Citizens by Choice, Voters by Necessity: Patterns in Political Mobilization by Naturalized Latinos

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In this article, we compare the 1996 turnout among cohorts of naturalized and native-born Latino citizens, looking for between-group differences endogenous to recent anti-immigrant rhetoric and events in California. We argue that immigrants naturalizing in a politically charged environment represent a self-selected subsample of all voters, identifying individuals who feel strongly about the political issues at hand, and who seek enfranchisement as an act of political expression. We suggest that newly naturalized citizens living in California made exactly these choices, which differentiate them from native-born citizens, longer-term naturalized citizens, and Latinos in other states. Using the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute's 1997 three-state survey of citizen attitudes, validated using original registrars-of-voters data, we estimate multivariate logit models of individual turnout of Latino citizens in each state for the 1996 national election. The data support our hypotheses. Newly naturalized Latinos in California behave differently from other Latino citizens of California, and the patterns of difference are not replicated in either Florida or Texas. Turnout was higher among those who naturalized in the politically hostile climate of California in the early 1990s. Our results suggest important political effects of wedge-issue politics that target Latino immigrants.

NOTE: An earlier version of this article was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 27-30, 2000. Authors' names are presented alphabetically. We would like to thank the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute for the use of the data, and Jongho Lee for his assistance with the data. We would also like to thank Louis DeSipio, the editors, and the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments. All results and conclusions are solely the responsibility of the authors.

Political Research Quarterly, Vol. 54, No. 4 (December 2001): pp. 729-750

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Naturalization can be a political act depending upon the reasons it is undertaken. Not every immigrant to the United States chooses to become a citizen. Individuals might choose not to naturalize to retain some *de jure* connection with their former homeland. In other instances, immigrants might choose to naturalize as part of an ongoing process of personal incorporation into American society. Such choices might be made at the first opportunity, reflecting an enthusiasm for the new homeland. Others might choose to naturalize as a result of changing life experiences, including military service, marriage, or the birth of a new child. Finally, and for our purposes most importantly, some might naturalize in the face of perceived threat—political or otherwise.

This effort is intended to estimate the political effect of the decision to naturalize. Specifically, we want to compare cohorts of naturalized citizens, looking for differences in behavior between groups naturalized at different points in time and across political environments, here operationalized as state of residence. Using the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute's 1997 post-election survey, we argue that immigrants naturalizing in a politically charged environment represent a self-selected subsample of all immigrants. This self-selection process identifies individuals who feel strongly about the political issues at hand and who seek enfranchisement to further their political self-interest. We expect that newly naturalized residents of California made exactly these choices. They registered and voted at rates higher than fellow naturalized citizens and native-born Latinos, and at rates higher than their fellow Latino citizens in Florida and Texas.

Beginning with a special Senate election in 1992, and exacerbated by a lingering recession in the California economy, the public rhetoric of elected officials in California toward immigrants—particularly undocumented persons—grew increasingly strident. In 1994, Proposition 187 appeared on the California ballot. The effect of 187 would have been to deny public services to illegal immigrants as well as require public officials, including doctors and schoolteachers, to report suspected undocumented aliens to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The initiative split the electorate along partisan, racial, and ethnic lines. While the majority of non-Hispanic whites saw this as an honest attempt to deal with the illegal immigrant problem, most Latinos saw the initiative as "anti-Latino" and viewed Pete Wilson, the Republican governor and incumbent gubernatorial candidate, as a demagogue for supporting it (Tomás Rivera Policy Institute 1996 survey).

Because of the passage of Proposition 187, many have argued that Latinos in California have become politicized (Scott 2000). Prior to Proposition 187, many pundits referred to the Latino electorate as "a sleeping giant." The term implied that while Latinos in California constituted a large demographic population, about 26 percent in 1990, politically they were still midgets, making only about 8 percent of California's voters in 1988 (Latino Issues Forum 1988). In the aftermath of Proposition 187, the Latino "sleeping giant" had awakened, turnout

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increased, and the Latino share of California's overall vote dramatically increased to 12 percent in 1996 and 13 percent in 1998 (Latino Issues Forum 1998; Tobar 1998). Moreover, according to a recent study based on actual voter registrar data in Los Angeles County by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (Barreto and Woods 2000), Latino turnout has not only been sustained but has actually surpassed that of other groups more traditionally considered participatory. According to this study, in 1998, Democratic Latinos in Los Angeles County voted at rates higher than any other group—including non-Hispanic white Republicans—at about 46 percent.

Not only did Proposition 187 increase Latino voter turnout in California, it also contributed to an overall expansion in the size of the Latino electorate as a result of an increase in newly naturalized Latinos citizens (Scott 2000). Because Proposition 187 was seen as a move against Latino immigrants, a large number of Latino non-citizens, perhaps out of fear of losing certain services or status, made the decision to begin the naturalization process. One newspaper report stated that the "Immigration and Naturalization Service records show that there were 234,000 applicants for citizens nationally between October 1994 and January 1995, an 80 percent increase. California State Senator Richard Polanco of Los Angeles, chairman of the Democratic Caucus, said 1,500 Latinos a day are applying for citizenship in Los Angeles County alone. That is up from 200 a day in October 1993, a 650 percent jump" (Jacobs 1995). Others put the number of citizenship applications in Los Angeles County much higher, at about 2,500 daily (Hadly 1995). This upsurge in naturalizations contributed significantly to the increase in Latino turnout and their share of the vote (Pyle, McDonnel, and Tobar 1998). The California Field Poll recently concluded that, of the 1.15 million new voters added to California's rolls in the 1990s, one million were Latinos, approximately 87 percent (Marinucci 2000).

