

congressional recruitment" affect the decision to enter a House race. First, a congressional vacancy must occur when a potential candidate has the necessary experience and qualifications to make a serious run. Second, some potential candidates fear that a move to Washington and the national arena will damage their family life through loss of privacy and reduced time with their children. Fowler and McClure also note that these two factors severely restrict women's likelihood of running for Congress: "The chance that a woman who has the credentials and desire to win a House seat will also reside in a district with a vulnerable or retiring incumbent is exceedingly small."⁴⁷

Moreover, women who are involved in politics may see it in a somewhat different light than men.⁴⁸ For instance, much evidence suggests that women legislators approach lawmaking differently than men.⁴⁹ In twelve statehouses, women legislators tend to place a higher priority on legislation that relates to children, the family, or women than men.⁵⁰ Surveying state and local legislators in South Dakota, 83 percent of the women listed family and children's issues as a priority, compared to only 60 percent of men. In a survey of 3,000 California political activists over a twenty-year period, Edmond Costantini showed that women activists had different goals than men.⁵¹ To that end, they were more likely to engage in activities that pursue broader policy-based outcomes.

Thus, compared to men, women activists are less likely to follow paths that lead to personal aggrandizement. These gender differences in political ambition suggest that women officeholders are less likely to use such male perspectives on politics as gamesmanship with zero-sum outcomes. In short, active women participants perceive the political world differently. As a result, the personal power that is attached to elective office may be less valuable to women than men.

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Minority Voters and Candidates: Tracking Trends

David L. Leal

One of the key questions throughout U.S. history is how, and sometimes even whether, to incorporate minorities into the political process. This issue is becoming even more pressing as the Anglo (non-Hispanic white) percentage of the population continues to decline. Much of this decline is the result of the growth in the Latino population, which is reshaping the political and cultural dynamics of large swaths of the United States. As a result, our traditional and straightforward bifurcated paradigm on racial questions is now slowly changing into a more complex black-white-Hispanic perspective.

The 2000 census found that Latinos are now the largest minority group in the United States. Although the U.S. Census Bureau in 1999 estimated that Latinos would be 11.4 percent of the population in 2000, the census revealed that they are 12.5 percent, a figure Latinos were not projected to reach until 2005. This percentage may understate the true Latino population because the census is an actual count, not an estimate or statistical sample, and many Latinos are noncitizens with clear incentives to avoid contact with government agencies. These figures for the first time put Latinos ahead of African Americans, who are 12.1 percent of the population. Given the substantial levels of immigration from Mexico, the Latino population will only continue to grow.¹ Anglos currently constitute 69 percent of the U.S. population, and in some states they are transitioning from majority to plurality. Given these numbers, how well the United States incorporates Latinos, African Americans, and other minorities will determine to an extent the future health of the nation's democracy.

In this chapter, I discuss first the political history of Latinos and African Americans, particularly the changing formal and informal regulations over the right to vote. The elimination of *de jure* (legal) and *de facto* (informal but very real) restrictions are only part of the story, however. I also examine minority voting behavior, specifically whether African Americans

and Latinos vote at the same rate as do whites and whether they support different candidates and parties.

Second, I look at the progress minorities have made in being elected to political offices. This issue is important because, as Roger Davidson and Walter Oleszek note, "When a member of an ethnic or racial minority goes to Congress, it is a badge of legitimacy for the entire grouping. Such legislators speak for people like them throughout the nation. Moreover, there can be tangible gains in the quality of representation."² In addition, the job of a national legislature like Congress is not just to serve particular interests but to legislate on behalf of the good of the entire nation. Political bodies likely serve this national interest best when they are a microcosm of the people.

Historical and Legal Context

African American Voting History

At the founding of the United States, the right to vote was limited along both racial and class lines. Most states allowed free males to vote only if they owned a certain amount of property, which excluded half of all men, all slaves and indentured servants, and all women. Free blacks could vote in the North if they met a state's other requirements. There were also religious restrictions in early America. Most colonies had Catholic and Jewish voting prohibitions, and some colonies prohibited Quakers and Baptists from voting. Rhode Island did not end the prohibition against Jewish voting until 1842. By the 1830s, most states had removed property requirements for white males. For African Americans, however, the right to vote contracted rather than expanded. By the start of the Civil War in 1861, all but six of the thirty-three states excluded all blacks from voting.

The aftermath of the Civil War changed this situation, but only temporarily. Adopted in 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment prohibited the denial of the right to vote "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude," and for a time this right was enforced. The postwar policy of Reconstruction meant that the northern army occupied the South and administered the former rebellious states. Blacks not only voted in large numbers but served as high-ranking federal and state officials. Congress also passed laws known as the Enforcement Acts to further protect black voting rights in 1870 and 1871, which were necessary because "from the outset, whites resisted enforcement of the Fifteenth Amendment. Violence, intimidation, and fraud were the primary means used initially to discourage blacks from voting."³

Several events eviscerated these new rights, however. First, the Supreme Court issued a series of rulings that strengthened the hand of "states rights" advocates in the South. For instance, the Court ruled in 1876

in *United States v. Reese* that Congress could not punish state officials for refusing to allow blacks to vote or for failing to count their votes. At the same time, a declining northern interest in Reconstruction and the "Corrupt Bargain" in the 1876 presidential election led to the end of Reconstruction and the withdrawal of Union troops.⁴ The timing of the two above events may not be coincidental. Although some see the Supreme Court as the guarantor of civil rights and liberties, others argue that for much of U.S. history, it has followed public opinion.⁵

