



7-2000

Asian Americans, Political Organizations, and Participation in Chicago Electoral Precincts

John P. Pelissero

Loyola University Chicago, jpeliss@luc.edu

Timothy B. Krebs

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Shannon Jenkins

Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation

John P. Pelissero, Timothy B. Krebs, and Shannon Jenkins. "Asian Americans, Political Organizations, and Participation in Chicago Electoral Precincts" *Urban Affairs Review* Vol 35 (2000): 750-769.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Publications at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Political Science: Faculty Publications and Other Works by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).

ASIAN-AMERICANS, POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND PARTICIPATION IN CHICAGO ELECTORAL PRECINCTS

JOHN P. PELISSERO

Loyola University Chicago

TIMOTHY B. KREBS

University of North Carolina, Greensboro

SHANNON JENKINS

Loyola University Chicago

Precinct-level data for voter registration and turnout in Chicago elections are used to assess the impact of the Asian population and party organization on political participation during the 1990s. Controlling for the effects of newer immigration, mobility, and socioeconomic status, the authors learn that larger Asian-American populations are associated with higher voter registration. Voter turnout is negatively affected in areas of higher Asian populations but attenuates when independent precincts are examined separately from machine-style precincts. This suggests that registration may be encouraged in Asian areas, but voting appears to be negatively affected by political party organizations.

Since 1965, when Congress reformed the nation's immigration laws, newcomers from Asia have arrived in the United States in great numbers (Kitano and Daniels 1988, 16-17). There are more than 7 million Asian Americans in the United States, most of whom immigrated during the 1980s, a decade that witnessed the largest immigration to the United States since the 1920s. According to the 1990 census, Chicago was among the top three locations in the United States of intended residence for Asians (U.S. Department of Commerce 1992, Tables 6 and 11). Although we generally do not think of Chicago as a particularly important setting for Asian politics, it is something of a

AUTHORS' NOTE: We thank the Social Policy Research Center, Northern Illinois University for use of their precinct data files and the Midwest Political Science Association for research support.

URBAN AFFAIRS REVIEW, Vol. 35, No. 6, July 2000 750-769

© 2000 Sage Publications, Inc.

David R. Morgan
 Peter O. Muller
 Patrick Mullins
 Max Neiman
 Ronald J. Oakerson
 Paul Ong
 Michael A. Pagano
 R. Andrew Parker
 Robert F. Pecorella
 Donald Phares
 Rhonda Phillips
 Mario Polese
 Kent E. Portney
 Hugo Priemus
 John Quigley
 Gordana Rabrenović
 Meredith Ramsay
 Ronald Randall
 F. Stevens Redburn
 Laura A. Reese
 James A. Regalado
 Margaret F. Reid
 Platon N. Rigos
 Gerry Riposa
 Richard B. Rosenfeld

Craig St. John
 Alan Saltzstein
 Emanuel S. Savas
 Paul C. Schmidt
 Mark Schneider
 Alex Schwartz
 Jim Seroka
 Stephen Sheppard
 David W. Sink
 David L. Sjoquist
 Preston H. Smith
 Jim Smyth
 Raphael J. Sonenshein
 Paul Speer
 Gregory D. Squires
 Lynn Staeheli
 Stephen Steinberg
 James B. Stewart, Jr.
 Randy Stoecker
 John Strate
 Gregory Streib
 James H. Svara
 Delbert A. Taebel
 George A. Taylor
 Ralph Taylor

Jon C. Teaford
 Paul Teske
 John Clayton Thomas
 David C. Thorns
 Michael Timberlake
 Donald T. Tomaskovic-Devey
 Robyne Turner
 Lawrence Vale
 Abel Valenzuela, Jr.
 Jim Vanderleeuw
 Norman C. Walzer
 Sally Ward
 Barney L. Warf
 Louis Weschler
 Brett Williams
 Michael Wolkoff
 Harold Wolman
 Kenneth Wong
 Bette Woody
 John Worrall
 James D. Wright
 Tingwel Zhang
 Yi-xing Zhou
 Joseph F. Zimmerman

magnet for Asian immigrants. The purpose of this study is to assess the political behavior of Asian-Americans in the city of Chicago during the 1990s by looking at two aspects of political life: voter registration and voter turnout. Our interest is in knowing what effect Asian-Americans may have had on participation and how that may be shaped by the presence of enduring political party organizations in many Chicago wards.

The research on Asian-Americans and political organizations is important for a number of reasons. First, we examine the political behavior of an ethnic group that, until now, has received very little attention in the participation literature (for exceptions, see Uhlaner, Cain, and Kiewiet 1989; Cain, Kiewiet, and Uhlaner 1991; Lien 1997). Second, we examine Asian-American participation at the municipal level, where party organizations exerted strong influence over patterns of ethnic participation (Dahl 1961). The local political arena is important because it is here where most ethnic groups (especially newer arrivals) develop roots and achieve initial political successes (McClain and Stewart 1995, 34). Third, although much research on this ethnic group has been conducted in western cities (Nakanishi 1985-1986), we focus on a multiethnic midwestern city with a political culture (Elazar 1970; Kincaid 1980) that places great emphasis on participation in city politics. It is also a city with ward-based party organizations that, in many instances, are still machine-like in their efficiency.

Lacking individual-level survey databases, much of what we know about urban electorates comes from studies of particular racial and ethnic groups in the aggregate. In this article, we examine patterns of registration and turnout at the precinct level in Chicago's 50 wards.

