

Population Change and Politics: What Matters, What Doesn't
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In recent years social scientists have taken note of two remarkable changes in the social landscape of the Chicago region: First, west Cook and collar county suburbs can no longer be depended upon to deliver overwhelming majorities for Republican candidates. And second, as in other urban regions across the country, extraordinary numbers of foreign born, and persons of Mexican origin in particular, have settled in the Chicago suburbs.

In fact, the social transformations of the Chicago region's suburbs have been occurring for a long time. Over the past 40 years, three major migratory patterns have occurred: During the 1960s and 1970s significant numbers of African Americans began moving into the south Cook suburbs. During the 1980s and 1990s equally large numbers of Hispanics began moving into the near west and northwest suburbs. And third, over the entire period, whites fleeing a more racially diverse Chicago, and upper middle class and affluent whites seeking large suburban lots and lifestyle, transformed west Cook and DuPage counties from a semi-rural, small town world, into Chicago's real "other side of the tracks."

The period from 1960 through 2000 also brought the Chicago suburbs a major political transformation: from an ascendant conservative Republican voting bloc counted on to sustain Republican candidates in statewide races and form the foundation for Republican control of the Illinois General Assembly, to a region that is becoming increasingly Democratic and, at least within the Cook County suburbs, no longer a bastion of support for Republican candidates.

Today I want to consider political change that has taken place in Chicago and the suburbs in the context of changes in population and its meanings, focusing on this question: Has Cook County as a whole undergone a set of population transformations over the past 40 years such that its political ecology now more closely resembles that of the diverse city than of a homogenous suburb? And second, what are we to make politically of the migration of Hispanics into the west and northwest suburbs?

I will begin by reviewing some of the major trends in demographic change, and then consider their impact on partisanship and the outcomes of statewide elections in Illinois. Finally I will consider the impact social and demographic change has had on more local political concerns and locally elected representation, with particular attention to how new Hispanic voters are likely to affect the political terrain.

Population Change

During the past 40 years, the Chicago region has undergone significant changes in its population that bear on its political configuration. The Chicago region has enjoyed significant population expansion over the period, primarily because of the rapid expansion of population in the collar county and west Cook suburbs. Chicago peaked in population during the early 1960s, and had been in steady decline ever since until rebounding slightly with the 2000 Census to around 3 million persons. The stemming of Chicago's demographic slide was attributable primarily to natural growth caused by large balances of new births over deaths, and immigration, primarily Latino. The flow of African Americans into the south suburbs, and whites into the west and northwest suburbs continued, although at somewhat slower rates than before. African American population in Cook County has increased somewhat, but has remained a fairly constant 25 percent of the county's population. The greatest change has, of course, occurred among Hispanics, who have increased from 9.5 percent of Cook County's population in 1980, to nearly 20 percent in the 2000 Census, an increase of over 500,000 persons.

Chicago's collar counties, DuPage, Lake, Kane, McHenry and Will County collectively increased in population by about 50 percent over the past 20 years. While the majority of those persons were white, the percentage, and absolute number of Hispanic persons in those counties doubled and tripled. Kane County moved from around 9 percent Hispanic in 1980 to over 23 percent in 2000. Lake County moved from 4.4 percent Hispanic in 1980 to over 14 percent in 2000.

The Hispanics, and foreign-born in general, who have been moving into the Chicago region are relatively recent arrivals in the United States. It has been said, and correctly, that the current rates of immigration rival those of the turn of the last century in

number, if not social significance. Of the 600,000 plus foreign born in Chicago in 2000, nearly half came to the United States during the 1990s. Another quarter of them arrived during the 1980s. The pattern is the same in the suburbs as well. Of 400,000 foreign-born in suburban Cook County in 2000, nearly half had arrived during the 1990s and nearly one quarter during the 1980s. Because these people are so new to the United States, many are not citizens and so it remains unclear what their cultural orientation and social concerns ultimately will be. Assimilation or independence? Democrat or Republican?

Hispanic and African American migration patterns have been quite different, as we can see from a comparison of numbers of municipalities with various percentages of each group. While African Americans are now found in most places across the region, they are more likely than Latinos to be concentrated in a few places. In 1980, 70 percent of Chicago area municipalities were less than 1 percent black. By 2000, only 23 percent were less than one percent black. On the other hand, in 1980 only 2.6 percent of Chicago area municipalities were at least half black. By 2000 8 percent were half black. Thus the south suburbs continued the pattern that occurred on the south and west sides of Chicago, where the entry of a few blacks into a community was generally followed by wholesale flight of remaining whites.

