, entailed marketing a new product to a new audience, and involved building Latinos’ commitment to the GOP over the long-term. In fact, common to many statements of the GOP goals is the notion of marketing a new product – the Republican Party – to a new audience – Latinos. In 2000, the GOP specifically focused its efforts on one segment of this new audience: recent immigrants. Why immigrants? Party strategists contend that this group of individuals has much in common with core GOP values. Republicans claim that immigrants’ motivations to migrate to the United States are in like with GOP principles. Frank Guerra, creator and producer of advertisement for the 2000 RNC Presidential Campaign, argued, “Why do recent immigrants come to America? It’s the same reason we believe they will align with Republican values. They come to America for jobs, to feed their families back home. Depending on where they come from, some would rather keep government out of their lives. They have a strong work ethic. They want to keep as much of their hard-earned money as possible. They’re not here because they want to be on the public dole. For them, America represents freedom and opportunity. Again, this is why I believe they align beautifully with Republican values” (Connaughton 2005, 31-32). Guerra points to a good work ethic, family values, and small government as shared values between immigrants and the GOP.

When organizations seek to show “fit” between themselves and a stakeholder group, they often focus on values that they commonly share (Chatman 1989). Similarly, when organizations attempt to foster identification from an individual, they focus on the shared identity points as well. Much like an organizations attempting to foster Latinos’ identification, the GOP seeks to connect with Latinos by noting values that Latinos share with the Party. Unlike policy issues where individuals support different sides of an argument, the audience is likely to agree on principle with statements and images in the GOP value-laden messages. The GOP evokes two values that they believe are central to Latino experiences. The first is the

significance of family. The second prominent value stressed in their soft sell strategy is religion. For example, in his 2000 campaign, Bush reinforced religious commonalities when courting Latino audiences.

4.2 Political Outreach to Millennials

Several characteristics of Millennials facilitate and complicate their potential political incorporation into the Republican Party. First, parties can rely on political socialization (between parents and their children) as one potential mechanism to bring youth into the Party. Second, research suggests that young people are particularly malleable in their political beliefs. In his ethnographic study of college activism, Munson (2010) finds that the growing up and defining of oneself, common to the experiences of undergraduate college years, is a key “transition point” in which political groups can insert themselves and develop new devotees. For example, pro-life groups offer a defining set of beliefs, structure, and social network for young people who are looking to reintroduce order into their newly independent world (Munson 2008). Importantly, Munson (2008) finds that young people develop their supportive pro-life views only after joining a pro-life group, suggesting establishing social ties between youth and political organizations is not only possible but effective in swaying political views. He posits, “organizational and relational ties are most often responsible for bringing political activists into contact with the movement for the first time; thereby making further stages of the mobilization process possible” (Munson 2008, 15). Furthermore, through examining the political mobilization and identity building within evangelical churches, Bean (2014) argues for the effectiveness of soft, identity-based outreach. Bean finds that evangelical churches talk only vaguely about politics, but effectively manage members’ partisanship through defining evangelical identity in ways that implicitly manage individual’s partisanship. In other words, churches will extol the virtues of good Christians that support heterosexual marriage, implicitly suggesting that votes for candidates opposing this view undermine one’s religious purity.

All together, previous research suggests that organizations with political agendas have drawn from a wide range of strategies to incorporate new constituents. Political organizations tailor their messaging to emphasize the commonalities between the organization and the target audience. Political organizations also couple soft outreach with political outreach, bringing the target audience into contact with the non-political elements of the organization’s work before engaging in explicitly political messaging and activities.

2.3 Gaps in the Literature & Contributions

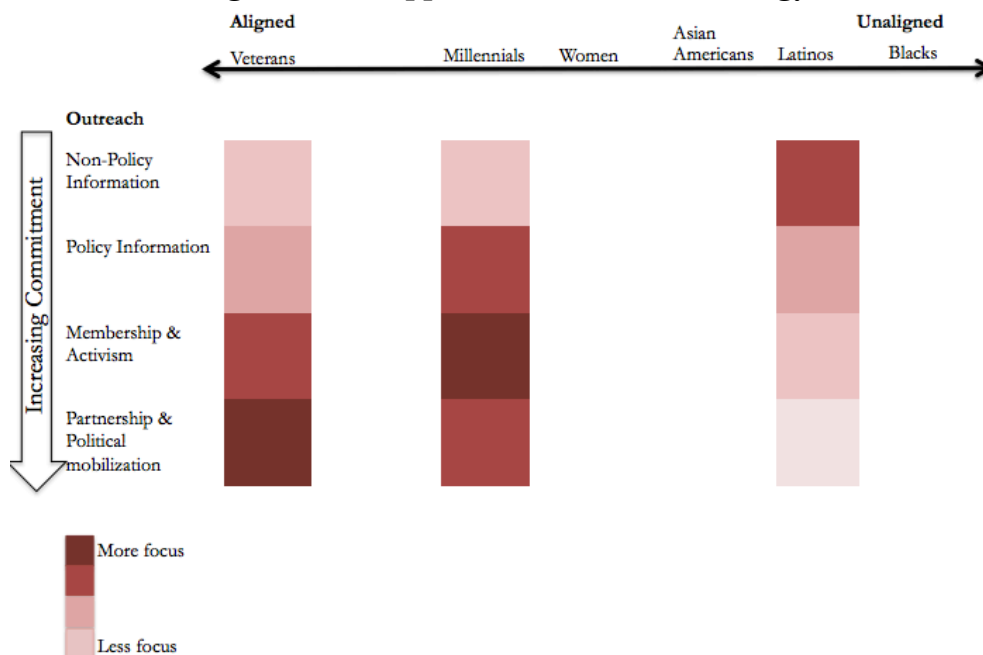
The recent work on minority and youth political incorporation motivates our own investigation on why – and particularly, *how* – parties incorporate nontraditional voters and nontraditional party supporters. While previous literature guides us in understanding the political tailoring of ads and outreach, additional work needs to be conducted to understand how organizations structure this outreach on the target audiences, and how the target audience experiences this outreach. We expand upon these recent findings by investigating: How do political organizations recruit and mobilize demographic groups that have not traditionally been aligned with their political ideology? More specifically, given the aims of the Koch Network, what explains the constituency-based organizations they choose to erect, and what explains how those organizations structure their outreach? Drawing from the past literature, we discuss and test four hypotheses.