ETHNIC POLITICS IN CITIES

For decades, scholars have used ethnicity to account for much of what goes on in urban politics (Wilson and Banfield 1964; Wolfinger 1965; Parenti 1967). Wolfinger (1965) found that one's ethnicity is not an ephemeral influence on citizen participation but a more lasting element of one's political socialization. Empirical models support the notion of ethnic political culture. Nelson (1979) compared the influence of socioeconomic status and ethnicity on rates of participation among residents in New York City. He found significant differences in participation among racial and ethnic groups, even after "controlling for socioeconomic status, age, sex, length of residence, assimilation rates, and levels of ethnic consciousness" (p. 1035).

Perhaps the most durable aspect of urban politics is the linkage between ethnicity and political coalition building. This is especially important in

Chicago, a multiethnic city with a history and enduring influence of machine-style politics. Machines thrived on the basis of their ability to mobilize voters, ethnic or otherwise. According to Dahl (1961), machine leaders in New Haven used the spoils of office (patronage jobs, city contracts) to reward their multiethnic political coalition. In general, the rainbow coalition of ethnic interests that supported machine candidates was rewarded in rough proportion to their support at the ballot box. Via the strategy of ethnic inclusion and voter mobilization of newer immigrants, machine organizations placated dissent and solidified their position among the electorate. Chicago has such a history, and many observers of Chicago's political development have held to the view that the machine reached out to all new residents to enlarge the Democratic Party voter base. From this perspective, ward organizations and their army of precinct captains registered new residents early to expand the Democratic Party voter base (Rakove 1975; Guterbock 1980).

By contrast, Erie (1988) has argued that multiethnic coalitions were not the keys to machine strength (although exchange of patronage and votes was the essence of machine strength). He contended that machine organizations excluded from the coalition or demobilized certain ethnic groups once they had successfully constructed a minimum winning coalition. According to Erie, strong Irish machines (especially the one in Chicago) never controlled an amount of patronage to meet the potential demands of new immigrants (or claimants more generally), and what benefits they did control went principally to Irish supporters. A rational electoral strategy, therefore, involved ignoring those ethnic groups that arrived after the Irish, once electoral control was firmly established (see also Inglot and Pelissero 1993; Grimshaw 1992). This minimum winning coalition theory would have its greatest impact on newer arrivals or any potential new claimants on machine largesse, including Asian-Americans in Chicago.

A third perspective on coalition building suggests that ward party organizations (the workhorses of political machines) maximize registration and turnout for party candidates without regard to ethnic considerations in hopes that they will be rewarded by the officeholders they help elect. In Chicago, research has demonstrated a political dimension to service delivery. Mladenka's (1989) study of park services and, more recently, Miranda and Tunyavong's (1994) study of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and capital improvement allocations demonstrated that politics was important in this aspect of city government. Thus, regardless of the ethnic composition of the turnout, there are still material incentives for ward leaders to maximize support for favored candidates (particularly ones for mayor, who controls the city's budget process and bureaucracy). This is an increasingly important consideration for ward leaders in Chicago today in

light of their reduced ability to reward voters via patronage (Hamilton 1999). Unlike the rainbow theory of broad-based inclusion and Erie's (1988) selective mobilization hypothesis, the service delivery or political favoritism hypothesis suggests that ward-based party organizations compete with each other to demonstrate their political strength and to gain favor from the mayor and city bureaucracy. The goal is to outperform other ward organizations in delivering high pluralities in elections, thereby solidifying political favors for the ward. Protecting what one has gained in one's ward from incursions by newer claimants, such as Asian-Americans and other minority groups, is an important objective of the political favoritism motive and may lead to less coalition building by established groups (see Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1997).

ASIAN-AMERICANS AND CHICAGO POLITICS

In contrast to what we know about the political behavior of older racial and ethnic groups such as African-Americans and Latinos, little is known about the participation of one of the nation's most recent immigrant groups: Asian-Americans. What we do know is that Asian immigrants become naturalized citizens much earlier and in greater numbers than other immigrant groups (Barkan 1983). Given their initial ambition to enter the American mainstream (Lien 1994) and high levels of group consciousness (Uhlener, Cain, and Kiewiet 1989, 211), we might expect Asian-Americans to be politically active as well. In general, however, research (centered almost exclusively in California) has shown that Asian-Americans participate at lower levels than other minority groups (Wong 1986; Lien 1997). This finding persists even when the socioeconomic status (SES) of the voter, a standard predictor of participation in national and local politics (Verba and Nie 1972; Oliver 1999), is controlled (Uhlener, Cain, and Kiewiet 1989; Lien 1994).

One explanation for this is that political activities are less important for Asians than securing citizenship status. Other explanations suggest that cultural and linguistic barriers, as well as more basic concerns with economic stability, decrease the incentive (and time needed) for Asian-Americans to participate (Feng and Tang 1997, 30). Two other factors may reduce Asian participation—naturalization time and frequent change of residences. Asian-Americans are a relatively new immigrant group. As a consequence, they are likely to be highly mobile and, therefore, less likely to participate in the political process (Squire, Wolfinger, and Glass 1987). This might be especially pertinent in urban politics because many of the issues dealt with by city

governments affect individuals with a stake in the community (especially homeowners) and an interest in the policies that cities adopt (Oliver 1999, 203; Thomas and Melkers 1999, 680). Because of differences in rates of assimilation, we might also expect precincts with greater numbers of Asians emigrating since the 1970s to have lower levels of turnout than those with more immigrants from earlier migrations.