The Hispanic pattern has been quite different, tending more toward dispersion across many municipalities as Hispanics tend to move into whatever low cost housing a region has. But whites in these communities have not fled from Hispanics during the 1980s and 1990s the way they did from blacks in the 1960s and 1970s. As a result, by 2000 less than 2 percent of area municipalities were less than 1 percent Hispanic, but only a couple were over 50 percent Hispanic. Forty percent of area municipalities were from 6 to 25 percent Hispanic and half were from 1 to 5 percent Hispanic.

Not only have blacks tended to concentrate in relatively few places across the region, but within the towns where they do live, they tend to cluster within a few neighborhoods separate from whites. Using an index of dissimilarity, where a score of 100 indicates complete separation of two groups, and a score of 0 indicates complete integration, most Chicago area municipalities have high white-black scores, meaning in most places where blacks and whites live, they tend to live apart from one another. In

2000, fewer than 5 percent of municipalities had a score of 40 or less and half had scores of over 70, indicating very high levels of black and white separation.

The Hispanic residential pattern is very different. While separated somewhat from whites, they live far less separately than do blacks and whites. More than 20 percent of municipalities have white – Hispanic dissimilarity scores under 40. Only 6 percent have the high separation scores of 70 or above. In most Chicago area communities, Hispanics cluster somewhat in neighborhoods, but not at the hyper-segregated levels of blacks and whites.

Economically, the Chicago area communities were more homogenous in 1960 than in 2000. In 1960, with the exception of small portions of Evanston and Oak Park and the north lakefront towns extending into Lake County, most of Chicago-area suburbia was characterized by neighborhoods inhabited by working class families and young, but not yet professionally arrived, white collar workers. Outside the suburbs immediately adjoining Chicago, most of it was still largely rural. A simple comparison of the range of average incomes of the Cook County townships between 2000 and 1960, with 1960 figures adjusted for inflation, reveals that the width of the range of low-income to high-income suburbs had greatly expanded by 2000. On balance, the Chicago area was a much less equal place economically in 2000 than it was in 1960, a development that figures significantly in which communities have persisted as Republican strongholds.

2. State and National Politics: Change in Partisanship

An abundance of evidence indicates that Illinois is becoming increasingly Democratic at a number of political levels. Different regions within Illinois have long had their own distinctive political cultures. The far southern counties have leaned Democrat, with cultural connections more akin to the American South than North and significant rural poverty. Most of the balance of rural counties have generally voted Republican. The Chicago suburbs, with few exceptions, consistently voted Republican until the 1990s, but the collar counties were a relatively small proportion of the entire Illinois electorate until the 1970s. Thus the Republican strongholds of the suburban Cook and collar county suburbs are largely a creation of the 1950s and since. As we shall see,

they are the product of a huge expansion in wealth inequality produced by the post World War II economy, which was rapidly growing a new, suburban, managerial and professional class.

By the 1990s, the post-1960s configuration that had culminated in Republican control of the Governor's office and Illinois General Assembly into the early 1990s, was breaking down. By 2000, Illinois was a solidly Democratic state in presidential politics, and Democrats controlled statewide offices and the General Assembly. By 2004, Democrats had added 4 seats to the 62 to 56 lead they had held in the House in 2000, and had retaken control of the Senate with 33 Democrats and 25 Republicans.

While corruption surrounding Governor Ryan, and the triumph of the Democratic legislative map following the 2000 Census played a part, the more important cause of this transformation has been the increasing number of Democratic votes in the collar counties, and the Cook County suburbs in particular.

The partisan evolution of the suburbs has been studied far less than the city's and, by virtue of its recent shifts, would seem to be more complex. In order to understand it, we need to compare 40 years of elections in such a way as to be able to detect underlying shifts in partisanship. While the outcome of the top of the ballot elections such as Presidential and gubernatorial elections are certainly important, they are not always the most helpful elections to consider when attempting to gauge the underlying partisanship of the electorate because characteristics of candidates, outside events and the like may influence voters beyond their basic partisanship. The answer has been to analyze votes for "bottom of the ballot" candidates as a way of measuring fundamental partisanship. Votes for these candidates are least likely to be influenced by the peculiarities of the candidates themselves, because most voters know nothing about them, and votes are determined most by whether a voter tends to think of oneself as a Republican or Democrat. For many years this led to study of votes for the Trustees of the University of Illinois, an approach validated by the federal courts as meeting scientific standards as a measure of partisanship.