It now seems apparent that Proposition 187 caused native-born and newly naturalized Latinos to vote in record numbers from 1994 to 1998. Many, however, attribute the expansion and increase in voter turnout to recently naturalized Latinos. Antonio Gonzales, president of Southwest Voter Registration Education Project (SVREP) noted in one interview, "The trend [toward greater civic involvement] got stronger, wider and deeper with 187, because immigrants got involved. . . . Before, it was a Mexican-American trend. Now it's a Mexican immigrant trend, a Salvadoran trend, a Central American trend" (Scott 2000: 19). The extent to which both native-born and, in particular, newly naturalized Latinos continue to participate at similar rates remains a subject for speculation. Our interest is to examine whether newly naturalized Latinos in California did, in fact, turnout in record numbers as a result of the naturalization process and the political environment. If they did, is this behavior significantly different from longer-term naturalized and native-born citizens of California? Is this pattern observable in other states?

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A Demographic Portrait of California, Texas, and Florida

How important is this potential pool of new voters? What evidence do we have that Latinos are naturalizing in higher numbers in California? In 1990, the U.S. Bureau of the Census counted 22.4 million Latinos in the U.S., making them about 9 percent of the nation's 250 million people. The Latino population is projected to rise from 31 million in 2000 to 59 million by 2030, and 81 million by 2050. The largest group making up the Latino population is composed of Mexican Americans. As of 1990, Mexican Americans made up 61.2 percent of Latinos. The second largest are Puerto Ricans at 12.1 percent, followed by Cubans at 4.8 percent.

In terms of geographic distribution, California has the largest share of the Latino population in the country, at about 33 percent. Approximately three quarters of these are of Mexican ancestry or origin with Salvadorans (6 percent) as the largest group among the others. Texas comes in second with about 21 percent (over 85 percent of whom are of Mexican origin) while Florida has about 8 percent. In Florida, Cubans are about 62 percent of Latinos, Puerto Ricans 11 percent, with the rest widely distributed in terms of origin. According to 1990 Census figures, there were 7.6 million self-identified Latinos in California making up about 25.4 percent of the population. According to this same estimate 45 percent of Latinos in California are foreign-born. In our survey, 52.2 percent were foreign-born while 47.8 percent were native-born. Within the next twenty-five years, California's Latinos are predicted to comprise about 43.1 percent of the population, a plurality (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990).

California, Texas, and Florida have experienced rapid increases in naturalizations in recent years. Nationwide, this phenomenon was the result of the joint occurrence of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (and the subsequent wait for citizenship eligibility) and change in Mexico's nationality laws. Since the pool of potential new citizens varies in size, numbers of newly naturalized citizens will vary considerably across the three states. More important is the acceleration in the rate of naturalization, which also varies across states. While 1996 represents the high point for each state, the discontinuity in California began after 1993. In 1994, the number was nearly twice that of the preceding period, increasing another 50 percent for 1995, then doubling again for 1996. For Florida, 1996 represents a significant jump; while the increase in Texas, though evident, is considerably more modest (Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Statistical Yearbook*).

The above demographics raise two points. First, the number of new citizens is large and growing, making their importance as a political phenomenon pretty apparent. Second, the greater increase in California suggests that conditions in that political environment may be playing a role. At this point, we turn our attention to what is known about the political participation of naturalized citizens.

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TABLE 1.
PERSONS NATURALIZED BY STATE OF RESIDENCE SINCE IRCA

	California	Texas	Florida
1986	105,284	13,439	20,366
1987	82,607	13,266	8,041
1988	65,397	18,625	15,589
1989	50,286	17,372	14,216
1990	61,736	24,529	22,978
1991	125,661	16,266	23,281
1992	52,411	17,631	21,129
1993	68,100	26,403	26,628
1994	118,567	25,148	35,186
1995	171,285	32,209	31,372
1996	378,014	57,970	123,368

LITERATURE REVIEW

There has long been an assumption among researchers that the naturalization process fosters good citizen behavior and acts as a catalyst to high rates of political participation among immigrant voters (DeSipio 1996b: 196). This assumption has never been empirically tested. Most of our knowledge of the nexus between naturalization and political participation is based on historical accounts of particular immigrant groups (e.g., Handlin 1941). These accounts emphasize the role machine politics played in bringing out the immigrant vote (Myers 1917; Krase and LaCerra 1991; Allen 1993). It remains unclear whether the naturalization process alone is a sufficient condition fostering higher levels of political participation among immigrant voters or whether the political or social context under which naturalization occurs is the primary determinant.[1]

The need to study the nexus between naturalization and political participation is critical for the Latino population. Non-citizenship is the most important factor depressing overall Latino participation rates vis a vis the total Latino population size (Calvo and Rosenstone 1989; DeSipio 1996a; Uhlaner 1996). Moreover, considering the large pool of non-citizen Latinos waiting to naturalize, their political behavior upon naturalizing has important implications for Latino political empowerment (Pachon 1991).

[1] It is worth noting that much of the historical literature on the positive effect of naturalization was driven by the experiences of Irish-Americans. Sowell (1981) suggests, however, that the politicization of this population had much to do with the highly politicized environment from which they had emigrated, as well as their extant command of the English language upon their arrival in the United States.