When looking at their participation in Chicago politics, we find that Asians have been hampered by a lack of focus on local affairs as well as an absence of unity in confronting local issues. The diversity of Chicago's Asian population has been an obstacle to achieving goals,¹ as members of one Asian subgroup are unwilling to support the causes and candidates from another Asian subgroup (Garza 1995). The Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights noted in a recent report that Asian-Americans need to "focus on issues confronting Asian Americans in the Chicago area, not on ethnic strife in their countries of origin" (Garza 1995, 4) to be effective in the political system. Group-organizing efforts have been low, although the Asian American Institute of Chicago is trying to change that in anticipation of the 2000 census and redistricting. One of the unknowns about Asians and Chicago is the relationship between the established ward political organizations and Asian participation.

To summarize, political participation is a function (in part) of individual and group factors. Better-educated and higher-income voters participate more regularly in the local political system because of high levels of efficacy and political interest (Alex-Assensoh 1997; Oliver 1999, 202). Group sensibilities and loyalties also affect participation rates. Group consciousness might propel individuals into the political realm, but often consciousness is articulated and advocated by entrepreneurial group leaders or political organizations. In Chicago, Democratic Party ward organizations still function at the grassroots, in some cases quite efficiently,² to mobilize support for favored candidates. Although Asian voters (and, by extension, the subgroups that compose the Asian ethnic group) do not constitute a bloc of voters city-wide that could swing elections one way or the other, their support may be crucial to election outcomes at the ward level where these groups are heavily concentrated. Furthermore, wards that deliver for successful mayoral candidates may be in an advantaged position when it comes to neighborhood services and improvements, a fact of political life in Chicago that may spur participation among Asian voters. Chicago is a highly politicized town, unlike Los Angeles and California more generally, the settings for most studies of Asians. Thus we might find that Asian status does not hinder registration and turnout at the precinct level as much as the research on Asians suggests. Ward

organizations could affect this, perhaps in the direction of inclusive rainbow coalition building or perhaps in negative ways to minimize political claimants or protect political favoritism in the allocation of jobs and services in wards.

This overview makes it clear that many questions remain about the political behavior of Asian-Americans, especially in urban settings such as Chicago. First, do high percentages of new Asian immigrants within voting precincts depress voter registration and turnout in precincts generally? Second, how might the size of the Asian-American population within precincts affect overall levels of registration and turnout, compared to other racial or ethnic populations? Third, do observed patterns of participation among Asian-Americans hold when controlling for income, residential mobility rates, and size of the new immigrant population within electoral precincts? Finally, and perhaps most important, how does the presence of a strong political organization in the ward shape Asian participation? These are the questions to which this inquiry is directed.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Based on this review, we expect variation in political participation—specifically, registration and turnout levels—to be related to racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and political organizing factors. We also believe that participation levels will vary by residential mobility and the timing of when immigrants entered the United States. Our specific hypotheses are the following:

Hypothesis 1: Precincts with larger Asian populations will have lower levels of participation. This will be especially true in precincts with larger populations of newer immigrant ethnic Asians, such as Asian Indians, Filipinos, Koreans, and Southeast Asians, rather than more established groups, such as Chinese and Japanese.

Hypothesis 2: Voter registration will be lower in precincts with higher Asian populations, higher levels of residential mobility, and larger new immigrant populations.

Hypothesis 3: Higher Asian populations will have a negative effect on precinct-level turnout after controlling for the effects of socioeconomic status and other predictors of participation.

Hypothesis 4: Machine-style political organizations will have a negative effect on precinct-level participation by Asian populations.

DATA AND METHODS

The setting for this study is Chicago, a city rich in ethnic and racial diversity with a long history of machine- and ward-based politics. Chicago has 50 wards used as the basis for representation on the city council and in the Democratic and Republican Parties' central committees. Elections to these offices, as well as mayor, clerk, and treasurer, are held every four years, including 1991 and 1995, which are studied here.³ Our unit of analysis is the voting precinct. Each ward has between 38 and 65 electoral precincts, a number that varies across election years. We have 2,361 cases (precincts) for our 1991 analysis and 1,968 for 1995.⁴ Our interest in Asians and political participation was stimulated by their high immigration to the city between 1980 and 1990 and the lack of study about the political effects of this growth. For example, the Asian population in Chicago grew 52.4% between 1980 and 1990 and included major increases among newer Asian ethnic immigrants, such as Asian Indians (+46%), Filipinos (+23%), Koreans (+36%), and Southeast Asians (+70%).

The dependent variables in this study are the following: (1) voter registration (percentage of voting-age residents registered to vote) in the municipal elections of 1991 and 1995 and (2) voter turnout (percentage of registered voters who took ballots) in the primary and general elections of 1991 and 1995. The data for these dependent variables were provided by the Chicago Board of Elections. The independent variables examined in this study are measures of race/ethnicity (black, Asian, Hispanic), socioeconomic status (income per capita), immigration (percentage foreign born who immigrated since 1980), and residential mobility (percentage who moved—changed residence—since 1985) in these precincts. These data are from the 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing (STF3) and were aggregated from the census block level to the precinct level by the Social Policy Research Center, Northern Illinois University.

A final predictor included is political party organization strength in the precincts, based on Democratic ward organization power over time. Although Chicago's legendary machine has not functioned in a citywide capacity since the late 1970s, many wards continue to operate with powerful and efficient machine-style organizations. In 1991, 20 wards still operated in machine-like fashion, 18 in 1995. These wards have successfully resisted the establishment of more independent and inclusive politics. Precincts were coded as (1) for machine-style party precincts or (0) for independent precincts.