The southern states gradually devised a host of laws to disenfranchise blacks, collectively known as "Jim Crow" laws. One such law was the literacy test, which prohibited citizens who could not read (or whom a registrar of voters decided could not read) from voting. Whites were largely exempted from this test, either directly by law or indirectly by the "grandfather clause," which said that one could vote if one's grandfather had voted. Although some states outside the South adopted a literacy test at some time, it was not enforced in such a discriminatory way. The grandfather clause was overturned in 1915,⁶ but the literacy test was not comprehensively banned until 1970.⁷

A similar tactic was the poll tax. Voters had to pay a fee to vote, which had a disproportionate impact on the relatively poor black population but also affected a large number of poor whites. Most states dropped this law by the 1930s, although it was still in effect in four states in 1960 and was not overturned for federal elections until the Twenty-Fourth Amendment in 1964.⁸

Yet another strategy was the "white primary," which allowed the Democratic Party to exclude blacks from voting in its primary. Based on the notion that a party was a private organization and could accept or exclude whomever it saw fit, this law was an especially effective means of disenfranchisement. In the one-party South, almost every elected official was a Democrat, and winning the Democratic primary was tantamount to winning the general election. It was not until 1944 that the Supreme Court in *Smith v. Allwright* overturned the white primary, which for two decades was a key target of the legal strategy of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

A variety of extralegal obstacles were also placed in the way of black voters. Not only were violence, threats, and economic intimidation available to whites, but local voter registrars could refuse to accept or just throw away application forms filled out by blacks.

It is therefore no surprise that the number of registered black voters declined precipitously in the South after Reconstruction. "By the turn of the century, virtually all blacks had been disenfranchised in the South. Abandoned by the federal government, thwarted by the Supreme Court, and faced with a multitude of state laws designed expressly for the purpose of disenfranchising them, the majority of blacks in the South would not be permitted to exercise the franchise until 1965."⁹ One historian noted that

in Louisiana in 1904, for example, there were only 1,300 African Americans registered to vote.¹⁰

It was not until the civil rights movement in the 1950s that the situation began to change. The first legislative result was the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first piece of congressional legislation on civil rights since 1875. It expanded the ability of the federal government to prevent interference with the Fifteenth Amendment and created the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The law had little impact because the Eisenhower administration grew reluctant to use it, so Congress passed somewhat strengthened revisions in 1960 and 1964. The Supreme Court upheld all three federal efforts, contrary to its actions in the nineteenth century.

Change was nevertheless slow, and black registration increased by only 36,000 in counties where federal suits were brought under the above three acts. Pressure for more significant change was generated by the continuing action of the civil rights movement as well as media coverage of the violent reactions by some whites. In an address before a joint session of Congress, Lyndon Johnson called for tough legislation ensuring the right to vote. According to Howell Raines, Johnson told his attorney general to draft the "toughest voting rights act that you can devise."¹¹

The result was the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965, the most important civil rights bill ever enacted by Congress. It ended literacy tests, provided for federal election supervisors in places of voting and registration where black electoral activity was low, created federal penalties for those who interfered with voting rights, and allowed federal officers to directly register voters and oversee elections.¹² To prevent southern governments from devising new and creative methods of disenfranchisement, the law required state and local officials to obtain federal approval ("preclearance") of any changes in electoral procedures. Although the VRA originally covered six southern states, it was eventually expanded to the entire South and a few other locations and reinforced by periodic revisions.

The results were dramatic. By 1969, black voter registration in the South increased from 35 percent to 65 percent. In Mississippi, the percentage shot up from 6.7 percent to 59.8 percent. More than 3 million African Americans were added to the rolls between 1965 and 1975.

Latino Voting History

The first point to consider is that there is no one single "Latino" or "Hispanic" population. Instead, there are three primary national-origin groups and many smaller but growing populations. The three largest groups are Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban Americans, and the number of people of Caribbean and Central American heritage is growing. Whether all these groups share enough common political and cultural values to be considered one group is debatable. For most political observers,

"Latino" is often used synonymously with "Mexican American," the largest of the subgroups.

A key event in Latino history is the Mexican-American War. The U.S. victory led to the annexation in 1848 of territory comprising all or part of the current states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and Texas. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed Mexicans living in this territory the choice of moving to Mexico, gaining U.S. citizenship, or retaining Mexican citizenship. Forty thousand chose to remain on the U.S. side.

The subsequent political situation of Mexican Americans in these territories varied, however. In Texas, the Latino population was not large and had already seen a decline in status before annexation. The Texas Revolution of 1836 led to the independence of Texas, but control was assumed not by Tejanos (Texas Latinos) but the Anglo majority. Although Tejanos predominated in a few parts of the state and managed to retain power there for a time, the overall political and economic status of Tejanos quickly declined. Tactics such as literacy tests and poll taxes were used to disenfranchise Latinos, and violence and a variety of intimidation tactics were used against Tejanos. Annexation by the United States did not change the situation.