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DeSipio (1996b) challenged the conventional wisdom that the naturalization process acts as a catalyst to higher rates of political participation. He studies the effects naturalization has on three types of political behavior: organizational participation, ethnic organizational participation, and electoral participation. He estimates a multivariate model of voter registration and voting among Mexican and Cuban respondents. He includes four core socio-demographic variables (age, education, income, and labor force participation) and two factors important to understanding immigrant/ethnic participation—language and national origin. For registration and voting, naturalization proved to be a significant and negative predictor of political behavior. Across a range of organizational and electoral behaviors, DeSipio found that native-born and naturalized Latino U.S. citizens have comparable levels of political and organizational activity. When levels did vary for specific activities, the native-born usually had higher rates of participation than did the naturalized.

In a recent analysis of voter turnout, the U.S. Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey (CPS) (Casper and Bass 1996) asked respondents whether they registered for and voted in the election held on Tuesday, November 5, 1996. The report analyzes whether newly enfranchised citizens are more likely to vote than their native-born counterparts. In some cases certain ethnic groups' native-born population indicated that it would vote at a higher rate than the naturalized population, while in other cases the desire to vote was similar among both populations. For Hispanics, newly naturalized respondents indicated that they would be voting at a higher rate (53 percent) than native-born Hispanics (42 percent).

Theory of Naturalized Voter Participation

Factors determining each individual's likelihood of voting are not constant over time. Rather, propensity to vote is the result of a dynamic process. Previous studies on Latino political participation explained voter turnout for particular elections without taking into account differences in time of naturalization and registration or the political environment at the time of naturalization. We develop a model of Latino electoral participation that captures voter-turnout fluctuations among native and naturalized Latinos across naturalization cohorts.

Political circumstances can play a significant part in the decision to naturalize. The pool of Latino eligible voters, particularly in California, has grown significantly in recent years, and this growth has come from politically motivated immigrants who are becoming citizens and potential voters at precisely the moment that Latino-focused issues are defining the behavior and choices of many Latino citizens. The decision to naturalize and vote on the part of Latino immigrants in California was largely due to the contemporary rhetoric and ballot propositions, which were perceived as an attack on Latinos and in particular Latino immigrants. There is some evidence suggesting that the decision to

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turnout and vote may at times be driven by a perceived political attack (Radcliff and Saiz 1995). In addition, the decision to turnout is not only motivated by individual level factors but also by the political context which may mobilize individuals to see the benefits of voting in terms of a larger group interest (e.g., Tajfel 1982; Turner 1982; Uhlaner 1989). We argue that these two related factors proved to be pivotal in turning out newly naturalized Latino voters in California.

Our theory is that subsequent levels of political participation are endogenous to the self-selective characteristics of the naturalization process and the raised expectations that accompany such life choice. Immigrants who chose to naturalize as a result of political events are more motivated to vote than others from their ethnicity. The decisions to engage the system and seek citizenship is a reflection of these individuals' underlying preferences and, as such, gives us strong signals about their propensity to participate. The result is an expectation that these highly motivated, self-selected individuals will vote at rates higher than native-born citizens (men and women selected in a process unrelated to contemporary political events).

By contrast, two other types of naturalized citizens might exhibit lower rates of participation. The first type includes individuals who entered the citizenry for reasons unrelated to politics. Some immigrants, either newly enfranchised or long-term, live in environments where immigration and ethnicity as issues have not had their salience raised by political and electoral events. While it is certainly the case that some of these citizens did naturalize for political reasons, our expectations in this regard are lower than for new citizens in ethnically/politically charged environments.

The second group includes long-term naturalized citizens whose naturalization decision was politically motivated, but whose participation is damped by the negative impact of unrealized expectations that lower levels of efficacy and political motivation over time. We expect the process of political socialization within the relevant ethnic community will lead to a convergence in the levels of participation between immigrants of various cohorts and native-born citizens. That is, for long-standing naturalized citizens, political expectations and disappointment levels should come to resemble those of long-life residents.

The political climate for Latinos in California through much of the mid-1990s was described by some observers as hostile, and by nearly all as tense. A series of statewide ballot initiatives raised the salience of immigration and ethnicity in state politics. The first, Proposition 187 appearing on the November 1994 ballot, was designed to withhold state services from undocumented immigrants and to require public servants to report suspected undocumented persons to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Its proponents saw the measure as addressing, in part, the significant policy challenges presented by large undocumented populations. Opponents, alarmed by the prospect of schoolteachers and doctors "informing" on students and patients, portrayed the issue as anti-Latino. They

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pointed out that the correlates that would raise suspicions or "identify" undocumented persons—and cause them to be denied services—would, inevitably, be language and ethnic appearance. The prospect of illegal Canadians, for example, would not suggest that whites seeking public accommodations were likely to face questioning glares and false reports. In short, opponents believed the issue was racial/ethnic animus.

Close on the heels of Proposition 187 was a second measure, Proposition 209, outlawing affirmative action in public employment, education, and contracting. Prop 209, placed on the ballot following a highly divisive debate on affirmative action by the University of California Board of Regents, was voted on in the November 1996 general election. The supporters of this measure and the earlier policy changes at UC—prominent groups and individuals, particularly Governor Pete Wilson—bore a striking resemblance to those supporting the earlier initiative.[2] While affirmative action programs in California had many beneficiaries, the issue was again interpreted by many Latinos as another manifestation of racial or ethnic resentment, undoubtedly due in part to the previous measure, Proposition 187, which had raised the salience of potential anti-Latino bias in the minds of Latino voters.