Two kinds of analysis are presented in this article. Basic descriptive information is used to highlight the differences among racial and ethnic groups in

TABLE 1: Demographics and Political Participation in Chicago, 1990s

	<i>1990s City</i>	<i>1991 Precincts</i>	<i>1995 Precincts</i>
Population	2,783,726	2,377,365 ^a	2,370,091 ^b
White, % (<i>n</i>)	37.9 (1,056,048)	49.2	49.7
Black, % (<i>n</i>)	38.6 (1,074,471)	33.5	33.6
Asian, % (<i>n</i>)	3.6 (98,777)	4.2	4.2
Hispanic, % (<i>n</i>)	19.6 (545,852)	21.4	20.6
Immigrated post-1980, % (<i>n</i>)	7.4 (207,075)	8.5	8.4
Moved post-1985, %	49.3	48.5	48.5
Income per capita	\$13,605	\$13,838	\$14,348
Participation, %			
Registration 1991	81.5	76.0	
Registration 1995	81.0		72.7
Turnout, %			
Primary 1991	47	48.5	
General 1991	45	46.5	
Primary 1995	40		40.4
General 1995	42		43.0
Precincts 1991, <i>n</i>	2,912	2,361	
Precincts 1995, <i>n</i>	2,454		1,968

a. Precincts with incorrect registration data were dropped from the analysis for 1991.

b. Precincts with incorrect registration data were dropped from the analysis for 1995.

the city, including various Asian ethnic groups. Second, correlational and regression analyses are conducted to permit inferential conclusions about the effects of Asian populations and party organizations on political participation in Chicago. Importantly, we note that the analysis and conclusions are about precincts, not individuals.

ANALYSIS

Table 1 presents a basic description of Chicago's population and political participation rates. Because we had to exclude precincts with erroneous political participation records, we display in the final two columns of Table 1 the actual descriptions of the precincts used in our analyses for both 1991 and 1995. With the exception of changes in the number of white and black residents and registration rates in the sample precincts, no significant differences from the citywide totals are reflected in our samples. The 1990 census put Chicago's population at 2,783,726, a decrease of 7.4% since 1980. The racial/ethnic breakdown in the city showed the following: 38.6% black, 37.9% white, 3.6% Asian, 19.6% Hispanic, and 0.3% other race. The fastest growing

populations in the city today are Asian and Hispanic. New immigration to the city was 7.4%, although the proportions are closer to 8.5% in the sample precincts. The percentage moving to a different residence since 1985 was 49.3%. The measure of socioeconomic status—per capita income—was \$13,605 but is slightly higher in our sample precincts.

Table 1 also shows political participation rates for municipal elections in each year. Citywide voter registration was near 81% in the first two elections held in the 1990s. Registration in our sample precincts is lower than the citywide totals—76% in 1991 and 73% in 1995. In the elections of 1991, citywide turnout was 47% in the primary election and 45% in the general election. Turnout dropped on average in 1995, with 40% participating in the primary and 42% in the general election. Turnout rates in our sample precincts are within 1.5% of the citywide rates for each election.

ASIAN ETHNIC GROUPS

To examine the political participation patterns of Asian-Americans and newer immigrants in these years, we first performed correlational analyses. Table 2 shows correlations between ethnic Asian population groups and political participation. In all instances, the effect of the Asian population on registration was negative and statistically significant. For example, the correlation between percentage Asian (race variable, including all ethnic groups) and percentage registered voters was $-.28$ in 1991 and $-.26$ in 1995, each significant. Registration was also negatively correlated with each of the ethnic population groups. In addition, precincts with larger population shares of new immigrants had the strongest negative correlation with registration. This reflects the effect that new immigrants can have in lowering registration levels in precincts. Overall, this indicates that precincts with larger Asian populations and those with more new immigrants will have lower levels of voter registration. These findings on registration are consistent with hypothesis 1.

The relationship between Asian populations and turnout was not consistent across groups and election years. Overall, the Asian race variable was positive in three of four elections—turnout in both the primary and general election of 1991 and the 1995 primary. Only the 1991 results were statistically significant, showing that higher Asian populations in precincts were associated with greater turnout. The Asian race variable did not have a significant correlation with the 1995 elections. This was not as hypothesized. Examining the ethnic group variables shows many different patterns. Precincts in which the Chinese population was larger had significant positive correlations with turnout in each election. This particular finding is consistent with our expectations that Chinese, as a more established ethnic group,

TABLE 2: Asian Ethnic Groups, New Immigrants, and Political Participation: Bivariate Correlations, Chicago, 1990s

<i>Group</i>	<i>Registration 1991</i>	<i>Registration 1995</i>	<i>Turnout Primary 1991</i>	<i>Turnout General 1991</i>	<i>Turnout Primary 1995</i>	<i>Turnout General 1995</i>
Asian (all)	-.279**	-.256**	.085**	.097**	.018	-.003
Chinese	-.074**	-.093**	.116**	.116**	.079**	.057*
Filipino	-.180**	-.150**	.091**	.087**	-.013	-.006
Indian	-.269**	-.235**	.002	.011	-.022	-.025
Japanese	-.138**	-.140**	-.027	-.006	-.072**	-.067**
Korean	-.202**	-.181**	.011	.010	-.016	-.012
Southeast	-.169**	-.110**	-.061	-.031	-.031	-.078**
New immigrant	-.564**	-.453**	.122**	.131**	-.017	-.098**
<i>n</i>	2,361	1,968	2,361	2,361	1,968	1,968

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$.

could have a stronger positive relationship with political participation than other groups that were more likely to be newer immigrants. Areas with greater Filipino populations also had a significant positive relationship to turnout—but only in 1991. There were also significant negative correlations: Japanese and Southeast Asian for 1995. With the exceptions noted earlier, most of these correlations were in the expected direction. We did not expect most newer immigrant Asian groups with higher populations in our sample precincts to have a positive effect on turnout.