4 Hypotheses

Drawing on previous work, we develop and test four hypotheses. First, we hypothesize that the Koch Network will erect constituency-based organizations targeting groups that are not captured by the political left, and are seen as sharing common values with the political right. Second, given the intra-group diversity within Latinos and millennials in the United States, we expect that GenOpp and Libre will target subgroups within these populations. We hypothesize that GenOpp will target Millennial subgroups that share values with the Republican Party. We also hypothesize that Libre will target Latino/a subgroups that share values with the Republican Party. Given the empirical relationship between class and partisanship, we expect that both GenOpp and Libre to target upper class and upwardly mobile millennials and Latinos. Furthermore, given the distribution of millennials and Latinos across the United States, we expect that both groups will focus their outreach efforts in regions of the country where these populations are present in (relatively) large numbers, and where they are most politically salient. Third, we expect that GenOpp and Libre should tailor their outreach activities to the degree of political alignment of the target group. We expect that both organizations will engage in soft outreach before engaging in political outreach. Furthermore, we expect that GenOpp will spend more resources on policy information and membership and activism compared to Libre, given that Millennials as a group are likely have more knowledge and familiarity with the political system than Latinos – a group that is still largely first- and second-generation. Fourth, within these strategies, we expect GenOpp and Libre to tailor their messaging to their target audience. Since previous work has shown that political organizations design messages to emphasize shared values, we expect GenOpp’s messages to focus on values and services relevant to youth, and we expect Libre’s messages to focus on immigrant and family values. Given previous research, we also expect Libre’s messages to contain less policy information, and to contain more symbolic information.

Having outlined our hypotheses, we now turn to outlining our methods for collecting and analyzing our novel dataset on the event and resource expenditures of GenOpp and Libre. We then leverage this new data to empirically test our hypotheses.

Figure 1: GenOpp & Libre Outreach Strategy



5 Data and Methodology

To examine Libre and GenOpp’s organizational structure and the nature of their outreach efforts, we draw on online organizational materials from Libre and GenOpp’s websites. We created a dataset of every Libre and GenOpp event advertised on the organization’s respective websites. Our dataset includes 530 unique events, taking place from January 2013 to December 2015. Our dataset includes each event’s date, location, venue, and description. Using the event address, we geocode all events. Furthermore, drawing on the information provided in the event descriptions, we extract information about the event’s target audience, the format of the event, partner organizations, and the services, messages, ideas, and products transmitted at events. When appropriate, we incorporate statements made at the Americans For Prosperity (AFP) Defending the American Dream summit in 2015. The summit is a public event hosted by AFP each year for politically conservative individuals. The statements we incorporate were made by panelists addressing a registered, public audience.

So that data collection process is clear and transparent, we will walk through an example of how we used event descriptions to extract information about event target audience, format of event, partner organizations, event ownership, and ideas and products transmitted. We will focus on one example, an event that took place mid-2014. On August 2, 2014, the Libre Initiative hosted an event titled “LIBRE at the VA Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Community Resource Fair.” The complete event description reads:

“LIBRE will be at this year’s Community Service Fair hosted by the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. This is a great opportunity to network with businesses, non-profit organizations, and corporations that impact the Latino community. Don’t forget to stop by and meet LIBRE’s Virginia team to learn more about LIBRE, our campaigns, and how you can get involved in your community.”

The target audience in this event is coded as “broad Latino/Hispanic community.” This is because Libre explicitly mentioned the “Latino community.” The format of the event is “booth at community fair/festival.” As indicated in both the title and the event description, Libre is not the owner of this event. That is, Libre set up its event by plugging into an existing community fair. As such, we code Libre as a “participant” of this overall event. Had Libre independently owned the event, we would have coded Libre as the “event owner,” and had it equally co-sponsored an event, we would have coded it as “co-owner.” Of all the instances where there is an indication of an existing partner organization, 90 percent of the time, Libre clearly indicates who the partner is. We use this information to record the name of partner organizations. In this example, Libre has partnered with the Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Finally, what services, messages, ideas, and products are transmitted to event participants? After three complete reads of all 530 event descriptions by both authors, we decided to extract only messages, ideas, and products that were explicitly mentioned. For the example above, we record “organizational information” and “networking” as two ideas, messages, or services that are provided. Since we are also interested in the products transmitted to event participants, we record any mention of a physical, monetary, or food product. In the example above, there are no explicitly mentioned products transmitted.

We repeat this process for each event. All together, we have a total of 530 geocoded events, coupled with rich data capable of shedding light on the nature of conservative outreach to Latinos and Millennials. In particular, this dataset is well equipped to answer the following questions: How do conservative extra-party groups persuade youth and minorities

to join the Republican Party? Do groups that target Latinos behave differently from groups those that target young adults? How do their outreach strategies differ? Using our dataset, we begin to shed light on these on-the-ground activities currently operating to influence the political allegiances of Latinos and millennials. Given the unique characteristics of the two populations – Latinos and millennials – we hypothesize that the nature of outreach strategies to these two groups is qualitatively different.

7 Findings

7.1 Target Populations

In 2011, the Koch Network erected three constituency-based organizations. In theory, the Network could have set up a constituency-based organization to target any or all of the following major U.S. demographic groups: Latinos, blacks, Asian Americans, youth, business-owners, public employees, and veterans to name a few possibilities. Why did the Koch leaders choose the particular groups of the many plausible ones to target? We do not have evidence of the decision-making process, but we can connect the final decision to target veterans, Latinos, and youth with previous research in political science and polling information to generate a plausible explanation.

The Koch Network created three constituency-based organizations to target three key groups: veterans (Concerned Veterans for America), Latinos (Libre), and millennials (GenOpp). As discussed above, Latinos and youth are electorally significant constituencies that are not yet entirely captured by the left. Thus, the Koch Network may have chosen to target these groups because they believe they can make progress in winning support from millennial and Latino voters. This point is most clear by focusing on which groups the Koch Network has chosen *not* to pursue with a constituency organization: African Americans and Asian Americans. Though a sizeable population and a symbolically meaningful one in American politics, African Americans vote overwhelmingly for Democrats. Additionally, if Asian Americans and Latinos voted for the Republican candidate in the 2012 election at similar levels, why did the Koch Network not create a constituency-based organization that targets Asian Americans? The answer may be found in the numbers. Latinos comprise 17 percent of the population, and Asian Americans comprise 5.6 percent to the population. Thus, the logic driving which groups to target may be to focus on sizeable groups that are not captured by the political left. As previously mentioned, we do not explore the rationale behind targeting veterans, but we hope to do so in future work.

7.2 Subgroups within Target Populations

Millennials and Latinos are not homogenous groups. There is incredible intra-group diversity, by class, national origins, legal status, and occupations. While U.S. Latinos are principally comprised of a Mexican-origin population, this only represents two-thirds of the overall Latino population. Furthermore, Latinos vary in their nativity, education, and income. Similarly, while Millennials share key characteristics, they are a distinctly heterogeneous group. Millennials are the largest, most diverse age group in the United States, with whites comprising only 60% of the group. Differences in education levels also vary greatly along racial lines among Millennials. The range of class, education level, nationality, and experience among these groups suggests that Libre and GenOpp may further narrow their focus beyond youth and Latinos. We find that Libre and GenOpp focus their efforts on subgroups within Latinos and youth, respectively, that are most likely aligned with the values small government.