The state of New Mexico, by contrast, never saw the level of Anglo immigration that Texas did. In many places, particularly in the north, Latinos either retained their majority or were too numerous to ignore. Anglos were forced to cooperate politically, and Latinos thus preserved some political power at both the local and state levels. Until 1960, for instance, the only consistent source of Latinos in Congress was the territory and then the state of New Mexico.¹³ This experience was not typical, however, and overall a combination of government neglect, declining population share, racism, poverty, and in some cases brute force deprived Latinos of a meaningful political voice in most of the Southwest.

At the turn of the century, the Latino population in the Southwest remained small. A major change that took place at this time was large-scale immigration from Mexico that would continue throughout much of the twentieth century. During the early decades of the twentieth century, not only was there a strong demand for labor in the booming U.S. economy, but the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and the resulting social disorder led many to move north. The border was largely open, and active efforts were made to convince Mexican citizens to immigrate. Demand for labor shrank during the Depression, and the U.S. government even organized mass deportations of Mexican citizens that sometimes ensnared U.S.-born Latinos.¹⁴ World War II and the subsequent U.S. economic expansion reversed this trend, however, and almost continuous immigration from Mexico would be a familiar feature of the Southwest for the rest of the twentieth century.

The postwar years also saw renewed political activity by Mexican Americans. The many returning Latino veterans who fought for freedom overseas were disinclined to accept the usual barriers to full political and

economic participation when they returned home. Several influential new organizations were founded at this time (League of United Latin American Citizens, American GI Forum). Latinos began to win a few consequential political offices, and the "Viva Kennedy" organization in 1960 saw the first large-scale Latino mobilization efforts in a national election.¹⁵

These beginnings were followed by the Chicano movement, a more radical effort that in some ways paralleled the African American civil rights movement. Disenchanted with Latinos' political, economic, and social status, a variety of protest movements began across the southwest in the 1960s. As Juan Gómez-Quiñones describes it, "confrontation politics and heightened ethnic consciousness characterized Mexican activity. Institutions were confronted through demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, sit-ins, and street fighting."¹⁶ During this time, groups such as the United Farm Workers, the National Council of La Raza, the student organization El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MECHA) and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) were founded. The American public began to learn more about this population, in contrast to the "forgotten people" status that characterized Latinos for much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The confrontational style of the movement also differed from the more assimilationist tactics of previous Latino organizations.

Puerto Rico became a U.S. territory in 1898 following the Spanish-American War, and the Jones Act of 1917 granted Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship. Puerto Ricans can move back and forth from the island to the mainland without any restrictions, and although many did live in New York in the 1930s, substantial immigration to the mainland did not take place until after World War II. The island became a self-governing commonwealth in 1952, but it does not send any presidential delegates to the electoral college and only sends a single nonvoting delegate to Congress.

The Spanish-American War also gave the United States possession of Cuba, but in 1902 an independent Republic of Cuba was formed. Cubans first came to the United States in large numbers following the overthrow of the Batista regime by Fidel Castro in 1959. Although many intended to stay in the United States only for a short time, the persistence of the communist Castro government meant that few returned to Cuba. Large numbers of Cubans were also flown to the United States in the mid-1960s and settled with substantial financial assistance from the U.S. government. Another period of significant Cuban influx was the Mariel Boatlift in 1980, in which 120,000 people, ranging from political activists to common criminals, were allowed or even encouraged by the Cuban government to leave. This group contrasted socioeconomically with the generally wealthier and better-educated initial immigrants. Politically, the Castro experience has given the Cuban community a strong anticommunist and pro-Republican character.

The VRA of 1965, as discussed above, was focused on African Americans and did not include any of the aforementioned Latino populations. When it came up for renewal in 1975, Hispanic (as well as African American) organizations argued that it should extend to them. It was not difficult to make the case that Latinos lacked full and equal access to the ballot box. As Chandler Davidson points out: "Both groups [African Americans and Hispanics] in Texas had historically been excluded from white primaries; both had suffered from the financial burden of the poll tax, from laws and practices that kept their candidates out of office, and from voter manipulation by Anglo-dominated machines."¹⁷ The nation had also become more attuned to the Latino community since the passage of the original act because of the Chicano movement.

Under the 1975 extension, the VRA applied to regions if they had 5 percent or more of a language-minority group, if turnout of these groups in the 1972 presidential election was less than 50 percent, and if the election was conducted in English. It included Hispanics as well as Alaska natives, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. In doing so, the coverage of the VRA was extended outside the South to Arizona, Texas, Alaska, and parts of California, Colorado, and South Dakota. In practice, it required bilingual ballots and voting materials in these states and regions and subjected these areas to the "preclearance" requirements.

Racial Gerrymandering

The membership of the Senate is predetermined by geography; each state, regardless of size, is allowed two senators. Some states have fewer people than the larger California counties, but Vermont and Wyoming each have the same voice as Texas and New York. The House is fixed in number at 435 districts, and each district elects one representative, but the boundaries and sometimes the locations of these districts change every ten years because each state is not given a permanent allocation of House seats. Instead, the seats are apportioned to the states depending on state size. The Constitution mandates that a census be taken every decade, and the results typically show that some states have gained in size and others have shrunk relative to each other. Seats from the latter are taken away and given to the former. For example, the state of New York had thirty-four representatives in the 1980s; that number declined to thirty-one in the 1990s and twenty-nine after the 2000 census. During this same time period, the number of Texas representatives increased from twenty-seven to thirty to thirty-two.