Perhaps more surprising was the observed relationship between new immigration and turnout. Precincts with larger new immigrant populations were significantly and positively correlated with turnout in the 1991 elections but then negative in the 1995 elections. A clearer understanding of this finding may emerge from the multivariate analysis that follows.

UNDERSTANDING VOTER REGISTRATION IN THESE WARDS

To provide a clearer understanding of the effects of Asian populations and other variables on political participation, we conducted a series of regression analyses, beginning with voter registration in Table 3. In model 1 for each year, race/ethnicity and our socioeconomic status measure, per capita income, were the effects being tested. In 1991, all predictors were negative and significant in a model that accounted for 23% of the variation in registration. These results are consistent with the literature on voting and our expectations (hypothesis 2). However, when we add immigration and mobility to the equations in model 2, the effects were different. Here we see that immigration and mobility exerted the strongest negative effects on registration. But after controlling for their effects, Asian remained a significant and positive predictor of registration in a model that explained 48% of the variance. This shows that Asian populations actually can have an independent and positive effect on greater precinct-level registration after one controls for two factors that reduce political participation—larger shares of the population that are more mobile and of newer immigration.

The 1995 registration models followed a similar pattern to 1991, although the level of explained variance was lower. In model 1 for 1995, Asian and Hispanic populations had a significant negative effect on registration. But after immigration and mobility were introduced to the equations in model 2, these new control variables represented the only significant negative predictors. Asian and Hispanic became significant positive predictors of registration. The net results are that after controlling for immigration and mobility, higher Asian (and Hispanic) populations had an independent, positive effect on registration levels for 1995.

TABLE 3: Voter Registration Models, Chicago Municipal Elections: 1991, 1995

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Model 1: 1991</i>	<i>Model 2: 1991</i>	<i>Model 1: 1995</i>	<i>Model 2: 1995</i>
Income per capita (\$000)				
<i>b</i>	-.004***	-.002***	-.001**	.000
Beta	-.235	-.144	-.073	.010
Asian (%)				
<i>b</i>	-.595***	.266***	-.552***	.348***
Beta	-.272	.122	-.234	.148
Hispanic (%)				
<i>b</i>	-.275***	-.019	-.118***	.158***
Beta	-.406	-.028	-.158	.212
Black (%)				
<i>b</i>	-.018*	-.017*	.016	.019
Beta	-.052	-.047	.041	.050
New immigrant (%)				
<i>b</i>		-.904***		-1.018***
Beta		-.487		-.498
Mobile (%)				
<i>b</i>		-.423***		-.377***
Beta		-.388		-.318
Intercept	.910***	1.083***	.812***	.966***
Adjusted R^2	.227	.483	.098	.300
<i>F</i> -value	174.45**	368.27***	53.99***	141.14***
<i>n</i>	2,361	2,361	1,968	1,968

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

These registration models for 1991 and 1995 show significant new findings from previous research on Asian-American participation. The main reason that higher Asian populations reduced registration in precincts was due to a high proportion of new immigrants in this group. When one accounts for this variable and the frequency with which immigrants will move, Asian populations exerted a positive effect that was associated with higher precinct-level voter registration.

Political party organization was added to the second model in each year (analysis not shown) to determine the effect that it had on registration; in neither case was it significant. To explore this further, we divided our data set into separate groups of precincts based on whether the area was a machine-style organization or an independent one. The results of separate analyses (not shown) were inconclusive. In 1991, the regression slope coefficient for Asian had a stronger and significant effect on registration in independent precincts ($\beta = .346$) than in machine-style precincts ($\beta = .202$). In contrast, the 1995 models showed machine-style wards with a stronger effect

TABLE 4: Voter Turnout Models, Chicago Municipal Elections: 1991, 1995

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Primary: 1991</i>	<i>General: 1991</i>	<i>Primary: 1995</i>	<i>General: 1995</i>
Income per capita (\$000)				
<i>b</i>	-.001***	-.001***	-.001***	-.001***
Beta	-.230	-.265	-.196	-.202
Asian (%)				
<i>b</i>	-.180***	-.221***	-.113**	-.147**
Beta	-.086	-.092	-.055	-.068
Hispanic (%)				
<i>b</i>	-.158***	-.232***	-.163***	-.254***
Beta	-.243	-.311	-.251	-.371
Black (%)				
<i>b</i>	-.279***	-.348***	-.187***	-.191***
Beta	-.820	-.892	-.559	-.543
Mobility (%)				
<i>b</i>	-.317***	-.345***	-.395***	-.420***
Beta	-.302	-.287	-.383	-.387
Party organization				
<i>b</i>	.004***	.004***	.006***	.006***
Beta	.136	.103	.193	.207
Intercept	.810***	.860***	.716***	.772***
Adjusted R^2	.591	.619	.499	.541
<i>F</i> -value	568.95***	639.86***	327.19***	387.16***
<i>n</i>	2,361	2,361	1,968	1,968

** $p \leq .01$. *** $p \leq .001$.

of Asian on registration in machine-style precincts ($\beta = .596$) than in independent ones ($\beta = .177$). Regardless of political party influence, precincts with higher Asian populations had positive effects on registration.