We also want to be able to look below the aggregate level of a county in order to analyze what may have caused changes in electoral outcomes. The level of voting data that can most readily be matched with data on items such as race and income in the

suburbs is the township. And so our analysis will focus on comparing levels of political change across townships in suburban Cook County, as they represent a wide range of socio-economic conditions where suburban political alignments have changed considerably over the past 40 years. Because UI Trustee data was not readily available at this level for elections of the 1950s through the 1980s, and UI Trustees ceased to be elected in the 1990s, I have utilized data from other races that were not top of the ballot, and then averaged vote totals for periods so as to create measures of partisanship marking the time around 1960, 1980 and 2000. Most elections were selected from non-presidential years in order to minimize the effects of national party politics on local outcomes. Those elections are:

1954 State Treasurer, 1960 Auditor of Public Accounts, 1968 Clerk of the Supreme Court
1982 Treasurer, 1982 Attorney General, 1986 Attorney General
2000 Secretary of State, 2000 Comptroller, 2000 Treasurer

From around 1960 to 2000 suburban Cook County has shifted from solidly Republican to strongly Democratic. In 1960, only the townships of Niles, Stickney and Riverside consistently voted Democrat, and that was by margins of 51 percent, 50 percent and 53 percent respectively. The vast majority of townships were solidly Republican, most by margins of 70 percent Republican or more. At around 55 percent Republican, the other “least Republican” places were several suburbs adjacent to Chicago such as Berwyn, Cicero, Leyden, Norwood Park, Bremen and Calumet.

Locally and nationally, African Americans have been the most stalwart Democrats since the 1940s. But the transformation to a Democratic majority in Cook County began during the 1960s and 1970s, and occurred not only in places that were becoming black, but in many places that had no blacks at all. Suburban Cook townships uniformly became about 10 percent more Democratic by 1980 with few variations. Part of the reason was the flow of white Chicagoans fleeing the city during the late 1950s through the 1970s. Many of these people may have been fleeing black neighbors and school desegregation, but they were still mostly Democrats. They moved into neighborhoods located across the suburbs. Calumet, where many blacks moved, went

from 55 percent Republican to 65 percent Democratic. Evanston and Oak Park each went from around 70 percent Republican to small Democratic majorities. In all of these places, the magnitude of transition from Republican to Democrat well exceeded the magnitude of any racial transition. Only a few places went the other way. Lemont, in the southwest suburbs, moved from 47 percent Republican to 49 percent. Cicero went from 53 percent Republican to 64 percent as it became a bulwark against westward black migration.

The 1980s and 1990s brought more change. Places that were the most Democratic in the 1960s and 1970s became even more so. Calumet, Thornton, Evanston, Rich, Oak Park, Proviso, Bremen, Niles and Stickney, townships that had become over 50 percent Democrat in the 1960s, moved to 65 to 70 percent Democrat by 2000. Most of these places have in common high black populations and in many of them the black migration did fuel the political change. However, as in the 1960s and 1970s, the Democratic consolidation continued across most of the region, largely irrespective of racial composition. Cicero, which had moved Republican during the 1960s, reversed itself during the 1980s and 1990s as it moved from white to Hispanic. Among the Cook suburbs, only Barrington township remained solidly Republican by 2000 at 68 percent. Formerly solidly Republican suburbs of Schaumburg, Palatine, Riverside, New Trier and Northfield townships had become 45 percent or more Democrat. These places, which have almost no African Americans, and relatively few Hispanics who are voters, have likely been influenced by continued migration of Democrats from Chicago and by the urbanization of the issues facing them, such as the need to raise taxes to support schools, open daycare centers, build infrastructure and develop public transportation, and increasingly liberal views of the roles of women and minorities.

While it is certainly possible that partisanship has changed because residents have changed their minds about which party best represents their interests, the swings in partisanship are sufficiently wide where they occur to suggest that this is probably not the principal reason. The Chicago area has not experienced the wrenching economic or social change that other areas of the Rust Belt have during the same time period. The major exception to this in the suburbs, has been in south Cook County, where the loss of the steel industry and other manufacturing has provided it with typical Rust Belt

problems. Far more likely is that suburban changes in partisanship are attributable to changes in who the people are who live there.