When the number of seats allocated to a state changes, district boundaries must be redrawn. In addition, because districts must be of approximately equal population, the changing distribution of populations within a state requires redistricting. This process is often controversial because

legislators can draw boundaries that help one party over another. This process is called "gerrymandering" and sometimes results in districts of unusual shape, but they are generally acceptable as long as the districts are of approximately equal population size.¹⁸

Sometimes districts are created to maximize not the number of Democrats or Republicans but the number of minority representatives. By creating "majority-minority" districts, legislators can help ensure that a member of a particular group is elected. Without such a district, minorities have found it difficult to win elections. In addition, the minority population of a state has sometimes found itself the subject of negative racial gerrymandering. In this case, a minority population in one region may be intentionally divided among multiple districts, making them a majority in none, to prevent the election of a minority representative.¹⁹

The 1982 amendments to the VRA encouraged the creation of majority-minority districts, although the VRA noted: "Nothing in this section [of the act] establishes a right to have members of a protected class elected in numbers equal to their proportion in the population."²⁰ Then the Supreme Court ruling in *Thornburg v. Gingles* (1986) encouraged legislators to maximize the number of minority representatives.²¹ This decision led to much racial gerrymandering, and a record number of minority representatives were elected in 1992.

In subsequent rulings, however, the Court has backed away from this decision. In 1993, the Supreme Court ruled in *Shaw v. Reno* that majority-minority congressional districts may violate the rights of white voters. Writing for the majority, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote that voters may object to the districts based on the "equal protection" clause in the Constitution. She also wrote that such redistricting must be "narrowly tailored" to further a "compelling government interest," a standard that states traditionally have difficulty meeting. The case was brought in reaction to a North Carolina districting plan with two strangely drawn minority districts. Although the Court stopped short of saying that these districts automatically violate the Constitution, it seemed particularly suspicious of districts with odd shapes.²²

Then in 1995 the Court ruled in *Miller v. Johnson* that race could not be used as the "predominant" factor in redistricting and threw out a Georgia redistricting plan. The Court, however, was again vague about how much race could be used as a factor in drawing lines.²³ This decision was a dramatic change from the 1986 ruling in *Thornburg v. Gingles*, and several states had to change their district maps. The results did not noticeably change minority representation in Congress, however, and the Court has even approved majority-minority districts in some circumstances.

The key point for the Court seems to be the oddness or "compactness" of the district. It is interesting to note, however, that no district has ever been declared unconstitutional, regardless of shape, if the drawing was

done with partisan goals in mind. It is only when minorities are the intended beneficiaries that the Court has intervened. In fact, if a state can convincingly argue that a majority-minority district was drawn with partisan outcomes in mind, it can stand.

As Bruce Cain and Kenneth Miller summarize the current situation:

Lower courts face two seemingly contradictory mandates: the legislative one stemming from the VRA to remedy situations of historic and persistent vote dilution and the constitutional one that treats race as a suspect classification, subject to strict scrutiny and narrowly tailored state actions. Neither the Supreme Court nor Congress has given the lower federal courts clear guidance in how to implement the VRA in light of these developments.²⁴

An important debate to mention is whether the creation of majority-minority districts promotes the election of minority politicians but ultimately hurts the policy interests of minority communities. Such districts may elect more African American and Latino politicians, but they also lead to the election of more Republican officials in other districts. Because minorities are heavily Democratic, concentrating them together in sufficient numbers to elect a minority representative means withdrawing substantial numbers of Democrats from surrounding districts. These newly "bleached" districts may therefore be more likely to elect Republicans.

David Lublin finds that "Republicans conservatively won at least six more seats in 1992 and three more seats in 1994 thanks to racial redistricting . . . [which] made the House less likely to adopt policies favored by African Americans."²⁵ When one considers that a switch of only six seats would have changed House control from Republican to Democratic in 1998, these nine seats loom large.

There are other criticisms of the majority-minority redistricting strategy. Abigail Thernstrom argues that the act creates new racial and ethnic conflict because majority-minority districts provide an incentive for political appeals to be made on the basis of race and ethnicity.²⁶ She also suggests that minority politicians are better able than many think to win the votes of Anglos, which means majority-minority districts may not even be necessary to create diverse political bodies. Adolph Reed suggests that majority-minority districts provide largely symbolic political rewards and ultimately benefit only a small number of middle-class people, that the districts may convince Anglos that sufficient progress is being made on the race issue, and that they may discourage class-based alliances of people of different colors.²⁷

One redistricting case of specific interest to Latinos is *Reynolds v. Sims* (1964). The Court decided that House districts must contain approximately equal numbers of inhabitants, not just citizens. Because the number of Latino noncitizens is relatively high, citizens may be a minority in some

Latino-majority districts. That can result in elections with very low turnout, which has attracted some criticism.²⁸ If the Court had ruled otherwise, however, there would be many fewer opportunities to create majority-Latino districts and consequently fewer Latino members of Congress.²⁹

Applying the VRA to Latinos (and also Asian Americans) is not always easy, for it was understandably written with the African American community in mind. It was meant to address the concerns of a large, coherent, and concentrated population that is eligible to vote but prevented by institutional barriers. Although the Latino population is large, it contains many noncitizens, is sometimes dispersed, and sometimes lacks pan-ethnic identity among members of the different Latino subgroups. In addition, the VRA is meant to remedy long-standing discrimination, and some have questioned whether its solutions apply to the large number of new Latino immigrants who have not been in this country long enough to establish a record of discriminatory electoral treatment specifically against them.