While occurring after the collection of our data, Proposition 227 on the June 1998 primary ballot outlawed bilingual education, yet another focusing event the motivation of which is perceived as anti-Latino bias. A number of other less visible events contributed to the perception that Latinos were "under attack." For example, Governor Wilson signed an executive order withholding state funded pre-natal care services from undocumented women.[3]

Our theory suggests that environments where immigration and ethnicity become highly charged and salient issues will yield a newly naturalized immigrant pool whose level of political participation should be higher. California in the 1990s clearly meets this standard. From this observation and our theory, then, we can derive several expectations. First, in California where political circumstances have helped mobilize Latino participation, we expect newly naturalized Latinos to vote at higher rates than both native-born citizens and long-standing naturalized citizens, controlling for other widely recognized determinants of turnout. Second,

[2] In fairness, there was some divergence in the pools of supporters. For example, Ward Connerly, a principal proponent of Proposition 209 against affirmative action, and Ron Unz, who went on to author Proposition 227 on bilingual education, both claimed to have opposed 187.

[3] At the national level, in the summer of 1996, President Clinton also signed "welfare reform" into law. A key element for Latino voters was the presence of anti-immigrant provisions, elements that denied benefits even to legally resident immigrants who were not yet citizens. These provisions managed to attract the only GOP nay votes on the bill from South Florida Cuban members of the House. The anti-immigrant provisions of welfare reform, however, affected Latinos nationwide and hence, could not contribute to an expectation of differential rates of voting. The remaining polarizing events were focused in California.

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among earlier cohorts of naturalized citizens there should be either no observable difference in turnout rates when compared with the native-born Latino population, or these long-term naturalized citizens should vote at a somewhat lower rate than native-born Latinos. Finally, this dynamic is driven by the politicized nature of the environment in which individuals choose to become citizens. In less politically charged contexts like Texas and Florida in the mid-1990s, the differences in turnout between the newly naturalized and the other two groups should be either smaller or insignificantly different from zero.

Data and Analysis

In the spring of 1997, the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute conducted a three-state study of the Latino electorate.[4] From each state, a sample of Latino-surnamed citizens was drawn with a total sample size of 1325 respondents divided roughly evenly among the three states.[5] An intentional oversample of respondents who self-reported being registered to vote was obtained in order to assure that sample sizes would be sufficient to make multivariate assessments concerning characteristics of voters.[6] Respondents were asked 47 demographic and political questions which, among others, included whether they were naturalized or native-born U.S. citizens, the year in which they were naturalized, whether they were registered to vote, whether they had voted in the 1996 general election and, if so, for whom. Two additional variables were coded by observation.

The data gathered from the survey were then subjected to a validation procedure, where self-reported registration and vote were checked for accuracy against voter rolls and records for the 1996 general election.[7] The dependent

[4] The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute was the original collector of the data. The survey instrument was constructed by Harry Pachon and Gary Segura of Claremont Graduate University, and Rodolfo de la Garza and Daron Shaw of the University of Texas. Any analysis and results are solely the responsibilities of the authors. For a detailed discussion of the survey method and design, see Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee (2000).

[5] The missed-observation problem of relying upon surnames is well known but unavoidable. The first screening question asked whether the respondent considered him- or herself Latino or Hispanic. "No" responses were not counted.

[6] The ratio of registered to unregistered is 3:1. As it turns out, the resulting sample and validated figures correspond very closely to CPS data, indicating that the oversample resulted in little or no bias (Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee 2000). Though Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee (2000) do employ sample weights for age and gender, we find little justification and, instead, use the original data. Nevertheless, the results of our replication efforts on their analyses were extremely similar, giving us further confidence that the weighting was, in the end, not necessary.

[7] Subsequent to initial analysis, an error in the validation procedure was uncovered. Validation was then repeated for California, correcting for the earlier procedural problem. While in principle, this suggests that we are more confident of our California numbers than our numbers in other states, the revised validation results correlated with the first validation attempt at .821, and results from the data analysis were not appreciably affected.

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variable used in this analysis, then, is not self-reported behavior but, rather, *Validated 1996 Vote* which is coded as a dichotomy where one (1) indicates that the respondent did, in fact, vote in 1996, and zero (0) means the negation.

Respondents were identified as being either native-born or naturalized and, if naturalized, by whether they become citizens before 1992 or since. A simple examination of the dependent variable, grouped by these cohorts and by state, is encouraging for our hypotheses. The rates of validated voting within each group and by state are reported in Table 2. Two things are immediately apparent. The first is that California stands apart from the other two states in the levels of voting, and that level was very high by historical standards. In comparisons among figures for the newly naturalized, native-born, and totals, voting among California Latinos is always higher. Overall Latino turnout in California is estimated here at 60 percent of eligibles, compared with 34 percent in Florida and 37 percent in Texas.[8] This difference is substantial (and statistically significant at $p = .000$), but not as large as the difference among the newly naturalized. That rate in California was an astounding 75 percent, compared with figures of 25 percent and 32 percent for Florida and Texas, respectively. This difference is, again, highly significant.