Suburban Cook County and the Collar Counties have changed not only racially, but economically over the past 40 years. Most of the region has prospered. Where industrial townships were built out by 1960, they have remained primarily working class. But where abundant space remained, a transition has often taken place to upper middle class or upper class residents, such as across much of the northwest suburbs, and other parts of the regional periphery. In 1960, Barrington, Northfield, Lemont, Oak Park and Palatine looked economically about like the other townships in Cook County, but by the 1980s they had emerged as considerably wealthier on average than the other townships. Schaumburg and Orland had moved from among the least affluent townships, to the second tier. Cicero and Calumet, by contrast, were actually, on average, poorer in 2000 than they had been in the 1960s. Thus the Chicago region had far greater economic disparity across it in 1980 than it did in 1960, and so, at least within Cook County, by the 1980s the extent of partisan polarization had increased.

To what extent, then, has the influx of blacks and Hispanics, who are overwhelmingly Democrat, and to what extent have economic transitions, which are also associated with partisanship, contributed to changes in voting across the suburbs?

We can test this empirically with a multiple regression analysis that calculates the relative power of a township's size of minority population or economic composition to predict levels of partisanship.

The analysis indicates that the correlates of partisanship have changed in important ways from the 1960s to 2000. In 1960 the income of a township was a far stronger predictor of its partisanship than was a township's racial composition. Few of the Cook townships had significant black populations; none had significant numbers of Hispanics. Although the region was more economically homogenous in 1960 than 40, or even 20 years later, it was still more economically than racially diverse.

By 2000 conditions had changed substantially with race supplanting income as the stronger indicator of partisanship. While most Cook townships had Democratic majorities by 2000, the strongest of these were in the places where blacks tended to live. However, there was also a strong tendency of Democratic majorities to build on bases

where Democrats had been more common 40 years earlier. And so the largest predictors of the percentage of Democrats in a township in 2000 were the proportion of the township that had been Democratic in 1960 and the percentage of the population that was black in 2000. Higher income militates against voting Democrat, but when race and historical partisanship were considered, it was not statistically significant. In short, rich people are more likely to vote Democrat than blacks are to vote Republican.

A similar analysis can be conducted to understand changes in partisanship between 1960 and 2000. Again, the level of previous Democratic partisanship and the percentage increase in the black percentage of the township's population were the biggest indicators of increases in partisanship. Increased income did correlate with lower percentages of Democrats and was almost statistically significant.

The analysis provides no clear indication of the Hispanic role in predicting township partisanship. In the three analyses discussed above, the Hispanic variable was not statistically significant, and actually correlated negatively with increased Democratic voting between 1960 and 2000. While surveys indicate that in the suburbs Hispanics are divided between the two parties and voting independently, in this analysis it is more likely that their relatively small numbers simply have little impact on overall levels of partisanship. While large in absolute numbers, in the suburbs perhaps half are non-citizens and many citizens are not registered to vote.

A large proportion of suburban Hispanics have settled in the Northwest suburbs, which are among the strongest Republican areas of Cook County and so it is possible that Hispanics could tend to vote Democratic but that their presence correlates with Republican partisanship at the township level simply because they live in otherwise highly Republican areas. It is also possible that those Hispanics who vote in the northwest suburbs are homeowners and identify with their Republican neighbors.

We know little about how suburban Hispanics participate in politics, both in terms of their positions on issues of local interest which are largely non-partisan, and their likely partisanship in statewide or national elections. Large numbers of African Americans have lived in Chicago-area suburbs for 40 years now and their political interests and partisan tendencies are well-known, their having become majorities in many communities, such as the south suburban municipalities, and having participated visibly

in others such as Evanston and Oak Park. Nationally, African Americans have been among, if not the most, steadfast Democratic interest groups and this has been the case locally as well. Hispanic political orientation is less well-defined. In elections of the past 20 years, they have consistently voted Democrat at the national level and within Chicago. However, there are reasons to believe this may not always be the case. In California, Texas and Miami, where Hispanics have long participated in politics in large numbers with a high degree of organizations, Republican Hispanics are more common, if not a majority. Republicans have hoped that ultimately Hispanics would align with them on the basis of issues such as abortion, desire to send their children to non-public, Catholic schools, anti-communist foreign policy, and low levels of welfare utilization. Hispanics in Chicago have consistently voted Democrat in large numbers, but it remains to be seen whether they will do so in the suburbs, where they will mix more closely with white Republicans, are far more actively recruited by Republicans, and it is possible because of local issues and increased prosperity, they may have different political interests.