Finally, just because a district has a majority of nonwhite residents does not guarantee that a minority representative will be elected. Of the sixty-two majority-minority districts in 1998, Anglos represented eleven (18 percent). In addition, there were five African Americans and two Asian Americans elected from majority Anglo districts, so race is not the only factor in congressional elections.³⁰

Minority Voters

Latino Registration and Turnout

Much attention has been paid to Latino voter turnout. Political scientists are interested not only in the percentage of the overall Latino population that turns out but also how it compares to that by Anglos and African Americans. Much of the research on Latino political participation is interested in explaining if, how, and why political participation has lagged among that group in comparison to the rest of society. Maria Calvo and Steven Rosenstone conclude that "Hispanics are less likely to participate in politics than are other Americans," a view that reflects conventional political wisdom.³¹ Rodney Hero also acknowledges that Latinos have a reputation for low levels of political activity.³²

Because we know that turnout is connected to factors such as age, education, citizenship status, and to a lesser extent income, an important question is how Latino turnout compares when such factors are taken into account ("controlled for," in the language of statistics). Because "Latinos are disproportionately younger, poorer and less educated than the general population," perhaps their participation does not lag when such factors are taken into account.³³ Carole Uhlaner, Bruce Cain, and D. Roderick Kiewiet

argue that such intervening variables "fully account for lower Latino participation rates" and that "ethnicity per se has no independent effect" on differential participation rates.³⁴ Raymond Wolfinger finds that, although the turnout rate for Latinos lagged behind that for non-Latinos, the difference was not as large as many thought.³⁵ He also notes that when Latinos are registered to vote, they turn out at almost the same rate as non-Latinos.

One of the most important explanations for lagging voter participation is citizenship status. Almost 38 percent of Latino respondents in the Latino National Political Survey (LNPS, 1989-1990) identified themselves as noncitizens, and 40 percent is a commonly noted figure. Louis DeSipio found that 44 percent of Latino adults were noncitizens in 1994, with the figure reaching over 50 percent in some states, including California.³⁶ Scholars see lack of citizenship to be the most important reason for low Latino political participation.³⁷

The reasons that the Latino population in the United States is composed of such large numbers of noncitizens include the long-standing and significant inflow of immigrants from Mexico as well as the long time it takes for Latinos to naturalize. As Michael Jones-Correa maintains, "it takes a generation for even half of the largely middle-class Latin American immigrant population in New York to become citizens."³⁸

The mid-1990s did see an increase in both voter turnout and naturalizations in California that demonstrated the powerful political potential of Latinos. It was attributed by many observers to the anti-immigrant and, in the minds of many, anti-Latino Proposition 187 in 1994. California Republicans afterward suffered substantial political defeats at the polls, and some believe it will take years for them to recover from alienating much of this growing population.

When examining turnout data, it is important to differentiate between presidential and congressional election years because presidential elections generate saturation levels of media coverage; they are also more interesting to the public because they feature a relatively straightforward contest between (usually) two personalities for the right to live in the White House. Congressional elections, by contrast, feature hundreds of relatively disjointed campaigns, many candidates receive no media coverage, and the institution at stake is less well understood than the executive branch.

How does Latino voter registration compare with that of Anglos in more recent decades? From 1972 to 1996, 38 percent of voting-age Latinos were registered to vote in presidential election years, compared with 69 percent of whites, with an average gap of 31 percentage points. For congressional election years from 1974 to 1998, about 34 percent of Latinos were registered, whereas about 64 percent of whites were registered, for a similar gap of about 30 percentage points. In terms of actual voter turnout for presidential elections from 1972 to 1996, 31 percent of Latinos and 61 percent of Anglos reported voting, which again produces a gap of 30 percentage points. In

congressional contests, the reported turnout of Latinos was 22 percent, and the turnout of Anglos was 47 percent, for a gap of 25 percentage points.³⁹ Again, one of the key reasons for these gaps is citizenship.

Latino Ideology

Although one must be careful in making generalizations about large and complex population groups, Latinos are generally more liberal than Anglos. Latinos are much stronger supporters of the Democratic Party than are Anglos, both in terms of voting in presidential and congressional elections and partisan identification. Latinos are also more likely than Anglos to support an activist government and to differ from Anglos on language issues, such as making English the official language, requiring English in the workplace, providing public services in Spanish, and bilingual education. Latinos are also more likely to support affirmative action.⁴⁰

This is not to imply that Latinos are monolithically liberal. There are well-known conservative strands within the Latino community: Latinos put a strong emphasis on faith and family issues and demonstrate lower support for abortion, and Cuban Americans largely oppose diplomatic relations with Cuba and support the Republican Party. Additionally, many Mexican Americans describe themselves as moderate or conservative, although their specific issue positions and voting behavior seem to belie these identifications. Republican Party officials therefore sometimes claim that Latinos have a high potential for conversion to their party. As Louis DeSipio, Rodolfo de la Garza, and Mark Setzler note, however, "Much of the talk of Latino conversion by Republican leaders is more rhetoric than reality."⁴¹

Latino Partisanship

The Latino National Political Survey asked respondents to place themselves on a seven-point partisan scale, with the middle category representing independents and the extremes representing strong partisans. Among Mexican Americans, 66.8 percent identified in some way with the Democrats, 11.5 percent were independents, and 21.5 percent identified in some way with the Republicans. For Puerto Ricans, 71 percent identified in some way with the Democrats, 11.5 percent were independents, and 17.5 percent identified in some way with the Republicans. For Cuban Americans, a relatively low 25.5 percent identified in some way with the Democrats, 7.1 percent were independents, and a relatively high 68.8 percent identified in some way with the Republicans.