We find that GenOpp and Libre further divide their respective constituencies into targetable subgroups based on electoral geography and the potential for upward mobility. Geographically, we find that both Libre and GenOpp focus their events in states that Mitt Romney marginally won or lost the 2012 election. Demographically, we find that Libre targets immigrants, college-going and entrepreneurial Latinos; GenOpp targets college-educated, white Millennials.

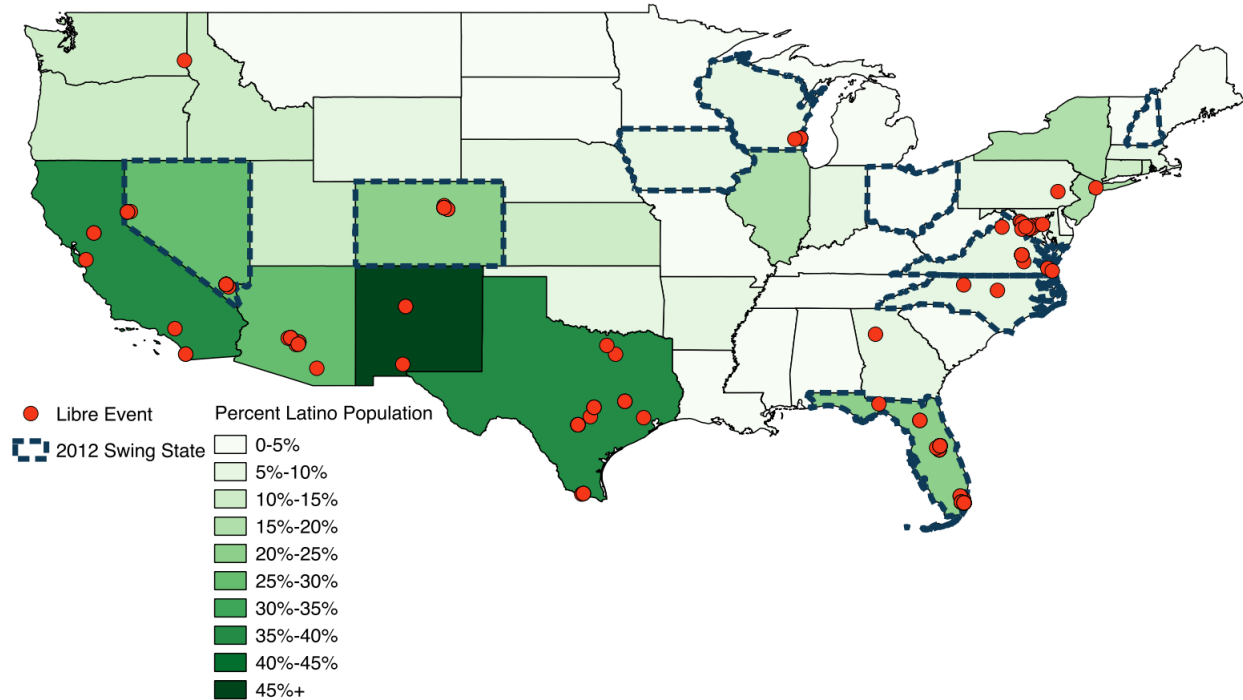
7.2.1 Geography

We might expect that organizations seeking to recruit new constituencies might target areas with high concentrations of the group in question. Consequently, we first examine whether Libre and GenOpp concentrate their events in states with large Latino and Millennial populations. We find that Libre prioritizes events in states based on a mix of both Latino presence and swing state status, while GenOpp seems to focus its efforts almost entirely in electoral swing states. First explore Libre's geographic patterning followed by GenOpp's.

Figure 2 shows that Libre's events are clustered across the south and southwest, in states with large Latino populations. However, if Libre pursued a strict population strategy, we would expect Libre to concentrate its outreach efforts in California. Yet, only 2 percent of Libre events are located in California – the state with the greatest Latino population in the United States. Why might this be? The partisanship make-up of the Latino population might provide an answer. While over half of Latinos in Texas and Florida supported Mitt Romney in 2012, barely two-fifths of Californian Latinos voted Republican. Beyond even Latino demographics, California is considered a solidly Democratic state in presidential politics, setting a high barrier to turning the state red anytime in the near future.

Public statements at the AFP conference corroborate the idea that Libre is targeting selective subgroups of Latinos. During an AFP 2015 summit workshop called “Hearts and Minds – Making the Moral Case for Freedom,” Daniel Garza, Libre's Executive Director, directly addressed this issue. “I would love to go into California,” said Garza, speaking to a predominantly white audience, “But if you go in there, you have to go big. You need to know these communities.” While Garza himself has roots in California, he suggests that The Libre Initiative does not have an established relationship with Latinos in California. Furthermore, he hints that success in California would require a well-resourced strategy built on establishing trust with the community. The organization's limited commitment to targeting California Latinos, combined with the focus on other Southwest, states suggests that Libre is interested in targeting “politically convertible” Latinos. They may be most interested in Latinos that have not yet established strong ties with the Democratic Party, either due to a lack of political involvement, or prolonged exposure to state Republican support (e.g. Texas and states in the deep south).