Recent polling data in the suburbs indicates that by 2000, suburban Hispanics tended to be Democrats, but not by the margins that they have been in Chicago. About one-third of suburban Hispanics say that they are Democrats, about 20 percent Republicans and about 24 percent say they are Independent. This makes them more Democrat than whites, but much less so than African Americans. However, as a community with defined interests and historical political identifications, suburban Hispanics, and even Chicago Hispanics, are quite new. Families have not developed multi-generational identities of political partisanship. Many Hispanics have not been politically active and they do not yet communicate well in English or only recently attained citizenship. Others have not participated actively in public affairs and an indigenous Hispanic leadership has yet to develop in most Chicago area suburbs. All of this is to say that it remains uncertain what, if any, political identity Hispanics are likely to have in coming decades.

While the growth of black and Hispanic population in and around Chicago has led to changing color of the faces in the state legislature, the change in racial composition has not made much, if any, difference in partisan control. It has generally resulted in replacement of white Democrats with black or Hispanic Democrats in the General Assembly. The major exception to this would be in the south Cook suburbs where the

huge black migration has made the region solidly Democrat. In 2004 26 black representatives and senators represent 25 house and senate districts in the Chicago area that have black majority populations. Two black majority districts are represented by whites and blacks represent 3 districts that do not have black majorities. This is an increase from 21 black senators and representatives in 2000.

Hispanics have seen gains as well from 2000 to 2004, moving from 4 to 8 Chicago House districts and 2 to 4 Chicago Senate districts. Currently 11 Hispanics hold seats in the General Assembly and whites represent one Hispanic majority and one Hispanic plurality district, but these members have come from historically Democratic places.

3. Local Politics

In the Chicago region, the growth in African American population has had an important impact on the race of elected officials. The growth of black representation in Chicago has generally kept pace with increases in Black population. While each decennial census brings contention between coalitions of African American alderman and the leadership of the City Council's finance and rules committees over how, exactly, the new ward map should be drawn, the contention at this point tends to be around the margins. No one seriously contests that the City Council should be broadly representative of the racial composition of the city. What was likely the most expensive remap litigation in American history, the 1990s Chicago ward remap fight, resulted in the reallocation of a few thousand persons between one ward and another and the white alderman whom plaintiffs sought to unseat wound up re-elected anyway. Hispanics are less relatively well represented in the City Council than whites or African Americans, but nonetheless have made steady progress during the past 20 years through a combination of politicking and litigating. The current ward map has 8 wards that have at least 60 percent Hispanic voting age population, and an additional two more that are slightly over 50 percent. Blacks have 20 wards that are at least 58 percent black. And so blacks are represented about as they should be within the Council, Hispanics are somewhat under-represented and whites are a bit over-represented.

I would make one technical observation regarding the allocation of wards among racial majorities in the Council, because it raises a cautionary note about how racial

politics may develop in the suburbs. Maximization of minority political power generally occurs when a group is able to draw district lines in such a way that their districts have around 60 to 70 percent of their group within them. That has been hard in Chicago's remap history because most of Chicago's neighborhoods that have African Americans are almost entirely African American, resulting in wards that are entirely African American. Pressure has also been placed on black alderman because the areas of the city that have undergone the greatest population losses have been the south and west side black communities, necessitating some consolidation of ward boundaries in those areas, resulting in turf fights between incumbents. For Hispanics, the problem has been the opposite. Hispanic areas of the city have undergone the largest rates of population increase as large Hispanic families replace aging white families. But because Hispanics are so widely dispersed across the northwest and southwest sides of the city, it is difficult to draw wards that are 70 percent Hispanic because few areas of the city have that level of concentration of Hispanic population. And when the proportion falls much below that, pre-existing political organizations in those majority Hispanic regions have continued to elect white alderman, such as Ed Burke and Richard Mell, to the Council. Down the road, Hispanics will likely face these same problems in the suburbs because of the lack of concentration of population in most places.