Then the survey asks, "Which party do you think has more concern for Latinos—the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, or is there no difference?" The only group that primarily answered "No difference" was Cuban Americans; 37 percent favored this option, versus 33 percent who preferred

Democrats and 19 percent who liked Republicans. Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans thought the more concerned party was that of Bill Clinton and John F. Kennedy. For Mexican Americans, 42 percent chose Democrats, 11 percent Republicans, and 39 percent no difference; for Puerto Ricans, the results were 52 percent Democratic, a very low 6 percent Republican, and 34 percent no difference.⁴²

To make some overall comparisons between races and ethnicities, we need to look at the questions from the *Washington Post*, Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University National Survey on Latinos in America (2000). The survey asked respondents, "Overall, which party, the Democrats or Republicans, do you trust to do a better job in coping with the main problems the nation faces over the next few years?" In response, 45 percent of Latinos answered Democrats; 28 percent picked Republicans; and the remainder said neither, both, or do not know. For African Americans, 80 percent answered Democrat and only 6 percent Republican. For Anglos, 35 percent answered Democrat and 44 percent said Republican.

Latino Voting

DeSipio, de la Garza, and Setzler bring together voting statistics from presidential elections from 1960 to 1996 and find that the average Latino Democratic vote was 73.5 percent. It ranged from a high of 90 percent in the 1964 Johnson-Goldwater election to a low of 56 percent in 1980, when Ronald Reagan defeated Jimmy Carter.⁴³ The figures from 1960 to 1972 include data only for Mexican Americans, however. This point is important because Cuban Americans are more likely to support Republican candidates. If we examine data from 1976 to 1996, we see that 68 percent of Latinos voted for the Democratic candidates, which is higher than the 40 percent of Anglos who voted Democratic during the same time period. In the most recent presidential election, Al Gore received about 66 percent of the Latino vote, whereas George W. Bush received 32 percent. Bush had 11 percentage points more than Dole did in 1996, which reflects Governor Bush's performance among Tejanos, who supported Gore over Bush by 54 to 43 percent.⁴⁴

The LNPS asked respondents about their votes in the 1988 presidential and congressional elections. Examining the Latino subgroup preferences of those who did vote and recognizing that those who did not vote a large population, the survey authors found that Mexican American voters supported Michael Dukakis over George H. W. Bush 63 percent to 37 percent, Puerto Ricans surprisingly supported Bush over Dukakis 52 percent to 48 percent, and Cuban Americans strongly supported Bush over Dukakis 86 percent to 14 percent. In congressional voting, Mexican American voters supported Democrats over Republicans 76 percent to 24 percent, Puerto Ricans supported Democrats over Republicans 65 percent to 35 percent,

and Cuban Americans strongly supported Republicans over Democrats 79 percent to 21 percent.⁴⁵

In the 2000 elections, 69 percent of Mexican Americans voted for Gore and 23 percent for Bush, 71 percent of Puerto Ricans voted for Gore and 19 percent for Bush, and 18 percent of Cuban Americans voted for Gore and 79 percent for Bush. Among other Latinos, 88 percent of Dominicans voted for Gore and 10 percent for Bush, 74 percent of Central Americans voted for Gore and 18 percent for Bush, and 69 percent of South Americans voted for Gore and 22 percent for Bush.⁴⁶

Assessing Latino Voting Behavior

To make some additional comparisons between races and ethnicities, it is helpful to look again at the questions from the 2000 *Washington Post*, Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University survey. Respondents were asked how they voted in the 1996 and 1998 elections. In the 1998 congressional elections, 72 percent of Latinos voted Democratic, which is between the 94 percent figure for African Americans and the 45 percent for Anglos. In the 1996 presidential elections, 78 percent of Latinos voted Democratic, which is again in between the 89 percent figure for African Americans and the 43 percent for Anglos. In general, Latinos fall in between Anglos and African Americans in their support for the Democratic Party. In this regard, the group they are most comparable to is Jewish Americans.⁴⁷

African American Registration and Turnout

The political participation of African Americans has increased dramatically in the last half of the twentieth century. Much of this change is due to the removal of the limitations on voting, as discussed previously. Other factors include mobilization by the civil rights movement and rising educational and occupational status levels.

How does African American voter registration compare with that of Anglos in more recent decades? For the reasons mentioned above, it helps to separately examine turnout in presidential and congressional election years. From 1972 to 1996, 63 percent of voting-age African Americans were registered to vote in presidential election years, which compares with 69 percent of whites, with an average gap of 6 percentage points. For congressional election years in the same time period, about 59 percent of African Americans were registered, whereas about 64 percent of whites were registered, for a similar gap of about 5 percentage points. With regard to presidential voter turnout from 1974 to 1998, 52 percent of African Americans and 61 percent of whites reported voting. Here we find a more substantial gap of 9 percentage points. In congressional contests, the reported

turnout of African Americans was 39 percent, and the turnout of whites was 47 percent, with a gap of 8 percentage points.⁴⁸