Figure 2. Libre Events by Latino Population and 2012 Swing States

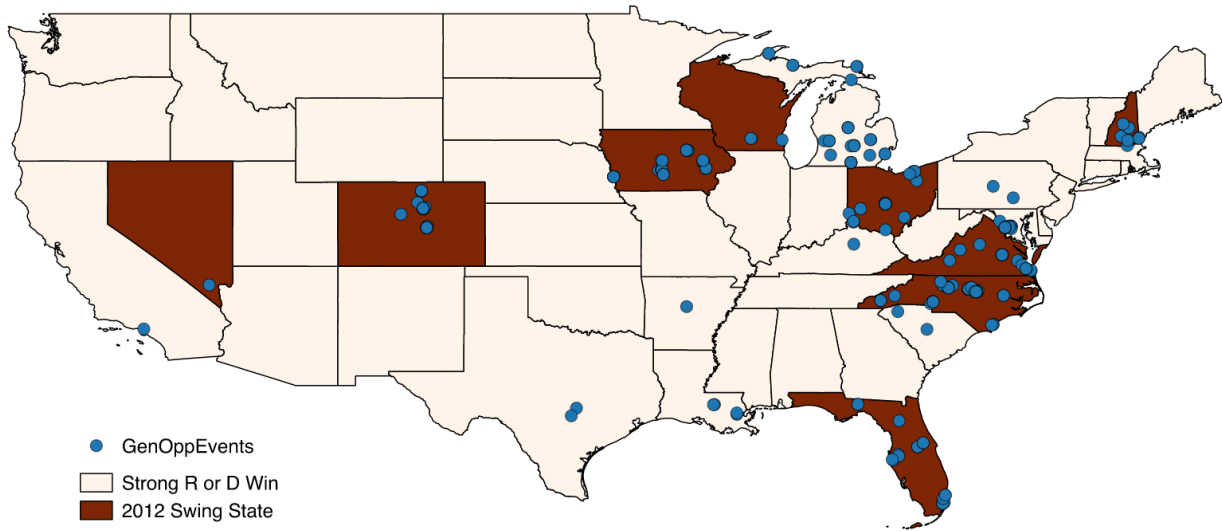


To further examine the possibility of a political logic driving the geographical distribution of Libre and GenOpp’s events, we combine our geocoded event data with demographic and electoral data. Using data from the 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, we map our events onto the percent Latino by state.⁶ Figure 2 shows that a majority of events are in fact located in states with significant Latino populations. Interestingly, Libre only hosts 1% of its events in New Mexico, the state with the largest share of Latinos. Using election returns from the NBC News Decision 2012 Center, we also map out events onto 2012 swing states. While Libre has hosted at least one event in a majority of swing states, there does not appear to be a consistent pattern between event location and swing states. Ultimately, it appears that the distribution of Libre events is predominantly driven by demographics.

What explains the geographical distribution of GenOpp events? As mentioned above, GenOpp’s events are concentrated in North Carolina (19%), Michigan (15%), Colorado (12%), Iowa (10%), and Virginia (10%). Is there an electoral logic driving the location of GenOpp’s events? Using the same electoral data above, we map our events onto 2012 swing states. Figure 3 shows that a vast majority of events are in fact located in 2012 swing states.

⁶ Given the relatively even distribution of young adults across states, we do not include demographic data by age.

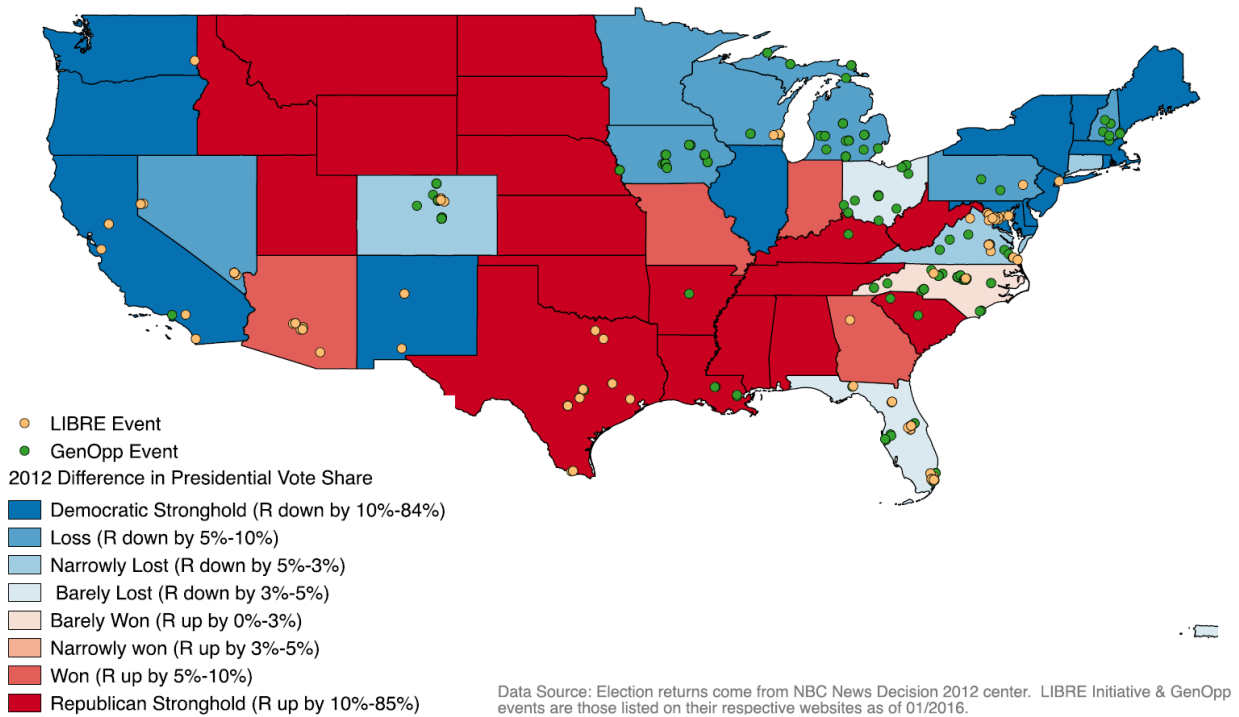
Figure 3. GenOpp Events by 2012 Swing States



When we plot Libre and GenOpp events onto the same map, we find that there is spatial overlap in two main states: North Carolina, Virginia, Florida and Colorado (see 4). In Figure 4 the darkest red indicates Republican stronghold states. The darkest blue indicates Democratic stronghold states. This map more clearly illuminates the electoral logic driving outreach event locations. Very few Libre and GenOpp events are located in Republican stronghold states. Where Libre does hold events in Republican stronghold states, it is likely because of the large presence of Latinos. Similarly, very few events are located in Democratic stronghold states. While Libre does hold events in California, New Mexico, and New York, this share of events is small (4 percent total). Together, Figure 3 and Figure 4 demonstrate that GenOpp locates its outreach events in states that are neither a stronghold for the Democratic Party nor the Republican Party. Rather, GenOpp conducts its outreach in states that Republicans narrowly won or narrowly lost. For example, in North Carolina, where GenOpp located one-fourth of its millennial outreach events, Romney won 51 percent of the popular vote. In Michigan, where GenOpp located 15 percent of its millennial outreach events, Romney won 45 percent of the popular vote. In Colorado, where GenOpp located 12 percent of its events, Romney won 47 percent of the popular vote. Overall, Figures 2, 3, and 4 show that there is both a demographic and electoral logic driving the strategic location of events.

How are event locations related to the organizational infrastructure of these two organizations? Both Libre and GenOpp employ staff focused on individual states; however notably every single one of these staff, with the exception of the Texas State Director, are placed in swing states. GenOpp has staff allocated for Florida, Iowa, North Carolina, Ohio, Virginia, and Wisconsin, while Libre has state staff in Colorado, Texas, Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia. Libre also employs three Coalitions Coordinators (Eastern Region, Florida, and Texas) and sixteen Field Directors. The Field Directors are located in Arizona (2), Colorado (1), Florida (5), National (1), Nevada (2), Texas (3), Ohio (1), Virginia (1). Allocating staff to these states represents a greater investment of resources beyond individual events, further supporting our suggestion that an electoral strategy guides GenOpp and Libre strategy.