The second apparent trend is that newly naturalized citizens in California out perform their colleagues in the state. Table 2 also reports group differences within each state. When compared with native-born Latinos, voting rates are significantly higher among California's newly naturalized, and voting is also significantly greater when compared to other naturalized citizens in California. This data suggests that the newly naturalized had turnout rates as much as 20 percent higher than native-born Latinos in California, a significant difference. These trends are not apparent in Texas and Florida where, in both instances, the newly naturalized participated at the *lowest* rates of the three cohorts.

[8] Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee (2000) report turnout rates from this data lower than the numbers presented here. Specifically, they report aggregate turnout rates of 36 percent, 29 percent, and 29 percent for California, Florida and Texas, respectively. The figures in Table 2 are between 5 percent and 24 percent higher for three reasons. First, Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee fail to exclude respondents who report naturalization dates after the election, or who report not knowing their naturalization dates. The former group was not eligible to vote in the 1996 election, and the latter are most likely non-citizens who falsely report citizenship status. The evidence on electoral behavior supports this. Only 10 of 98 respondents in this latter group have a positive validated vote, a rate so dramatically low that—in combination with their failure to recall the year of naturalization—suggests something is surely amiss. Second, all respondents for whom the validation is coded "missing," i.e. their vote was neither confirmed nor decisively disconfirmed, were also treated as being citizens but not having voted. We prefer to treat missing data as missing, particularly since we cannot make assumptions about the citizenship of individuals in the missing category for either the "year of naturalization" or the "validated vote" variables. Finally, our figures are based on our revised validation in California. Nevertheless, since we are modeling individual-level behavior, the overall estimates of turnout rates are not particularly germane to our argument.

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TABLE 2
PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS ACTUALLY VOTING IN 1996, BY STATE AND COHORT

	California	Florida	Texas	ANOVAS within groups, across states
Natives	.551 n = 214	.336 n = 119	.369 n = 310	F = 10.84 p = .000***
Naturalized pre-1992	.558 n = 86	.378 n = 214	.373 n = 54	F = 4.39 p = .013*
Naturalized 1992-1996	.747 n = 95	.246 n = 72	.321 n = 32	F = 27.86 p = .000***
ANOVAS within states, across groups	F = 5.79 p = .003**	F = 1.92 p = .149	F = 0.13 p = .879	
Statewide total	.600 n = 395	.343 n = 405	.366 n = 396	F = 33.46 P = .000***

*Significant at p < .05
**Significant at p < .01
***Significant at p < .001

Consistent with our expectations, long-term naturalized citizens behave largely as native-born Latinos do. In no state were rates of voting for native-born Latinos significantly different (higher or lower) from those of long-term naturalized citizens, or from all naturalized citizens in general. As a result, for the remainder of the analysis, we focus our attention exclusively on estimating the uniqueness of the newly naturalized.

In order to test our hypotheses in a multivariate context, we have constructed a generalizable model of voting which includes twelve predictors. *Naturalized 92-96* is our key variable of interest and is operationalized as a dummy variable that identifies those respondents who are naturalized citizens reporting naturalization dates after 1991 but before the election.[9] The unexpressed category includes those naturalized in earlier time periods and all native-born citizens, grouped together

[9] We chose the cohort break point between 1991 and 1992 since it would eliminate the single year surge caused by IRCA rather than political conditions in California. One might reasonably argue that beginning the "new citizen" cohort at 1991, or at 1995 (given Prop 187 was on the 1994 ballot) might be a superior alternative. As we indicated, we believe the saliency of immigration and the effects of this rhetoric began in 1992 and therefore use this as the starting point for identifying potentially politically motivated naturalized citizens. Nevertheless, when we replicate this analysis using either of the alternative break points for identifying the group in question, the results are largely the same for all three specifications.

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as a result of their insignificant differences in the bivariate analysis. We expect the coefficient on *Naturalized 92-96* to be positive in California and insignificant, or even negative, in Texas and Florida where, we hypothesize, the political climate has not been sufficiently hostile to elicit this phenomenon.

Democrat is a straight dichotomous measure identifying self-reported Democrats, with all others coded as zero (0). We expect these core identifiers in California will be more likely to register and vote than weak identifiers or those identifying with the party perceived to be associated with these "anti-Latino" ballot measures, consistent with Segura, Falcon, and Pachon (1997). *Strength of Partisanship* measures the vehemence with which respondents identify with their party, since strong partisans are generally more likely to vote. This variable has four values, the highest indicating strong party identification. *Political Interest* captures the respondent's self-reported level of interest in politics and ranges from zero to three, with three an indication of "a great deal" of interest. We expect both *Political Interest* and *Strength of Partisanship* to be positively related to likelihood of and voting.

Group Mobilization is a composite measure, developed by Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee (2000), capturing the respondent's self-reported involvement in community organizations and the contact by those organizations in advance of the election. Ranging from zero (0) to two (2), a high value indicates that s/he was contacted and encouraged to turn out by member(s) of an organization to which s/he belongs. Similarly, *Hispanic Contact* signifies whether the respondent reports being contacted by either a Latino political organization or by campaign worker(s) for a Latino candidate to encourage the potential voter to register and vote. This variable is a dichotomy. For both *Group Mobilization* and *Hispanic Contact*, we might expect positive and significant effects on the probability that the respondent voted.[10]

Income is a categorized variable capturing the level of income the respondent reports. There are six categories, each covering a $15,000 range, and the last comprising $75,000 and greater. We expect income level will be positively associated with registration and voting.[11]

High School Grad captures the respondent's educational attainment. Given fairly small cell sizes above this level, an original multi-category variable was

[10] This pair of variables is included primarily to control for the effects identified in Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee (2000). They find no effect to the composite and a strong effect from Hispanic-specific contact—driven by Texas and Florida and absent in California. Pantoja and Woods (1999) also find no effect of group mobilization efforts among California Latinos in 1996. We would expect our analysis to be consistent with theirs.