VOTER TURNOUT MODELS

We developed models of voter turnout for the primary elections of 1991 and 1995 and the mayoral general elections of the same years. The models test the effects of six predictors of turnout: income, Asian, Hispanic, black, residential mobility, and political party organization.⁵ The results of these analyses are displayed in Table 4.

Race/ethnicity, income, and mobility were significant negative predictors of voter turnout in each of these elections that chose party candidates for mayor, city clerk, and city treasurer and selected city council alderman for each ward in nonpartisan elections. Simply stated, each measure reduced voter turnout in our models. This was as expected (hypothesis 3). The one

consistently positive predictor of turnout is political party organization. Precincts located in wards with strong Democratic Party organizations had stronger turnout in each year.

In the 1991 elections, Asian population in the precincts had a significant negative effect, but its influence in the models—as measured by the standardized beta coefficients—was not as great as the other predictors. Indeed, black and Hispanic populations, residential mobility, income, and political party organization were more important influences on precinct-level turnout than Asian population. The overall model was a good fit for these 1991 elections, accounting for 59% of variance in the primary and 62% in the general election.

The final two columns in Table 4 display the results of regressions for the 1995 elections. Again in these models, the Asian race variable exerted a negative effect suppressing voter turnout, even after controlling for other factors. Although we know that voter turnout can be lower in precincts with larger black and Hispanic populations, the model provides support for hypothesis 3 that areas of high Asian population also experienced lower turnout. Again in 1995, the Asian predictor's standardized betas were the smallest, indicating that compared to other predictors of turnout, Asian population was the weakest predictor of turnout in these elections. In fact, other race/ethnicity measures, income, and residential mobility were stronger negative predictors of precinct voter turnout, and the level of Democratic Party organization had a positive effect on turnout. The 1995 models were not quite as good of a fit as those for 1991, when measured by the smaller adjusted R^2 values of 50% for the primary and 54% for the general election.⁶

The findings of Table 4 point to few differences between precincts with greater Asian populations and other racial/ethnic features of precincts. Just as larger black and Hispanic populations suppressed turnout, so did a larger Asian population. These negative effects of race/ethnicity were present even after controlling for socioeconomic status and residential mobility. The effect of party organization was positive, suggesting that where machine-style party organizations were stronger, minority voting may be lower. But were racial and ethnic effects any different in precincts with more independent political organizing, as stated in hypothesis 4? Do machine-style organizations suppress minority voting as they maintain their minimum winning coalition or preserve political favoritism? To answer these questions, we conducted separate analyses (not shown here) on precincts with machine-style political organizations and precincts with independent

political organizations. The separate analyses provided some new insights into the effect of parties and Asian populations in Chicago's precincts.

First, average turnout in the elections was higher in machine-style precincts than in precincts with independent organizations. In 1991, turnout was 39% to 42% in independent precincts and 55% to 57% in machine-style precincts. In 1995, independent precincts averaged 35% to 37% turnout, and the machine-style areas showed turnout of 49% to 53%. Higher turnout in the old machine organization precincts was consistent with our expectations and the thesis that ward leaders want good turnout to ensure good service delivery or bureaucratic favoritism.

Second, whereas Table 4 showed that precincts with higher Asian populations suppressed voter turnout in the same way as other racial/ethnic minorities populations cause lower turnout, our separate analyses of machine-style and independent precincts point to a different conclusion. In the machine-style precincts, the results were consistent with Table 4: Higher percentages of Asians, Hispanics, and blacks had a negative effect on turnout. But when the independent precincts were examined, higher Asian populations in precincts no longer had a significant negative effect on turnout. Indeed, for the 1995 primary, the Asian precinct measure was positive and significant; for the 1991 elections and the 1995 general election, the Asian predictor was not significant.

Herein lie some differences in turnout associated with Asian populations in precincts. Although the expected negative effect of high Asian populations on precinct turnout was apparent in the full model of Table 4, the results were closely tied to the continuing impact of the Democratic ward organizations. It was in these machine-style precincts that turnout was higher and the racial/ethnic minority predictors were negative. Consistent with hypothesis 4, this suggests that party organizations do not mobilize as well in high-minority precincts as they do in others. Furthermore, in areas of less party organization influence, the pattern in the regression models differed in one key aspect: High Asian populations did not suppress voter turnout. In three elections, the Asian predictor was positive, and in one it was negative; the one significant effect was a positive effect of the Asian population on turnout in the 1995 primary. Hence, after separate analyses of machine-style and independent precincts, Asian populations stand out from others; their impact on precinct-level participation was much less negative and possibly even more positive than theories of Asian participation would suggest. These findings warrant an alternative explanation.

ASIAN PARTICIPATION IN CHICAGO

Erie's (1988) thesis suggests that the relationship between ethnic groups and political organizations is subject to the dictates of the minimal winning coalition. After the political party organization had secured the political participation of the Irish and other needed groups, there was no incentive to mobilize unneeded voters who would make claims on the organization's scarce resources. That model has been shown to hold in Chicago and seems to have been at work in the 1990s in the areas of the city still under the influence of ward-based party organizations. How these organizations have affected participation by the growing Asian-American population is seen in a different light here, one that shows selective mobilization in Asian-American areas.

This analysis of voter registration and turnout in Chicago's municipal elections has produced findings that are consistent with some of our expectations and contrary to others. At the simple bivariate level, precinct measures of the relative size of the Asian population and Asian ethnic group populations displayed several diverging patterns. Whereas areas with greater Asian populations correlated negatively with registration, turnout varied by Asian ethnic group. The only consistent finding was that greater Chinese-populated precincts were more positively associated with turnout.

