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ASIANS—A MONOLITHIC VOTING BLOC?

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Past studies of Asian voting behavior have more often than not treated Asians as a single homogeneous group. Based on this assumption, the studies proceed to predict Asian voting behavior. However, the underlying assumption of homogeneity can produce fallacious results when the group Asians is not homogeneous. In fact, it is *often* the case that the separate ethnicities act as separate groups with their own unique political perspectives and identities. Hence, studies of Asian voting behavior should be careful to consider the effects and consequences of such aggregation.

Demographically, the U.S. is in a dramatic state of flux. In a democracy, population changes have political consequences as politicians examine the new face of the population and adjust their strategies accordingly. Most recently, there has been a surge in the number of Asian Americans (hereafter referred to as "Asians"). According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1983 and 1990), Asians are the nation's fastest growing ethnic group, having increased 128 percent from 1.5 million in 1970 to 3.5 million in 1980. Likewise in California, the Asian growth rate (120.36%) overshadows the growth rate of blacks (26.18%) and Latinos (72.09%). Here, when the Asian population increased from 1.5 million in 1980 to 2.8 million in 1990, it became the second most populous minority group; only the Hispanics are more numerous.

What does this shift in demographics mean to the world of politics? Will this phenomenal growth rate hurl the Asian group into a position of political prominence? Perhaps because this growth is a recent phenomenon, the literature on Asian politics is not as abundant as the literature on other minority groups. Even among the studies that have been done, there is a discrepancy about the proper basis from which to study the impact of Asians on the political scene. Three theories seem to have emerged. The first theory encompasses a Pan-Asian hypothesis where descriptions of "Asians" are believed to

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span across all of the subgroups (Chinese, Japanese, etc.) while differences among the subgroups are assumed to be minor. A second theory treats nationality as the key element. It begins by assuming that the Chinese are different than the Japanese, the Japanese are different than the Koreans, etc. Each subgroup is considered to have a separate political identity. Finally, the last theory would throw both of these basic assumptions aside and would regard socioeconomic status as the key variable.

Examples of the Pan-Asian hypothesis are numerous. For instance, Uhlaner (1991) claims that Asians have the highest income and lowest poverty and unemployment rates among minority groups. Moreover, unlike other minority groups, she says that substantial proportions of Asians are immigrants. Clearly, Uhlaner is concentrating on Asians as a single homogeneous group. This is not an uncommon perspective. Henry and Muñoz (1991) speak of an Asian voter turnout rate that lags significantly behind that of blacks and Anglos. They also claim that issues such as immigration, bilingual education, hate crimes, and university admission quotas are "Asian concerns." These studies place their emphasis on the context in which an Asian political coalition might exist. In Cain, Kiewiet, and Uhlaner's study (1991) of the acquisition of partisanship among Asians and Latinos, they clarify that they are not working under the pretense that Asians are a homogeneous group but rather that they are a "politically meaningful category" in the same way as are blacks, whites, and Latinos. Hence, while they acknowledge that significant differences may exist between Asian groups, they also seem to believe that Asians might still have similar political identities.

In other studies, the heterogeneity among Asians is given a position of greater prominence. Nakanishi (1991) describes significant differences among the Asians in educational levels, affluence, party affiliation, and party registration. Certainly these aspects have been key indicators of political participation and activity in virtually any study on voting behavior. Cain and Kiewiet's study (1985) provides further evidence that we might be dealing with separate political entities. They show that within-group differences on "Asian issues" such as bilingual education are pronounced.

Lastly, the theory encompassing the time-honored socioeconomic variables can be seen as a special case of the previous two theories. One can either examine the socioeconomic condition of each of the Asian subgroups separately or concentrate on the entire Asian group as a whole. In either case, the value of considering these variables adds to the quality of the other perspectives rather than competing with them.