Across the suburbs the most interesting political questions may be, as the hundreds of thousands of relatively new Hispanic residents first become citizens, and then register and vote, what will their political impact be? One way to look at that question is to consider whether the Hispanic progression is more likely to resemble the African American experience, or that of white ethnics. African American politics in Chicago has undergone three distinct phases, first a period of political organizing based around political machines tightly bound to the majority machine. From the 1970s through the mid 1980s, the black community liberated itself from the machine at various levels beginning with Ralph Metcalf's triumph over Erwin France as an independent Democrat in 1976, followed by Harold Washington's election as mayor in 1983. Upon the fracturing of the Washington coalition with his death, black politicians claimed nominal independence but have been increasingly tied to the Daley administration. Many of Chicago's suburbs also elected black mayors and councils during the 1980s and 1990s

as one by one many of the south suburbs came to have African American majorities. As a result of this political history, and so much social history that went before, many African Americans remain wary of assimilation and have embraced a distinct identity, interpretation of history, and independent political aspirations. The white ethnic story, has been very different as in Chicago's highly racialized politics, succeeding groups of European nationals came to be "whites" giving up much of their national identity in order to join with other whites socially and politically.

Much of future of Hispanic political identity rests in Hispanic peoples' own hands, but it also may be structurally determined by 1) the distribution of affordable housing in the suburbs and 2) whether municipalities elect their council members through at-large elections or from multiple voting districts. Voting districts usually favor minority groups because when they are a numerical minority in a jurisdiction and racial bloc voting exists, they are less likely to be elected in an at-large election where they constitute fewer of the voters, than from one or more districts within the jurisdiction where they may form a majority or plurality. First blacks, and then Hispanics have gradually increased their representation in the Chicago City Council by triumphing in federal court in remap fights in the 1980s and 1990s aimed at creating ward boundaries favorable to election of blacks and Hispanics.

In Evanston, African Americans have long sat on the city council, where they have consistently been elected from wards with African American majorities. Chicago Heights has had extended litigation on behalf of African Americans attempting to secure equitable arrangement of district boundaries, and Aurora is beginning it. Most Chicago-area municipalities continue to elect their trustees through at-large elections, making election of minorities problematic where either 1) racial bloc voting persists, 2) local political caucuses exist that tend to slate and support people from the local establishment, or 3) racial/ethnic minorities may have less political experience, reputation or resources on which to base campaigns for office. While they are relatively new to most Chicago area communities, very few Hispanics have been elected to political office in the suburbs.

While there was concern during the 1990s that regressive legal decisions stimulated by the Croson logic applied to the Shaw decision in North Carolina would rapidly undermine legislative maps favorable to minorities, that has not come to pass

everywhere, and certainly not in Illinois. The highly irregular 4th Congressional District, drawn following the 1990 Census to maximize the possibility of electing a Hispanic to Congress, has survived legal challenge that has reached as far as the U.S. Supreme Court. The appellate decision in Barnett – the Chicago ward redistricting case that consumed the 1990s, as well as \$20 million, introduced a new standard of racial proportionality into the 7th circuit, that was affirmed in 2003 in the district court’s upholding of the state legislative map selected by the state redistricting commission following the 2000 Census. And so it appears that litigation will appear to remain available for possible use to promote representation and, given the way suburban housing markets distribute available affordable housing, it may be needed.

But how much does who is representing your interests matter? And a related question, will suburban Hispanics have political agendas significantly different from those of their neighbors?

Studies conducted on the national level suggest that blacks and Hispanics may have somewhat different views regarding how important it is to elect members of their own group to office. At least one national survey indicates that Hispanics are largely indifferent to the ethnicity of their representative as long as he or she appropriately represents their interests. However, a recent study out of California suggests that there is a relationship between people’s observation of the political culture and their level of political participation. Hispanics in Hispanic majority electoral districts are more likely to vote than those in non-Hispanic majority districts.

African Americans, on the other hand, would seem to have a stronger sense of the meaning and significance of the ethnicity of political representatives. In part this may be a product of feelings of entitlement, derived from a nearly 400 year history in the United States. Most Hispanics are either immigrants to the United States themselves, or the children of immigrants, and so may not yet feel the same sense of identity or entitlement. For new immigrants, whatever their level of opportunity here, it is likely better than what they left. And while most African Americans are by birth completely and wholly American, many Hispanics literally keep at least one foot in another country, experiencing a shared identity with the United States and their Latin American country of origin.

Even for African Americans, it remains unclear the extent to which African American leaders represent interests either better or differently from white representatives. A Chicago Urban League study in 1989 found that white Democrats in the Illinois state legislature voted essentially the same as black legislators on matters of interest to African Americans.