Some have suggested that African Americans participate more than Anglos once socioeconomic factors like education and income are statistically taken into account. One explanation is that group consciousness may help stimulate political involvement.⁴⁹ Sidney Verba and Norman Nie, for instance, saw it as an awareness of a shared and unjustly oppressed status, and another study described it as "a process through which dissatisfactions are aggregated across individuals and then politicized."⁵⁰ However, some argue that this statistically heightened participation was once true but is no longer operative.⁵¹

African American Ideology

As shown in the section above on Latino voting behavior, African Americans are strong supporters of the Democratic Party. They are more Democratic than all the Latino subgroups and much more so than Anglos. In terms of ideology, they are likewise generally liberal. For example, they are more likely than whites to favor an activist government and redistributive programs and are also more liberal than whites on economic issues.⁵² Kenny Whitby finds that although African American opinion varies, "In the main, however, blacks favor liberal policies. That is, black policy preferences, as expressed in public opinion polls, are skewed in the direction of affirmative action policies and programs that would assist the economically disadvantaged."⁵³ Nevertheless, as with Latinos, there cannot be one single ideology for a large and complex group. Carol Swain finds that "a strand of social conservatism runs through black America."⁵⁴

African American Partisan Registration and Voting

Although African Americans are today strong supporters of the Democratic Party, that has not always been the case. Until the New Deal in the 1930s, they were largely Republican. Economic factors moved them toward the party of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as was the case with many Americans, but "Few could forget that the Democrat party was largely controlled by the South, which depended on lynching, supremacist violence, and legal devices to disenfranchise Blacks."⁵⁵ In the 1956 election, for example, Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower received about 40 percent of the black vote. The Eisenhower administration was concerned about losing these voters, and for this reason its Justice Department drafted what was to become the previously discussed Civil Rights Act of 1957.

In 1960, Republican Richard Nixon received about a third of the black vote in his campaign against John F. Kennedy. The watershed election for black party identification was 1964, which featured the presidential campaigns

of Barry Goldwater, an unusually conservative Republican, and the more liberal Lyndon Johnson. Black identification with the Democratic Party reached 80 percent and has remained high ever since.

For instance, National Election Study survey data show that from 1952 to 1962, about 60 percent of blacks on average identified with the Democratic Party. From 1964 to 1996, however, this support shot up to over 81 percent. The change from 1962 to 1964 alone was 18 percentage points. Black support for Democratic presidential candidates from 1976 to 1996 has likewise been high. The average vote is 85.5 percent, compared to 40 percent for Anglos and 68 percent for Latinos.⁵⁶

Minority Politicians

Latinos

Political scientists have developed a number of ways to think about the connections between voters and representatives. First, there is the idea of collective representation, whereby a legislature may represent the people as a whole even if there is no specific link between constituents and elected officials.⁵⁷ The second form of representation is what Hanna Pitkin called substantive representation, which occurs when a legislator votes in line with the interests of his or her constituents.⁵⁸ Pitkin contrasted it with descriptive representation, which takes place when voters elect a representative who shares key traits but not necessarily policy views. Substantive and descriptive representation are not mutually exclusive, but they are conceptually distinctive.

Latinos clearly have a deficit of descriptive representation. There are nineteen Latinos in the 107th Congress (2001–2003), not including the two nonvoting delegates from Puerto Rico and Guam, which comes to about 4.4 percent of the House. The 2000 Census shows that Latinos are 12.5 percent of the U.S. population. These members are largely from California and Texas, although they can also be found in Illinois, New York, New Jersey, Arizona, and Florida. All but three are Democrats. The two Cuban Americans are Republicans, which reflects the party registration statistics of this group, and there is one Mexican American Republican from Texas. Even when we account for about 40 percent of Latinos who are not citizens, there is still an underrepresentation of the population.

In all of U.S. history, only three Latinos have been elected to the Senate—all from New Mexico. The first Latino in the Senate was Republican Octaviano A. Larrazolo, elected in 1928. The next was Democrat Dennis Chavez, who served from 1937 until his death in 1962. Democrat Joseph M. Montoya was elected in 1964, and since his retirement in 1977, there have been no further Latino senators. The prospects for more in the near

future do not appear bright, as New Mexico currently has two electorally secure Anglo incumbents.

In the House, the first Latino was elected much earlier. Upon the formation of the Florida Territory, Joseph Marion Hernandez was elected as a delegate from 1822 to 1823. He was later an unsuccessful Whig candidate for the U.S. Senate in 1845 and then moved to Cuba. As of 2001, just over sixty Latinos have served in the House.

After the extension of the VRA to Latinos, the number of elected officials increased. In the six states of Arizona, California, Florida, New Mexico, New York, and Texas, the number of Latino elected officials increased from 1,280 in 1973 to 3,592 in 1990.⁵⁹ The latter figure means that Latinos made up 4 percent of all elected officials in those six states, in comparison to a Latino voting-age population of 17 percent.

Overall, the National Association for Latino Elected Officials (NALEO) found that in 1985 there were a total of 3,147 officials, which increased to 4,004 in 1990 and 5,459 in 1994. Using a different counting methodology, NALEO found that in 2000 there were a total of 5,096 Latino elected officials across the nation. This number includes nineteen in the U.S. House, as noted above; 195 in state government; and 4,882 elected to county, municipal, judicial, school board, and other local offices.⁶⁰ Of the total number of elected officials in the United States (approximately 500,000), Latinos comprise just 1 percent.