Figure 4. GenOpp and Libre Events by 2012 Vote Share

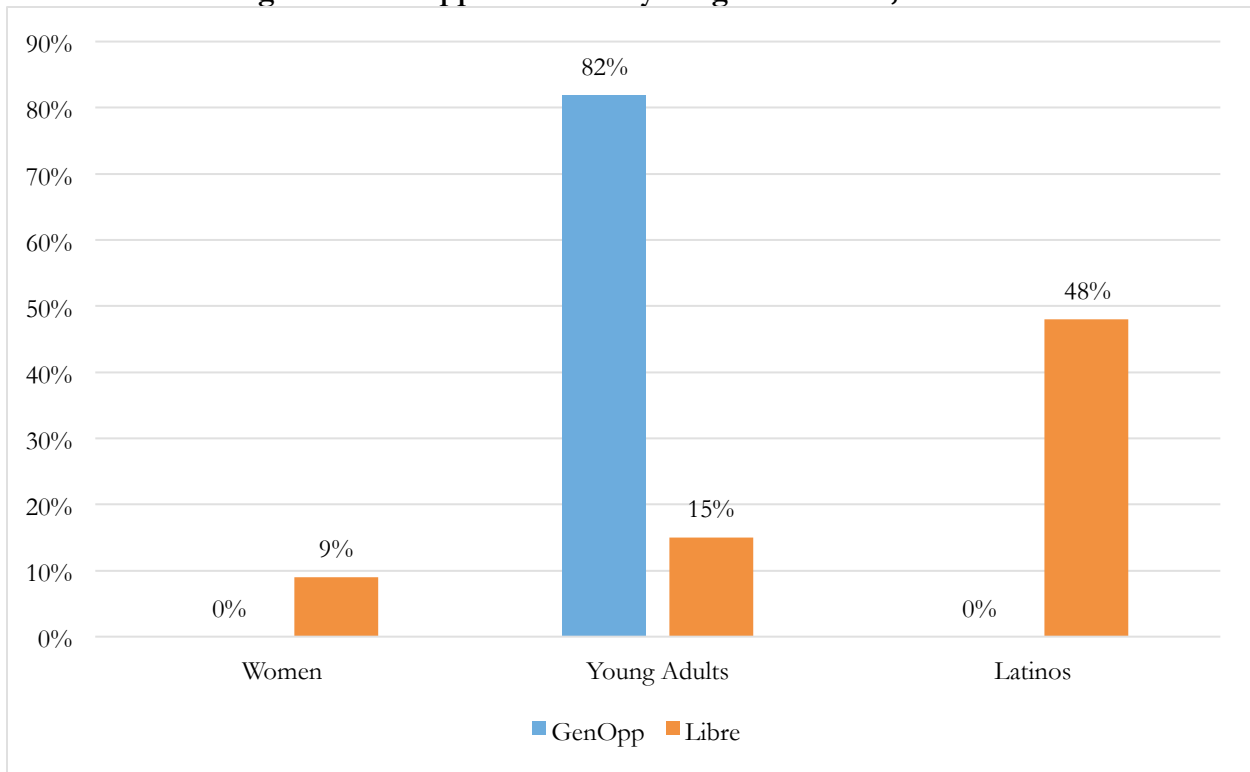


7.2.2 Demography

While it is clear that The Libre Initiative reaches out to Latinos and that Generation Opportunity reaches out to millennials, it is not clear *which Latinos* and *which millennials* they are reaching out to. Using our data, we identify GenOpp’s and Libre’s target audiences. First, we show the breakdown of events by major demographic groups. As Figure 5 shows, we find that 82% of GenOpp’s events explicitly target young adults. That is, none of GenOpp’s events explicitly target any racial/ethnic or gender group. On the other hand, only 48% of Libre’s events are explicitly targeting Latinos. An additional 9% of events are targeting women, specifically. In a majority of these latter cases, the women being targeted are Latinas. Furthermore, 15% of Libre’s events target young adults. In a majority of these cases, the young adults being targeted are Latino/as. For example, on September 26, 2013, Libre attended an event sponsored by the Hispanic Women’s Corporation called: “HWC’s Professional Development and Leadership Institutes,” described below.

“This program is designed for women who are seeking career development, upward professional mobility, life transition and leadership opportunities within their respective communities. Attendees who are seeking employment opportunities and/or workforce option changes or retirees seeking other avenues of employment or volunteer opportunities should also attend these seminars. College students are also welcome into this venue. Join LIBRE to learn more about the organization’s mission and its future campaigns!”

Figure 5. GenOpp and Libre by Target Audience, 2013-2015

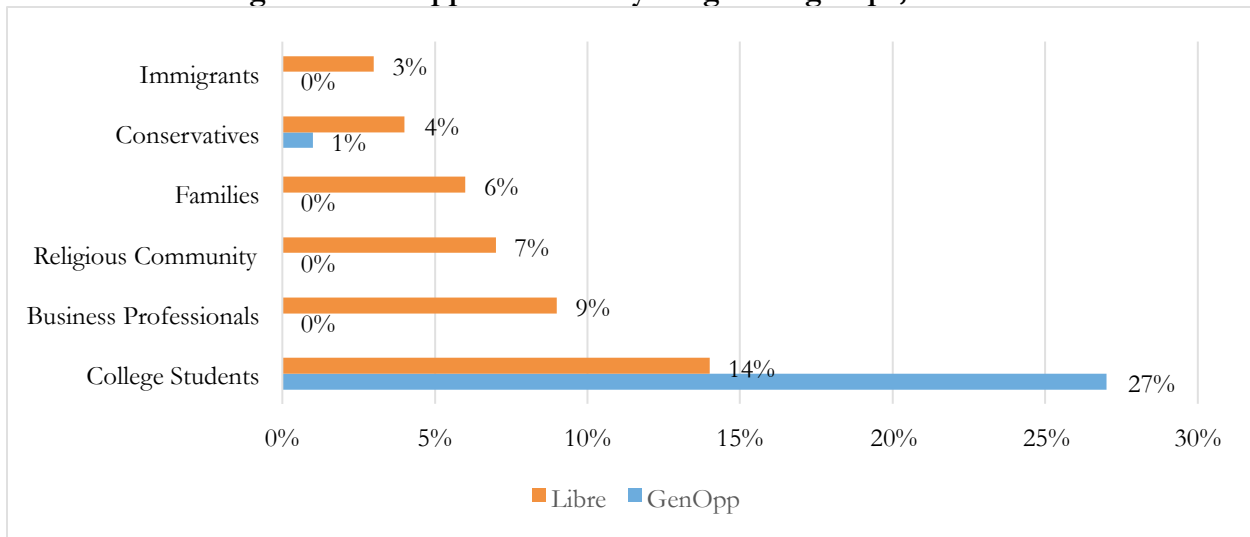


Since we are interested in subgroup-specific targeted outreach, we also break down target audience by other social categories. As discussed in our methodology description above, we only code explicit mentions. In Figure 6 below, we find that Libre targets explicitly targets college students, business professionals, religious communities, families, immigrants, and even conservatives. Our event data show that Libre is not only targeting Latinos, but it is also doing the work of persuading white conservatives that this outreach is valuable, and even moral. For example, on May 30, 2013, Libre partnered with several conservative groups to host an event called “America’s Small Business Summit 2013,” described below.