Regression models refined our understanding of the relationship between the Asian populations and other influences on participation. Precincts with higher Asian populations had a significant negative influence on registration in models that included controls only for race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. But when the registration models were expanded to control for mobility and immigration, the Asian population variable was significant and positive. Higher Asian populations actually predicted higher registration, independent of immigration status. This finding was not as hypothesized; based on earlier research, we expected higher Asian populations to have an independent and negative influence on registration, even after controlling for other factors. Hence it seems that larger populations of Asians did not reflect lower registration (Lien 1994), but larger populations of Asians who were newer immigrants and had moved more frequently did lower registration. Being a newer immigrant and having less investment in the neighborhood, as seen in higher mobility rates, make it less likely that one will register to vote. Political party roles were not significant in the registration models. Contrary to other findings on Asian participation, the results show that higher Asian areas produce more political interest, as measured by higher registration.

The voter turnout models yielded more consistent results across election years. After controlling for socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and mobility, the relative size of the Asian population exerted a significant negative effect

on turnout. The larger the Asian population, the lower the precinct's turnout rates in the elections. But other factors were more significant predictors in each model. This finding was consistent with our hypotheses, as we had expected higher Asian populations to significantly reduce turnout rates, even after controlling for the influence of other factors.

Turnout models validated earlier research on lower Asian participation patterns—until we separated independent precincts from the machine-style ones. Here we saw the real impact of political organizations on Asian-American precincts' participation. Machine-style precincts suppressed participation. Support for the minimum winning coalition thesis is suggested. The reasons for this are not clear and cannot be sorted out with the precinct-level analysis. Perhaps lower turnout in machine-style areas is due to Erie's (1988) selective mobilization thesis; perhaps it is due to the political favoritism theory in which party leaders seek to protect their jobs and services from dilution from other groups or wards. What is not supported by this research is a rainbow coalition thesis, in which participation is stimulated among all minority and Asian areas of the city.

It appears that in Chicago, areas with higher Asian populations have higher rates of registration than other racial/ethnic minority groups. This is certainly a positive sign of political involvement by a newer immigrant group to Chicago and seems to be independent of the organizing activities of the Democratic Party. Turnout in areas of higher Asian populations is shaped by political organizations. Where vestiges of the old Chicago machine still reign, selective mobilization and protection of political favoritism may be the motivations for lower turnout. Where more independent political organizations are at work, turnout rates are lower than in machine-style areas, but the level of participation is not suppressed by the presence of larger Asian populations. Opportunities for greater political incorporation of Asian populations in Chicago may have their best opportunities to take root in the more fertile political ground of independent political organizations and wards in the city.

NOTES

1. Chicago's Asian population in 1990: total = 104,118. Ethnic groups in Asian population: Filipino = 26.4%, Chinese = 21.4%, Asian Indian = 15.7%, Korean = 13.3%, Southeast Asian = 8.9%, Japanese = 6.4%, Pacific Islander = 1.1%, and other Asian = 6.7%.

2. This is particularly true in the case of the 33rd Ward Regular Democratic Party organization. Richard Mell, the committeeman and alderman in that ward, "effectively runs a door-to-door ward organization as if it were still the 1950s" (Davis 1995, 1).

3. Data are not available for the 1999 elections.

4. The total number of precincts was 2,912 for 1991 and 2,454 for 1995. Because a number of precincts had more registered voters than eligible voters as a result of poor maintenance of registration records by the city of Chicago, we dropped all cases in which the registration figures were clearly in error.

5. Because immigration has a more direct effect on a prior determinant of voting—eligibility to register—and is closely linked to the race variables, it is excluded from this analysis.

6. The 1995 city elections were the first to be conducted under new ward maps approved by voters in a referendum in 1992. In this referendum, it is estimated that the vast majority of Asian voters supported the map approved for use in the 1995 election, but only 64% of other voters supported this (Chicago Urban League 1994, 54). However, the new ward boundaries and precincts in effect for the 1995 elections did not increase the Asian turnout from 1991.