An expert report prepared for the Barnett litigation presented a number of issues from the 1980s and 1990s on which white and black aldermen differed substantially – some of the issues of substantive importance, others more symbolic. Still, as was pointed out in cross examination in court, those issues represented only a fraction of the business conducted by the City Council and white and black aldermen voted together on the vast majority of legislation. Carol Swain's recent study of representation in the U.S. Congress came to a similar conclusion, that whites elected from majority black districts were equally capable of representing black interests as were black Congressmen. A September 2004 issue of the *New Yorker* magazine reports on Georgia Congressman John Lewis finding himself in the unusual position of defending an existing legislative map drawn after the 2000 Census against black plaintiffs who argue that it under-represents them. This turn of events resulted from Lewis's conclusion that black interests were ultimately better served in Georgia by a state legislature with a lot more Democrats than by one with a few more blacks, when faced with the choice.

On the other hand, one might argue that it is not on the individual legislative votes that the race of the representative matters so much, but rather on the larger issues which may never come to a vote. While black and white aldermen in the Chicago City Council may tend to vote the same on matters that come before the body, what of the agenda that perhaps never comes before it? Might there be an economic development strategy what would be significantly more beneficial for low income blacks? Do TIFs and redevelopment of downtown and its periphery sufficiently benefit low income neighborhoods? Is the school system as responsive to the needs of minority under-achievers as it could be? But in Chicago, after a brief alignment with the reform administration of Harold Washington, many Hispanic leaders ultimately decided their interests were better served by working with the Daley administration than by risking loss

of power through partnership with an unstable African American coalition divided in the wake of Harold Washington's death.

In order to gauge where Hispanics are likely to fit in suburban political culture, it is useful to review survey data that suggests where Hispanics stand on issues of interest. To the extent that their positions on issues tend to align with those of various political parties, we might infer 1) the likelihood that Hispanic voters will tend to support one party or the other, and 2) whether they are likely to find themselves in contention with local elected officials.

Of blacks, whites and Hispanics, Hispanics have the lowest per capita income across Chicago's suburbs. This would be prima facie evidence of likely alignment with Democrats but for a number of positions on social issues that are more often associated with Republicans.

For instance, anecdotal data on suburban Hispanics suggests a high priority on quality of education but in terms of how the education issue has been contended recently, it is unclear where Hispanics would align. Recent MCIC survey data indicates that suburban Hispanics would likely support Democratic proposals for reform of the state's educational funding system which would include an income for property tax swap and greater resources for public schools. A national Zogby survey indicated that 74 percent of Hispanic voters supported more spending for education and 84 percent thought spending should be equalized between districts. On the other hand, interest in sending their children to Catholic schools also leads 48 percent of suburban Hispanics to support using public money for private or religious schools, which is to say vouchers – a key Republican position. Of course, advocacy for more bilingual and culturally responsive programs in schools may eventually lead to conflict with local administrators, even if Hispanics and school administrators are aligned on the broader policy need for more money for schools.

Republicans had hoped that the Hispanic immigrant work ethic would lead them to oppose welfare and so join Republicans, but it does not appear that the issue has played out that way to this point. 46 percent of Hispanics in the Chicago suburbs indeed believe that government spends too much on the poor, compared to only 9 percent of blacks, but 70 percent of them also place a high priority on providing social services to

people in need. In the area of health care, Hispanics are particularly needy. Largely because they are more likely than whites to work low-wage jobs with little or no health care benefits, they are more likely to be uninsured, are less pleased with their health care options, and 83 percent support spending more public money on health care. The national Zogby survey found 72 percent of Hispanic voters saying that access to health insurance was a “big problem.” Over 75 percent were willing to pay more taxes if it would result in better access to health care.

Of the three racial groups, Hispanics most strongly oppose abortion – 54 percent saying it should be illegal - a position presumably rooted in Catholic tradition and teachings. Abortion has been a low visibility issue in statewide politics in Illinois, and has very little relevance at the local level, so it seems unlikely that it would be a determining factor for many Hispanic voters on state and local issues.

Much more immediately relevant for most Hispanics is concern over immigration rights and protections. Hispanics are strongly supportive of immigrant access to public services, although nationally Hispanics have historically divided over what U.S. immigration policy should be, as many have been torn between viewing the undocumented alternately as either brethren or potential competitors.