“The Leadership Institute, in partnership with New America, The Heritage Foundation, Libre Initiative, Faith & Freedom Coalition, and Tea Party Patriots, has developed workshops to communicate more effectively the values that bring Hispanics and conservatives together. Daniel Garza will address the participants.”

This event description is revealing, as it indicates that Latino incorporation into the political right needs to happen alongside efforts to convince white conservatives of the value of such inclusion. During the AFP 2015 summit “Hearts and Minds” workshop, Garza addressed a group of white conservatives in efforts to convince them that reaching out to Latinos must be a priority of conservative groups. Garza justified this claim by appealing to the growing electoral of this group, Latinos, he said, are “flipping Houses and Senates.” The implication of not reaching out, Garza argued, was that Democrats will capture them.

Figure 6. GenOpp and Libre by Target Subgroups, 2013-2015



7.3 Tailoring Outreach Activities to the Target Group

Having described the composition of target audiences for GenOpp and Libre, we now turn to our third hypothesis, which posits that the organizations should tailor their outreach to each target group. Our outreach event data enable us to examine what strategies conservative extra-party organizations pursue to influence the political allegiances of Latinos and millennials. Ultimately, our work shows that Libre and GenOpp have developed different strategies for reaching out to millennials and Latinos. In line with our hypothesis, we find that Libre, which targets the less aligned constituency, engages in more soft outreach than GenOpp. A majority of Libre’s events focus on organizational and non-policy information. GenOpp, on the other hand, emphasizes political engagement and policy information at a majority of its events.

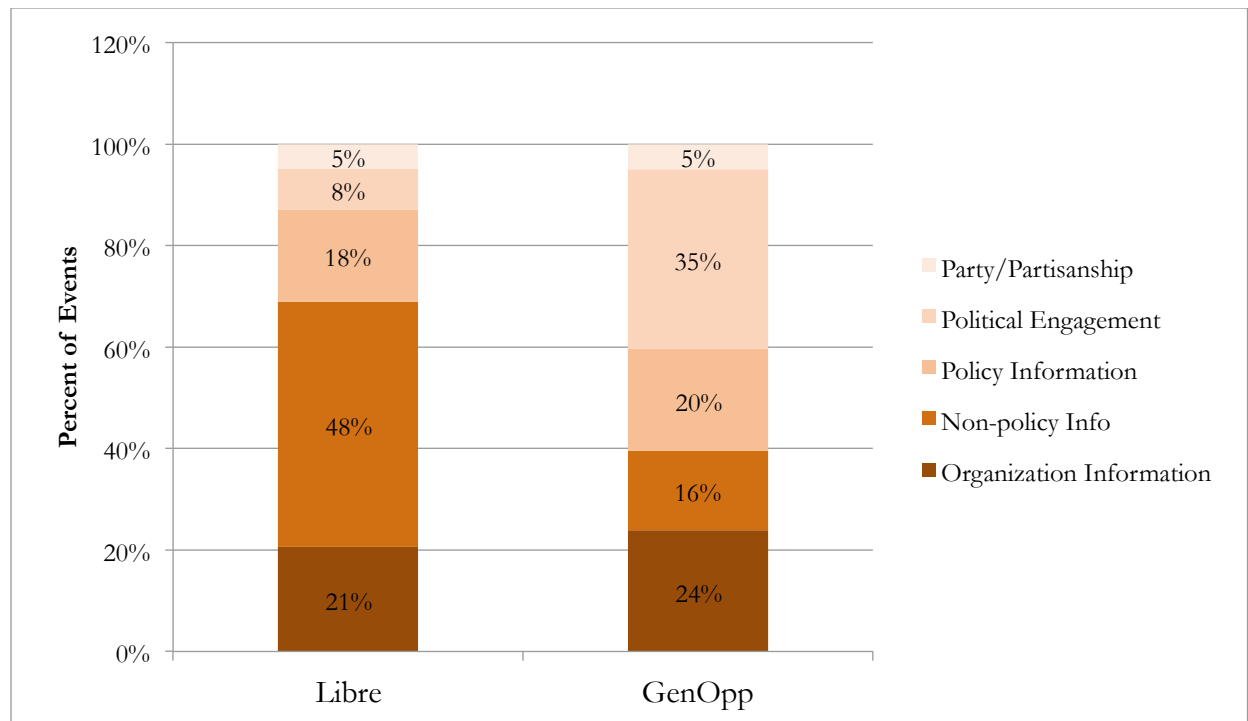
The event descriptions provided the material for analyzing the type of outreach each group engaged in. Using event descriptions, we coded each mention of transmission of organizational information, non-policy information, and policy information. Importantly, we only code explicit mentions. For example, if an event description stated that the organization offered information about the organization and its goals, we coded this as “organizational information.” Similarly, if the event description stated that the organizations delivered information or services not related to any specific policy, we code this as “non-policy information.” If an event description states that the organization provided information regarding a particular policy, we record the specific policy and code that as “policy information.” We make use of both the policy type and the policy framing in the analyses below. If an event description states that the organization engaged the audience in a political activity, such as phone banking, voting, or calling elected representatives, we code this as “political participation.” If an event description states that the organizations brings together the audience with an elected member (at any level of government), we code this as “party/partisanship.” In each of these events, Libre connects its target audience to only Republican elected officials. Similarly, over 90% of the officials hosted at GenOpp events are Republican.

Below, Figure 7 displays the distribution of activities for each group. As expected, the vast majority of Libre events, almost 70%, consist of soft outreach tactics. Almost half of Libre’s events provide non-policy information, such as how to file your taxes, best practices for entrepreneurs, and English lessons. Providing valuable services and information without placing

politics front and center mirrors the successful soft outreach strategies Bean (2014) observes among evangelical churches. The seemingly neutral interactions may allow Libre to build trust and rapport with a group traditionally alienated from the right.

Compared with Libre, GenOpp’s activities evince greater confidence in its target population’s willingness to accept conservative policies and engage in conservative mobilization. 55% of GenOpp’s events explicitly involve political activities and positions. Over one-third of GenOpp events request that attendees vote, contact representatives, or bring contact information to help the organization expand its network and mobilize the attendees’ friends.