REFERENCES

- Alex-Assensoh, Y. 1997. Race, concentrated poverty, social isolation, and political behavior. *Urban Affairs Review* 33:209-27.
- Barkan, E. R. 1983. Whom shall we integrate? A comparative analysis of the immigration and naturalization trends of Asians before and after the 1965 Immigration Act (1951-1978). *Journal of American Ethnic History* 3:29-55.
- Browning, R. P., D. R. Marshall, and D. H. Tabb, eds. 1997. *Racial politics in American cities*. 2d ed. New York: Longman.
- Cain, B. E., D. R. Kiewiet, and C. J. Uhlaner. 1991. The acquisition of partisanship by Latinos and Asian Americans. *American Journal of Political Science* 35:390-422.
- Chicago Urban League, Metro Chicago Information Center, Northern Illinois University. 1994. *Metro Chicago political atlas—1994*. Springfield, IL: Institute for Public Affairs, Sangamon State University.
- Dahl, R. 1961. *Who governs?* New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press.
- Davis, R. 1995. Lack of opponent in aldermanic races mixed blessing. *Chicago Tribune*, 10 January, 1.
- Elazar, D. 1970. *Cities of the prairie*. New York: Basic Books.
- Erie, S. P. 1988. *Rainbow's end: The dilemmas of Irish machine leadership, 1840-1985*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.
- Feng, K., and B. Tang. 1997. *1996 Southern California Asian Pacific American Exit Poll report*. Los Angeles: Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California.
- Garza, M. M. 1995. Asian-Americans need unity, agenda, group says. *Chicago Tribune*, 1 June, 4.
- Grimshaw, W. 1992. *Bitter fruit: Black politics and the Chicago machine, 1931-91*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Guterbock, T. M. 1980. *Machine politics in transition: Party and community in Chicago*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Hamilton, D. K. 1999. The continuing judicial assault on patronage. *Public Administration Review* 59:54-62.
- Inglot, T., and J. P. Pelissero. 1993. Ethnic political power in a machine city: Chicago's poles at rainbow's end. *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 28:526-43.
- Kincaid, J. 1980. Political culture and the quality of urban life. *Publius* 10:89-110.
- Kitano, H.H.L., and R. Daniels. 1988. *Asian Americans: Emerging minorities*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Lien, P. 1994. From immigrants to citizens and beyond? The political participation of Asian Americans in Southern California. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, September, New York.
- . 1997. *The political participation of Asian Americans*. New York: Garland.
- McClain, P. D., and J. Stewart, Jr. 1995. *Can we all get along? Racial and ethnic politics in America*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Miranda, R. A., and I. Tunyavong. 1994. Patterned inequality? Reexamining the role of distributive politics in urban service delivery. *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 29:509-34.
- Mladenka, K. R. 1989. The distribution of an urban public service: The changing role of race and politics. *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 24:556-83.
- Nakanishi, D. T. 1985-1986. Asian American politics: An agenda for research. *Amerasia Journal* 12:1-27.
- Nelson, D. C. 1979. Ethnicity and socioeconomic status as sources of participation: The case for ethnic political culture. *American Political Science Review* 73:1024-38.
- Oliver, J. E. 1999. The effects of metropolitan economic segregation on local civic participation. *American Journal of Political Science* 43:186-212.
- Parenti, M. C. 1967. Ethnic politics and the persistence of ethnic identification. *American Political Science Review* 61:717-26.
- Rakove, M. 1975. *Don't make no waves—don't back no losers: An insider's analysis of the Daley machine*. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press.
- Squire, P., R. E. Wolfinger, and D. P. Glass. 1987. Residential mobility and voter turnout. *American Political Science Review* 81:45-65.
- Thomas, J. C., and J. Melkers. 1999. Explaining citizen-initiated contacts with municipal bureaucrats: Lessons from the Atlanta experience. *Urban Affairs Review* 34:667-90.
- Uhlaner, C. J., B. E. Cain, and D. R. Kiewiet. 1989. Political participation of ethnic minorities in the 1980s. *Political Behavior* 11:195-231.
- U.S. Department of Commerce. 1992. *Statistical abstract of the United States, 1996*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- Verba, S., and N. H. Nie. 1972. *Participation in America: Political democracy and social equality*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Wilson, J. Q., and E. C. Banfield. 1964. Public-regardingness as a value premise in voting behavior. *American Political Science Review* 58:876-87.
- Wolfinger, R. 1965. The development and persistence of ethnic voting. *American Political Science Review* 59:896-908.
- Wong, M. G. 1986. Post-1965 Asian immigrants: Where do they come from, where are they now, and where are they going? *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 487:150-68.

John P. Pelissero is a professor and chair of political science at Loyola University Chicago. His recent research on urban policy and Chicago politics has been published in the American Journal of Political Science and Urban Affairs Review. He is currently researching the relationship between electoral coalitions and regimes in cities.

Timothy B. Krebs is an assistant professor of political science at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. His research interests are in urban elections, city councils, and campaign finance. His recent works have appeared in the American Journal of Political

Science, *Social Science Quarterly*, and *Urban Affairs Review*. He is studying city council elections in Chicago and Los Angeles.

Shannon Jenkins is a Ph.D. candidate at Loyola University Chicago, where she is completing a dissertation on constituency, party, and ideological influences on state legislators.

THE CHANGING FACE OF URBAN BUREAUCRACY

Is There Interethnic Competition for Municipal Government Jobs?

BRINCK KERR
WILL MILLER
MARGARET REID
University of Arkansas

The authors examine changes over time in 65 multiethnic U.S. cities to test hypotheses about (1) job distribution among ethnic groups and (2) interethnic employment competition. Compared to blacks and non-Latino whites, Latinos experience the lowest levels of representation in both managerial and nonmanagerial jobs. The authors uncover patterns of competition between blacks and Latinos for managerial positions, but the majority of observed competition is between traditionally disadvantaged ethnic groups and non-Latino whites. Competition between blacks and Latinos for managerial jobs is most likely to occur in departments with redistributive policy commitments. The authors find a pervasive pattern of Latino gains and black losses for nonmanagerial positions, but they argue that the pattern should not be interpreted as evidence for interethnic employment competition.

As urban environments become more diverse and increasingly multiethnic, questions about the distribution of municipal government jobs across ethnic groups become more important, and scholars must confront seriously the possibility of interethnic competition for these jobs (Hall and Saltzstein 1975; McClain and Karnig 1990; McClain 1993). McClain (1993) argued that increasing tensions between minority groups in many U.S. cities should lead urban scholars to direct research attention away from a predominant

AUTHORS' NOTE: We thank Dr. Ron Edwards of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for helpful comments. We also thank Teresa Taylor, University of Arkansas, for providing research assistance. This research was supported by the University of Arkansas Center for the Study of Representation and by a research grant from the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences, University of Arkansas. An earlier version of this article was presented at the 1999 meeting of the Arkansas Political Science Association, February, Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

URBAN AFFAIRS REVIEW, Vol. 35, No. 6, July 2000 770-793
© 2000 Sage Publications, Inc.