African Americans

The first African American to serve in the Senate was Hiram Revels of Mississippi, a Republican, in 1870. The first to serve in the House were Republican Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina and Republican Jefferson Franklin Long of Georgia, both in 1870, in the 41st Congress (1869–1871). During Reconstruction, a total of sixteen blacks served in the Congress, including two in the Senate. They were all Republicans. On the state level, one black served as acting governor of Louisiana, and three states (Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina) elected black lieutenant governors.

After the end of Reconstruction, white Democrats began to reassert control over federal and state offices through the legal and illegal means discussed previously. Over time, the number of black members of Congress declined, until by 1901 there were none. There would be no further black members of Congress until Oscar De Priest (R-Ill.) was elected in 1929.

In 2000, there were thirty-nine African American members of Congress, all in the House of Representatives. They comprise just over 7 percent of the Congress, although African Americans are about 12 percent of the U.S. population. The last African American senator was Carol Moseley-Braun (D-Ill.), who was defeated in 1998. In 1971, by contrast, there were only twelve African Americans in the House and one in the Senate.

Reform and ninth on International Relations. None are likely to become committee chairs in the near future.

Conclusion

In this chapter I first outlined the historical and legal context of Latino and African American political participation. An ideal United States is one in which all citizens have equal political rights, and much progress has been made in that direction since the 1960s. Although there are many people alive today who can remember when minorities were denied the right to vote or otherwise meaningfully participate in political life, it is clear that political practice in the United States is moving closer to its political values.

I also pointed out substantial differences in the political behavior of Latinos, African Americans, and Anglos. In terms of voter registration, Anglos are the most likely to be registered, African Americans the second most, and Latinos the least. The same ranking applies for voter turnout. Nevertheless, there is far more registration and turnout today for members of both minority groups than before the VRA and other federal legislation were passed. In addition, when factors such as citizenship and socioeconomic status are taken into account, scholars have found few differences in contemporary political participation.

In terms of partisanship, African Americans largely and Latinos mostly identify themselves as Democrats, and Anglos are most likely to identify themselves as Republicans. This trend also applies to voting in presidential and congressional elections. Because African Americans and Latinos generally take liberal positions on political issues and Anglos usually take more conservative positions, such partisan attachments come as little surprise.

Last, relatively few minority politicians are elected to Congress and other offices, although their share has risen in recent decades. Restrictions on the right to vote led to almost no minority politicians for long stretches of U.S. history, but this situation changed because of the VRA, as well as the creation of "majority-minority" political districts. The number of politicians of color has therefore risen but is still far short of proportionality. Although Latinos constitute almost 13 percent of the U.S. population, only 1 percent of elected officials are Latinos. African Americans are almost 12 percent of the population but constitute less than 2 percent of elected officials. I also noted the debate over whether the increasing number of minority elected officials (descriptive representation) has led to the advancement of policies important to the Latino and African American communities (substantive representation).

The total number of African American elected officials has also grown over the last thirty years. In 1965, they numbered less than 100. By 1970, there were a total of 1,469, with ten at the congressional level and 169 at the state level. In 1980, there were 4,963, and in 1990 the total reached 7,335. By 1997, there were 8,617, with forty at the congressional level and 586 at the state level.

After looking at these figures in more detail, David Bositis finds that in the mid-1990s, most of the gains in the numbers of African American elected officials came from the South, particularly Mississippi and Alabama, whereas the western states actually saw a decline.⁶¹ He also notes that women were a fast-growing presence in the ranks of African American elected officials and in 1997 constituted almost one-third.

Despite this improvement, African Americans are still not elected to office in proportion to their percentage of the overall population. In 1997, there were 500,000 elected officials across the country, so African Americans constituted only 1.7 percent. Blacks are almost 12 percent of the U.S. voting-age population, so the ratio of officials to population was only 0.144 (a figure of 1 would mean complete proportionality). This varies considerably from state to state, however. The ratio was 0.695 in Alabama, but only 0.071 in New York.

The relative political safety of African Americans and Latinos who occupy majority-minority House seats means that they are well positioned to enjoy long seniority. Because longer-serving members are more likely to receive committee chairs, this dynamic may work to increase minority political power in the House. As Hero notes, "Continuous reelection is central to gaining seniority and hence greater influence in Congress."⁶² This fact is somewhat ironic because only a few decades ago, conservative white Democrats from safe southern seats used their seniority and chairmanships to block civil rights legislation.

In the 103rd Congress (1993–1995), African Americans chaired the Armed Services (Ron Dellums [D-Calif.]), Government Operations (John Conyers Jr. [D-Mich.]), and Post Office and Civil Service Committees (William Lacy Clay Sr. [D-Mo.]), and Latinos chaired Agriculture (Eligio "Kika" de la Garza [D-Texas]) and Banking (Henry B. Gonzalez [D-Texas]). These members held their positions in the era of Democratic House dominance, however, which is no longer the political reality. When the Republicans assumed control in the 104th Congress (1995–1997), there were no minority committee chairs.

Of the minority Republicans, the sole representative in the majority leadership in the 107th Congress was J. C. Watts of Oklahoma, the House Republican Conference Chairman who announced his retirement in 2002. Henry Bonilla of Texas is sixteenth in seniority on the Appropriations Committee, Lincoln Diaz-Balart of Florida is fifth in seniority on the Rules Committee, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida is fifth on Government