Figure 7. GenOpp and Libre by Distribution of Outreach Activities



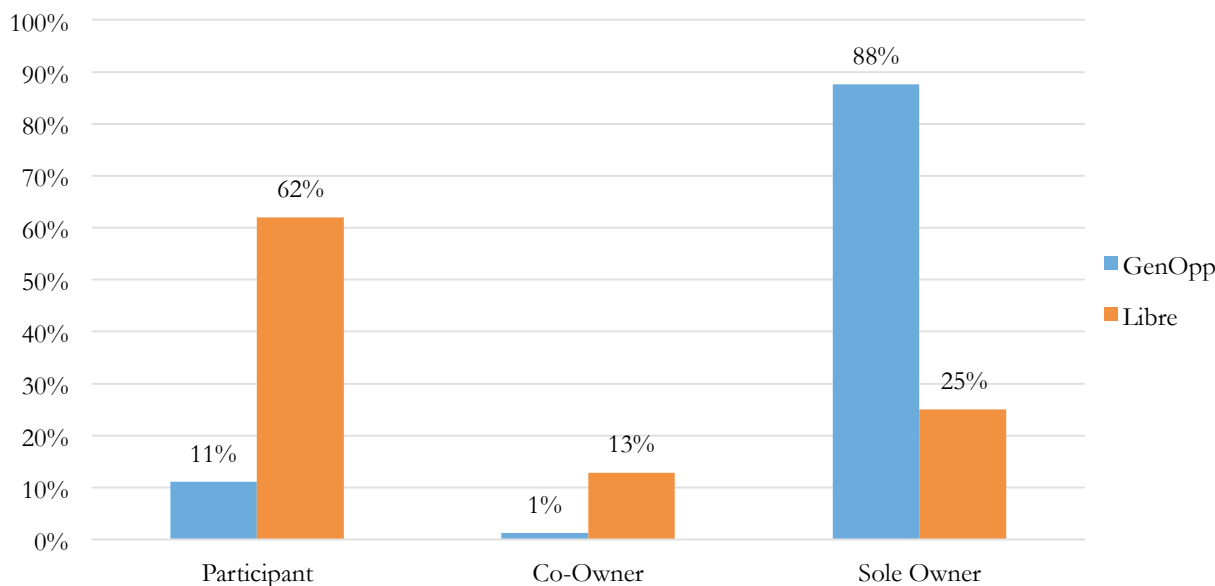
7.4 Messengers & Messaging

Thus far we have explored the specific groups GenOpp and Libre reach out to and the types of activities and information transmitted at each group’s events. We now turn to the messages that the two organizations direct at their audiences. As discussed above, organizations often design their messages to connect with the specific target audience. We find two meaningful patterns. First, we find that Libre partners with Latino-serving organizations to host the majority of their events, while GenOpp hosts its own events. Second, we find that GenOpp and Libre tailor their organization’s messaging to mirror the culture and assumed preferences of college-educated millennials and upwardly mobile Latinos, respectively. Libre emphasizes family, culture, and entrepreneurship. GenOpp depicts their events as fun, tech-savvy, and contemporary.

7.4.1 Messengers

Investigating GenOpp and Libre’s choice to partner with other organizations is important for several reasons. First, examining rates of co-sponsorship might indicate how well-staffed and well-resourced the two organizations are. Second, examining the types of organizational partners might shed light on the issues that the organization prioritizes. Third, co-sponsorship might be a way for the organizations to access or build trust with their target audience. Below, Figure 8 shows the distribution of events by types of event ownership for both organizations. As discussed in our methodology section, we code events as “sole owner” if the organization is the primary organizer of the event. We code the event as “co-owner” if the organization co-sponsors events. Finally, we code the event as “participant” if the organization is a participant in a larger event hosted by other organizations. We find that a majority (88%) of GenOpp’s events are solely owned. Additionally, 10% of GenOpp’s events are hosted within a larger event. Libre has taken an almost opposite strategy. Libre is only the sole owner of 25% of its events, and 62% of its events are hosted within a larger event.

Figure 8. GenOpp and Libre by Event Ownership, 2013-2015



Given the high levels of co-sponsorship, what kind of organizations does Libre partner with? Figure 8 shows types of organizational partners and the number of events they hosted or co-hosted with GenOpp or Libre. We find that, overall, Libre partners with a wider variety of organizational partners than GenOpp. Both organizations partner with a similar number of higher educational institutions. Along with higher educational institutions, Libre’s key partners include religious organizations, charitable organizations, and specifically Hispanic-serving organizations. Latino serving organizations are organizations that primarily serve Latinos.

One reason why Libre cooperates more often and with a broader set of institutions is that Libre is trying to build relationships with a wide range of organizations. Given that Libre often plugs its events into larger community or private events suggests that Libre needs to rely on the memberships and audiences of other organizations. Additionally, one reason why we might see GenOpp cooperating with fewer and more selective groups suggest that GenOpp might want a tighter control of the agenda. That is, being a participant at another organization’s event might require censoring or modifying the organizations message to fit the

overall agenda of the greater event. We now turn to the framing each group offers for its events.

7.4.2 Messaging

We began this article with examples of two event descriptions—one that explicitly invited celebrating opposition to a “creepy” and “invasive” policy in the context of a fun Halloween carnival, while the other offered a measured and neutral announcement of panel exploring the changes in healthcare policy. These examples are illustrative of the chasm between Libre and GenOpp’s messaging tactics. Central to its work, GenOpp offers monetary incentives, alcoholic beverages, and leisurely fun in exchange and in addition to political participation and tuition-related advice to college-going young adults. Libre, meanwhile rarely advertises policy preferences, instead emphasizing information gathering in a formal setting. Paired with this neutral tone, Libre also advertises celebration of Latino culture.