In terms of state and local tax policy, suburban Hispanics would seem to lean toward traditionally Democratic positions, 60 percent supporting environmental protection or enhancement, 86 percent saying affordable housing is very important, and a majority supporting more spending on public transportation. Like most people, 67 percent of suburban Hispanics responded that taxes are too high when asked, but it does not appear to be a particularly strongly held view, and certainly not so strongly as to send them toward Republicans when they appear to value so many of the social benefits that taxes typically buy. Data from the national Zogby poll of Hispanics indicated that twice as many Hispanic voters would rather have more services for more taxes, than less services for less taxes.

Survey data suggests that Hispanics are somewhat more likely to have been a crime victim in the suburbs than have been members of other groups. Yet, The Zogby poll suggested that Hispanics were far more likely to support policy approaches that attempted to fight the reasons for crime, rather than focusing on law enforcement and

punishment. Suburban Hispanics don't trust the police as much as whites do, 95 percent compared to 89 percent, but they trust them more than blacks, only 82 percent of whom said they did. Conflicts surrounding white on black police brutality and racial profiling have been endemic to black life in both Chicago and its suburbs for decades and historically were a major factor in creating black group identity that would eventually be mobilized into political power.

Hispanics could yet develop an opposition culture based around fear or anger, for instance in the event of highly intrusive attempts to enforce immigration law, or if severe nativist opposition to suburban Hispanics were to develop. Income disparity between Hispanics and whites that persists or deepens, combined with Hispanics in the suburbs remaining segregated or becoming more segregated, could create stronger perceptions of difference. Increased white perception of Hispanic juvenile delinquency, failure of suburban police departments to hire Hispanic police officers and the emergence of racial profiling could also create racial group antagonism. As of yet, however, problems have been few, particularly compared to African American history.

The Zogby survey indicates that the most important issues for Latinos are mainstream national issues. Thirty-four percent of Hispanics listed education or schools as the most important issue for Latinos and 22 percent said the economy or jobs. Issues that might be more confrontational such as immigration, civil rights and national security ranked far behind at well under 10 percent each.

It is hard to know whether suburban Hispanics will organize around any of these issues. Chicago is home to a number of quality advocacy organizations dedicated to issues of open housing, legal rights, immigration rights and Hispanic development that have been quite successful in advocating for Hispanic progress and interests in the city. The suburbs afford a much harder challenge however. Except for a very few places, Hispanic residents are dispersed both by their residing over a very large area less densely, and by the hundreds of municipalities and school districts, each of which has jurisdiction over the issues such as educational access, community-police relations, park district programming, fair housing and others that are of concern to Hispanics.

The Zogby data suggests that Hispanics desire group political power, 88 percent agreeing that it is important to build, but the view did not appear to be strongly held. 62

percent said that a candidate's relationship with the Hispanic community was only "one of many important factors" to consider when voting and only 6 percent indicated that whether a candidate spoke Spanish was the "single most important issue" in voting. Surprisingly, 30 percent said it was only a minor factor and 35 percent said it was not a factor at all.

On a number of measures, the Zogby poll suggested that Hispanics were more interested in integration into the broader social structure than maintaining a politically independent culture. Nationally, virtually all Latinos acknowledge the importance of speaking English. Less than half said that they had experienced discrimination, and only about one third said that discrimination against Latinos was a major problem in schools, housing or the workplace. By contrast, surveys of African Americans routinely find two-thirds or more of blacks saying they had experienced discrimination and that it is a major problem. English language television stations are also far more popular with Hispanics than are Spanish-language stations. Nevertheless, the actions of local municipalities could change that. Housing discrimination lawsuits have been filed in the suburbs of Addison, Waukegan and Cicero, and English-only laws have been passed in West Chicago and Lombard. These types of actions have historically awakened political opposition where African Americans were concerned. Suburban Hispanics may eventually align with one of the political parties, but as with black Democrats in Democratic Chicago, still find themselves fighting for access and fairness.

The sociologist Nathan Glazer, historian Arthur Schlesinger and others have worried that Hispanics might become the first major ethnic minority to fail to integrate into American society, but based on the polling data available to this point, and demographic evidence from the Chicago area, that appears unlikely. In the midst of the Jewish, Italian and eastern European immigrations from 1890 to the First World War, the same was said at the time of those groups, resulting in a nativist social and political backlash against immigration that in retrospect, was pointless. Hispanics are assimilating more in the Chicago region than many know, and history is clear on at least one point: all of our quality of life is better when existing political leadership works with, rather than in opposition, to newcomers.

Thank you.