[11] An alternative approach would be to include dummy variables for all income categories but the lowest, with coefficients assessing the effect of increasing income on vote probability. In results not presented here, we replicated all our models with these dummy variables substituted for the ordinal measure, and the results on our key variables were unchanged.

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collapsed to this dichotomy, where one (1) indicates the completion of high school and zero (0) the contrary. For the whole sample, about 43 percent had completed high school, with a somewhat smaller number in California (39 percent). Like *Income*, we believe this educational measure will be positively related to registration and voting.

Church Attendance captures the respondent's church-going behavior and varies from zero (0) to four (4), the high value indicating regular/weekly church attendance. The role of religion in politics and the place of the church as an organizing factor in political life suggest a positive coefficient on this variable.

Finally, we include three demographic controls. *Age* simply captures the age of the respondent and will be positively related to the likelihood that the respondent voted. Younger individuals are consistently less likely to vote. *Mexican* is a simple dichotomy to control for the largest national-origin group among Latinos in Texas and California. *Cuban* does the same in Florida. These two controls are present to test whether Latinos not from the dominant nationality among the states' Hispanic populations behave differently, an expectation that is widely shared in the literature (Garcia 1997; Hero 1992; Moreno 1997).

These twelve exogenous variables were entered into a set of logistic regression models specified to predict whether or not the respondent actually voted in 1996 (*Validated 1996 Vote*). Separate models were run for each state sample and the results are reported in Table 3a. Model 1 reports the California results for the dependent variable *Validated 1996 Vote*. The model correctly predicts 66.91 percent of the cases and has a proportional reduction in error (PRE, Lambda-p) of .110. As is readily apparent, newly naturalized Latino citizens in California are significantly more likely to have voted than other Latino citizens, this even holds true after we have controlled for other predictors of vote. If we examine Table 3b, we can observe the magnitude of the effect.

Table 3b reports changes in the predicted probabilities of having voted given changes in the value of each specific independent variable. The value reported for each predictor is the net effect over the range of the variable's values.[12] Being newly naturalized in California raises the respondent's likelihood of having voted by .16 percent, a significant effect since we have controlled for other important predictors of turnout. The size of this effect is on par with *Strength of Partisanship* as a predictor of voting.

Turning back to Table 3a, a number of other variables emerge as significant predictors of turnout among California Latinos. *Church Attendance* and *Strength of Partisanship* are both positively associated with the likelihood of having voted,

[12] We are indebted to J. Scott Long of the University of Indiana for this procedure. The reported figure represents the change in the model's predicted probability, resulting from a change from the minimum to the maximum value of the variable in question, holding all other predictors at their mean value.

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TABLE 3A

LOGISTIC REGRESSION RESULTS FOR PREDICTING VALIDATED 1996 VOTE

Variables	Model 1 California Full Model	Model 2 California Dropping Income/Age	Model 3 Florida Full Model	Model 4 Florida Dropping Age/Income	Model 5 Texas Full Model	Model 6 Texas Dropping Age/Income
Naturalized 92-96	.728*	1.008***	–.131	–.381	–.330	–.136
	(.328)	(.290)	(.412)	(.338)	(.566)	(.493)
Political Interest	.153	.169†	.385**	.503***	.552***	.599***
	(.156)	(.130)	(.166)	(.131)	(.175)	(.147)
Democrat	–.103	.271	.501	.402	–.305	–.241
	(.370)	(.304)	(.367)	(.304)	(.440)	(.371)
Strength of Partisanship	.262†	.260†	.138	.153	.306†	.319*
	(.199)	(.165)	(.176)	(.137)	(.210)	(.171)
Mexican	–.065	.008			1.055*	.488
	(.334)	(.279)			(.457)	(.367)
Cuban			–.193	–.164		
			(.347)	(.273)		
Hispanic Contact	–.133	–.015	1.015**	.720**	.752*	.680**
	(.350)	(.292)	(.356)	(.289)	(.344)	(.281)
Group Mobilization	.150	.027	–.061	–.235	–.083	.008
	(.210)	(.183)	(.254)	(.207)	(.233)	(.197)
High School Graduate	.252	.448*	.157	.192	.062	–.058
	(.306)	(.252)	(.341)	(.252)	(.336)	(.268)
Church Attendance	.293**	.265**	–.016	.044	–.206†	–.056
	(.112)	(.096)	(.108)	(.087)	(.135)	(.112)

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TABLE 3A (continued)