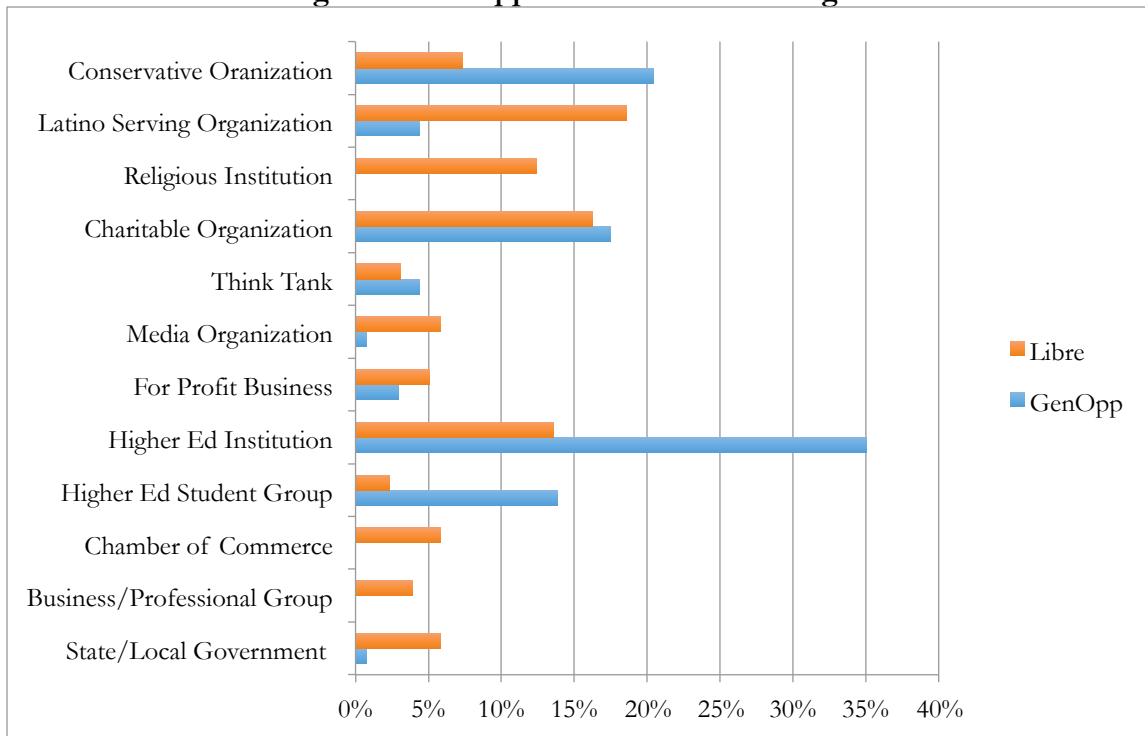
Figure 7 provides a breakdown of services, messages, and ideas that the two organizations provide during their vents. Not surprisingly, both GenOpp and Libre deliver information about their organization and their mission during their events. It is interesting to compare which services, messages, and ideas do not overlap between the two organizations. First, 30% of GenOpp’s events provide participants with an opportunity to participate in a political activity. For example, on May 6, 2014, GenOpp hosted an event called “Get a free ride with Uber to the polls.” In this event, participants were offered a free ride to vote in a primary election. To do so, GenOpp partnered with Uber – a multinational mobile ride hail company.

“Do you want to vote in the NC primary, but just don’t have a means of getting there? We’ve got you covered! We’ve partnered with Uber to give voters in Charlotte a free ride to the polls on May 6th. All you’ve got to do is text “Uber” to 877877 and follow the prompts. Click here for a list of Charlotte polling locations:
<http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/BOE/voter/Pages/Polls.aspx>.”

As seen in Figure 7, during one-fifth of its events, GenOpp provides policy information. Of these events, 21 focus on business regulation, 15 focus on student debt, and 7 focus on the regulation of the sharing economy.

Two additional types of messages and information that are missing from GenOpp, but significant for Libre are cultural celebration and immigration information. Libre’s emphasis on cultural celebration might be a function of two things. First, since Libre is partnering with organizations at higher levels, Libre might have to add additional items onto its agenda to match the host’s preferences. Second, Libre’s focus on cultural celebration might be strategic soft-outreach. Perhaps Libre feels obligated (either genuinely or not) to show its appreciation for the Latino culture and its influence on the United States.

Figure 9. GenOpp and Libre Partner Organizations



Libre and GenOpp overlap in their targeting of college students (Figure 6), but their messaging and tone of communication with this group diverges. Almost a third of GenOpp’s events explicitly target college students, and an additional 14 percent of Libre’s events explicitly target college students. However, while both organizations target college students, they do so differently. GenOpp’s events tend to provide information about student debt, the negative effects of the Affordable Care Act, and information about the negative effects of business regulations. GenOpp’s events targeted at college students also include engaging these students in political participation, particularly phone banking. Another key feature of GenOpp’s college student-targeted events is the provision of alcohol. Of these events, 35% offer alcohol. Below is an example that demonstrates some of these features.

“Are you and your friends end up drowning in student loan debt before you even get your first full-time job? GenOpp Colorado will be on the rooftop of the Warwick Hotel THIS SATURDAY for a poolside party to discuss student loan debt and what YOU can do about it. So come join us for: A great view of the Denver skyline. Wine and an open bar. Refreshments like sushi, crab cakes, hummus, vegetable and cheese trays, and more! A great conversation about an important topic with like-minded peers. A chance to jump in the pool...if its not too cold! A chance to win an iPad mini! Attire: Wear casual clothes or your bathing suit.”

On the other hand, Libre’s events tend to provide information about the organization and the meaning of economic freedom. A key feature of Libre’s college student-targeted events is the focus on immigration reform. 36% of college student-targeted events focus on the organization’s immigration reform campaign, *Estamos Contigo*. In comparison to GenOpp,

none of Libre’s events explicitly mention the provision of alcohol. Below is an example that demonstrates some of these features.

“Texas A&M University largest Latino fraternity, Sigma Lambda Beta Latina Fraternity, Inc., partners with The LIBRE Initiative to host a panel to discuss immigration reform. Come and learn about market-based immigration reform and why it's the best way to achieve the American Dream.

It is not difficult to envision the wildly different environments at each of these events, and we argue that is not unreasonable to assume that the different depictions of the purpose and vibe of each event is specifically intended to entice the participation of the respective organization’s target audience.

7 Conclusion

How do political organizations on the political right recruit and mobilize demographic groups that have not traditionally supported that Republican Party? In this paper, we investigated how a conservative extra-party group, the Koch Network, recruits and mobilize Latinos and Millennials. We do so using an original dataset, we analyzed the outreach strategies of two organizations – The Libre Initiative and Generation Opportunity. We find evidence supporting our hypothesis that resource constrained organizations should strategically target specific, winnable demographics. Libre and GenOpp both do so through focusing on upwardly mobile Latinos and college-going youth, respectively. Furthermore, both groups limit their efforts by focusing on these demographics in states that are electorally meaningful. Our data also suggest that organizations tailor their outreach according to the degree of alignment between the organization and the target group. Libre, an organization that targets a group that is less aligned with the Republican Party’s agenda than Millennials, relies on soft outreach that requires little to no ideological commitment from attendees. It partners with Latino-serving organizations to build trust and get an audience with potentially weary attendees. GenOpp boldly advertises its ownership of events and its conservative policy positions. GenOpp, assuming greater political alignment with its target audience, spends fewer resources on gaining the attention of Millennials and more time engaging them in political activities.

Can extra-party organizations persuade left-leaning groups in the United States to believe and support politically conservative principles? Can they serve as important conduits of Republican messages and beliefs? While our data does not speak to the effectiveness of such outreach strategies, our data does show that organizations perusing these missions tailor their strategies to uniquely speak to the target demographic group. Through an analysis of outreach events, our work shows that the two organizations have developed different strategies for reaching out to Millennials and Latinos. These tailored strategies shed light on the tailored approaches that conservatives must pursue to reach out to different subgroups of nontraditional voters.

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