



## Políticas

*Sonia R. García, Valerie Martinez-Ebers, Irasema Coronado, Sharon A. Navarro, Patricia A. Jaramillo*

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In the decades since Latinas began to hold public office in the United States in the late 1950s, they have blazed new trails in public life, bringing fresh perspectives, leadership styles, and policy agendas to the business of governing cities, counties, states, and the nation. As of 2004, Latinas occupied 27.4 percent of the more than 6,000 elected and appointed local, state, and national positions filled by Hispanic officeholders. The greatest number of these Latina officeholders reside in Texas, where nearly six hundred women occupy posts from municipal offices, school boards, and county offices to seats in the Texas House and Senate. In this book, five Latina political scientists profile the women who have been the first Latinas to hold key elected and appointed positions in Texas government. Through interviews with each woman or her associates, the authors explore and theorize about Latina officeholders' political socialization, decision to run for office and obstacles overcome, leadership style, and representational roles and advocacy. The profiles begin with Irma Rangel, the first Latina elected to the Texas House of Representatives, and Judith Zaffirini and Leticia Van de Putte, the only two Latinas to serve in the Texas Senate. The authors also interview Lena Guerrero, the first and only Latina to serve in a statewide office; judges Linda Yanes, Alma Lopez, Elma Salinas Ender, Mary Roman, and Alicia Chacón; mayors Blanca Sanchez Vela (Brownsville), Betty Flores (Laredo), and Olivia Serna (Crystal City); and Latina city councilwomen from San Antonio, El Paso, Dallas, Houston, and Laredo.

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