Variables	Model 1 California Full Model	Model 2 California Dropping Income/Age	Model 3 Florida Full Model	Model 4 Florida Dropping Age/Income	Model 5 Texas Full Model	Model 6 Texas Dropping Age/Income
Income	–.031		.156		.026	
	(.101)		(.112)		(.125)	
Age	.013†		.024**		.028**	
	(.009)		(.010)		(.010)	
Constant	–2.223**	–2.106***	–3.694***	–2.296***	–4.013***	–2.883***
	(.783)	(.594)	(.777)	(.527)	(.837)	(.638)
Chi-square	26.28	39.70	36.18	35.24	44.50	40.07
Significance	.006	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
PPC	66.91%	65.90%	71.78%	66.27%	67.89%	67.99%
PRE	.110	.163	.139	.009	.132	.110
Sample size	269	361	241	338	246	328

***Significant at p ≤ .001
**Significant at p ≤ .01
*Significant at p ≤ .05
† p ≤ .10 (one tailed tests)

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TABLE 3B
CHANGES IN PREDICTED PROBABILITIES, MIN → MAX

Variables	Model 1 California Full Model	Model 2 California Dropping Income/Age	Model 3 Florida Full Model	Model 4 Florida Dropping Age/Income	Model 5 Texas Full Model	Model 6 Texas Dropping Age/Income
Naturalized 92-96	.160*	.230***	–.027	–.084*	–.065	–.029
Political Interest	.110	.126†	.226**	.318***	.309***	.343***
Democrat	–.025	.067	.105	.092	–.063	–.052
Strength of Partisanship	.187†	.192†	.085	.104	.184†	.197*
Mexican	–.016	.002			.212*	.103
Cuban			–.040	–.037		
Hispanic Contact	.031	–.004	.231**	.172**	.168*	.155**
Group Mobilization	.070	.013	–.025	–.104	–.034	.004
High School Graduate	.060	.110*	.033	.044	.013	–.012
Church Attendance	.283**	.258**	–.014	.040	–.182	–.049†
Income	–.037		.171		.027	
Age	.249†		.420**		.486**	

***Significant at $p \leq .001$
**Significant at $p \leq .01$
*Significant at $p \leq .05$
†$p \leq .10$ (one tailed tests)

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the latter just missing the conventional significance threshold. None of the remaining variables reached the customary level of significance but, with the exception of *Income*, all are in the expected direction.

The relative paucity of significant predictors is owed, in part, to the relative strength of other effects and to the loss of respondents. We lose a considerable number of cases when we include *Income* and *Age* as predictors, due to high non-response rates. Since both failed to reach significance in our first model and cost us substantial observations, we reran the model with *Validated 1996 Vote* as the dependent variable, this time excluding those predictors and raising the N from 269 to 361. The results are reported as Model 2 on Table 3a, and the changes in predicted probabilities are reported similarly in Table 3b.

The new model predicts 65.93 percent of the cases correctly and has a PRE (Lambda-p) of .163. This PRE indicates an increase in explanatory power when compared to the fuller model, but the percent predicted correctly declines slightly with the loss of these two predictors. Nevertheless, the results on our key predictor variables are essentially unchanged in direction, general magnitude, significance, and effect on the predicted probabilities. Recent citizens, *Naturalized 92-96*, are more likely to vote than other naturalized citizens. Their probability of voting is .230 higher than the others in the sample—a huge effect by any estimate. *Church Attendance* and *Strength of Partisanship* remain in the predicted direction and have the same significance levels, and they are joined by *High School Grad*, our sole remaining socioeconomic control, and *Political Interest*, both of which are in the predicted direction, the latter marginally significant ($p < .10$) and the former significant at the .05 level. Consistent with the earlier work, mobilization effects, whether general or Hispanic specific, continue to have no significant effect and are negatively signed.

So far, the results are very supportive of both our expectations and the results from our bivariate analyses presented in Table 2. Californians naturalized in this highly politicized ethnic environment appear to be decidedly more participatory than other naturalized citizens and the native-born. Despite controlling for a variety of other well-recognized factors, the newly naturalized remained significantly more likely to have voted.

Our argument, however, is that California's political climate produced this effect. It is only sustained, then, if this pattern of behavior is not reflected in the models of outcomes in other states. Specifically, the recent absence of statewide ballot initiatives and divisive, immigrant-focused politics in Texas and Florida should weaken any cohort effect. Newly naturalized voters in those states might be slightly more political, but we would not expect significant trends like those in California. And, indeed, the F-tests in Table 2 suggested exactly this. Now we look more closely.

Models 3 and 4 in Tables 3a and 3b examine the *Validated 1996 Vote* of Latino citizens in Florida. The underlying model is the same, as are most of our

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expectations.[13] As before, the first column represents the full model, while the latter excludes *Income* and *Age* to reduce the decline in sample size attributable to question refusal.

The first and most obvious result is that the model is considerably less powerful in Florida. Many of the predictors fail to reach significance in either specification. Perhaps more importantly, the explanatory power of the models, captured in the Proportional Reduction of Error, is poor to nonexistent. While for the full model, a PRE of .139 is actually better than for California, for the model with the larger sample, forfeiting the two problematic variables drops the PRE to nearly zero, an indication that the model does no better than simply predicting the mode.[14]

The most important findings are with respect to our key predictor variables. In neither of the specifications is *Naturalized 92-96* statistically significantly different from zero. When we control for other factors, there is no evidence that those most recently naturalized behave in a manner any differently from either long-term naturalized citizens or native-born citizens among Florida Latinos. In short, the cohort and naturalization effects visible in California have not appeared in Florida.

As for the remaining predictors, *Political Interest*, *Age*, and *Hispanic Contact* work as hypothesized, and *Income* is marginally insignificant but in the correct direction for predicting vote. Remaining predictors have no significant effects. This includes *Group Mobilization*, again confirming previous findings that while Hispanic-specific GOTV efforts do affect turnout in Florida, more general efforts appear to have little effect.

The models for Texas perform almost as poorly. Nevertheless, our key expectation was supported. Looking at Models 5 and 6 in Tables 3a and 3b, it is apparent that the increased levels of participation among newly naturalized citizens, found in California, is not replicated in Texas. In no instance is the variable *Naturalized 92-96* significant. For Texas, we are forced to conclude that there are few systematic differences among Latino citizens grouped by nativity and date of naturalization, and that what differences there are point to lower turnout generally among all naturalized citizens (without regard to when they entered the political system), rather than the pattern demonstrated in California.

Looking at the rest of each model, it is apparent that these models, like those for Florida, are not particularly strong at accounting for variance. As for the

[13] The unique partisan allegiance of Cuban Americans might cause us to revise our expectation regarding sign and significance for *Democrat*.

[14] This is a textbook example of why Percent Predicted Correctly is an inappropriate measure of goodness-of-fit for models of dichotomous dependent variables. In the case of Model 4, for example, the model makes 66.27 percent correct predictions. Had we merely always predicted the modal outcome, however, we would be correct 65.98 percent of the time. The model, then, represents scant improvement.

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individual variable results, *Political Interest*, *Age*, and *Hispanic Contact* are the only significant predictors in the hypothesized direction. *Mexican* is significant but, this time, positive, suggesting Mexican-Americans are more likely to vote than non-Mexican Latinos in Texas, controlling for other factors. Given that Mexican-Americans are more than 85 percent of the respondents in Texas, however, caution in interpreting this effect is warranted. The models of Texas vote again illustrate the difficulty of relying on correct predictions as a measure of goodness-of-fit. While the two models predict 67 percent to 68 percent of the cases correctly, the PRE for the full model is only .132, while the PRE for the model excluding *Income* and *Age* is merely .110. The explanatory powers of the models, vis a vis modal predictions, are weak.

Discussion and Conclusion

We began this inquiry by suggesting that naturalization in a hostile political climate was, itself, a political act that tells us something about the behavioral propensities of those who undertake such a process. DeSipio (1996b) found that naturalized citizens might generally be expected to participate less, but his work treats naturalized citizens as an undifferentiated group, without sufficient attention to the time of naturalization and the circumstances. We believed that citizens who chose to naturalize as a result of perceived political threat would participate more than others. Specifically, we suggested that the recent political climate in California created exactly such an environment. Ballot initiatives and gubernatorial rhetoric and executive orders raised the salience of ethnicity and immigration as issues in the minds of potential citizens. Latino permanent residents, sensing growing hostility to their political and economic interests, chose to naturalize and enter the political system in large numbers. The aggregate data suggested this might be the case, but we set out to demonstrate the effect at the individual level.

Our results were largely supportive of our claims. Citizens naturalized in this politically charged environment appear to participate in politics at rates substantially higher than those naturalized in other environments and those born in the United States. By contrast, those naturalized outside of this political environment, either in California before the high-profile ballot initiatives and polarizing rhetoric, or in other states, seem to perform in a manner consistent with that of native-born citizens.

Our findings are important for three reasons. First, the simple argument that naturalized citizens always participate at lower levels than natives is clearly suspect. Our results suggest that you need to be specific with regard to which naturalized citizens' behavior you are explaining, because of both inter-cohort and inter-state differences driven by context. We also suggest that long-term naturalized citizens are hard to distinguish from natives in their turnout.

Second, our findings suggest that immigrant-bashing and other activities perceived to be anti-Latino potentially have huge negative political consequences for

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those political forces perceived to be the source of such attacks. We made reference to other work documenting the explosive growth of the Latino electorate in Los Angeles County and statewide in California (Barreto and Woods 2000; Marinucci 2000). There is evidence to suggest that this growth in the electorate is already having effects. This project suggests that these effects are endogenous to the very behavior of those political interests most likely to be adversely affected.

Third, our replication of earlier work on this data (Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee 2000) suggests that their principal findings were sound with regard to mobilization but less certain on other issues. Mobilization does appear to have had far greater effect in Florida and Texas than in California, where Latino turnout was clearly and significantly higher than in the other two states. This finding is consistent with theirs, as well as Pantoja and Woods (1999). But their conclusions regarding the generally negative effect of naturalization appear overstated, especially since they fail to distinguish inter-state and cohort differences among naturalized citizens. In addition, the widely divergent performance of several predictors across state models suggests that the pooling of the data into a single analysis was unwarranted and masked key differences between the states.

Finally, our findings suggest that those pushing political or policy positions perceived to be anti-Latino in other states should be cautious. The evidence suggests no mobilization through naturalization in Texas and Florida. While this was the case at the time in which these data were collected, there is nothing to say that the dynamic observed in California cannot replicate itself elsewhere. For example, more statewide initiatives on affirmative action, immigrant rights, and English-only provisions have at least the potential to ignite the same sort of ethnic anger that appeared in California in the mid-1990s. While the peculiar political alliances in other states might serve to mitigate the backlash, sentiment on perceived ethnic issues might, in the end, trump ideological alliances. So while Texas and Florida have yet to see the effects of this anger-motivated political mobilization, they still might.

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Received: July 14, 2000
Accepted for Publication: April 19, 2001
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