It is important to gain some insight into why one of these approaches might be better than another because the question of whether Asians should be viewed as one monolithic group or as a conglomeration of distinct entities has broad ramifications in many realms. There are numerous instances where the

implications of adopting one theory over another can be of great substantive importance. In the legal realm, for instance, the issue of Asian cohesiveness is fundamental to voting rights issues. The Court, in *Thornburg v. Gingles* (106 SCt 2752, 1986), ruled that minority groups must be able to show that they are politically cohesive in order to warrant special consideration. Hence, if Asians are not a single cohesive political bloc, protection as Asians under the Voting Rights Act becomes problematic. If, on the other hand, the Chinese or the Japanese form a cohesive group, then that nationality would be the relevant category for protection. Similarly, in the realm of political science and academia, the question of Asian cohesiveness also has significant ramifications. If the Japanese and the Chinese are truly separate and distinct groups, then studying the groups separately would be more reasonable than combining the groups and confounding the results. Certainly, we would not put the blacks, Latinos, and Asians together into one group to describe minority voting behavior. The distinct entities would confuse our results. In the same vein, if the Asian subgroups are significantly distinct, they should be separated also. Lastly, we can see that politicians would also benefit from understanding their Asian constituency better. If the Asian subgroups are truly separate entities, then targeting specific ethnic groups would be more effective than sending blanket mailings to all Asians. In fact, in this case, focusing on "Asian issues" might even be offensive to the very market being targeted. Understanding, recognizing, and respecting ethnic differences among voters is a crucial dimension of campaigning.

METHODOLOGY

Unfortunately, this agenda is much simpler to articulate than it is to implement. Especially in the area of voting behavior, how a group voted cannot be ascertained with certainty since our voting system employs the secret ballot. In addition, the lack of an adequate number of surveys often forces us to derive individual voting probabilities from sets of aggregate data even though no single method for deriving these probabilities is universally accepted as the superior method. As we shall see, some methods are better than others.

Ecological Regression

One of the most widely used methods is ecological regression. The seminal work of Goodman (1953) stated that, in general, ecological regression cannot be used to make inferences about individual behavior. However, ecological regression may be properly used in some *very* special circumstances. Unfortunately, these very special circumstances are not met very often.

Some of the research that has followed Goodman's initial work (Freedman

et al., 1991; Hanushek, Jackson, and Kain, 1974; Shively, 1969) has examined the utility of ecological regression with direct relation to our purposes here. One of the major findings is that this method works well when estimating probabilities for a homogeneous group since the homogeneity of groups is an implicit assumption of ecological regression. When groups are not homogeneous, specification problems can produce very misleading results.

Freedman et al. (1991) demonstrated that violating this basic homogeneity assumption leads to unreliable results. They cited a 1982 California Assembly race as an example. Using ecological regression in this case would predict that the Hispanics voted 231 percent for one of the candidates! In another example, another candidate received 201 percent of the Hispanic vote when exit polls suggest that this number is closer to 25 percent.

Clearly, the assumption that the vote can be predicted simply from knowing the Hispanic registration is fallacious. This model does not consider the differing socioeconomic variables of the various precincts. It assumes that poor Hispanics vote similarly to rich Hispanics. It fails to consider that heavily Democratic precincts are likely to vote quite differently than heavily Republican precincts. No attempt is made at any sort of differentiation between these obviously distinct situations. All of these omitted factors affect the quality of the results. Moreover, conjuring up a whole host of other potentially confounding factors is not difficult. Any factor that might have a significant impact on the vote affects the ability of a simple ecological regression to produce reasonable results. Because of these inherent faulty assumptions, the conclusions drawn from this method are often unreliable.

Correlation Coefficient

Another method that has been used to identify racially polarized voting utilizes the correlation coefficient. Many have suggested that the correlation coefficient is an inadequate measure. Robinson's (1950) foundational study in this area cited numerous examples to demonstrate that no relation whatsoever necessarily exists between individual correlations and ecological correlations. Hanushek, Jackson, and Kain (1974) claim that Robinson would have obtained much better results had he started from a more complete, properly specified model. However, at this point, we reach the impasse of the properly specified model. The argument becomes tautological.

In addition to these works, Engstrom and McDonald (1987) showed that the correlation coefficient can give systematically biased estimates when more than two homogeneous groups are present. Furthermore, Lupia and McCue (1990) have shown that the correlation coefficient is inadequate for measuring racially polarized voting even when only two homogeneous groups exist. They cite examples where the correlation coefficient takes on different values for electorates voting in exactly the same way.

The Model

The process for finding an adequate measure of racially polarized voting is still in its infancy. Recent literature on the topic has strongly suggested the abandonment of ecological regression as well as the abandonment of the correlation coefficient for measuring racially polarized voting since the underlying assumptions of both are simply not true. The model used in this paper, although not perfect in and of itself, does address and resolve some of the problems found in ecological regression and the correlation coefficient. In particular, covariates that describe the contextual effects of different precincts can be included in the model.

The model is a conglomeration of the work of Crewe and Payne (1976) and Brown and Payne (1986). Goodman's (1959) solution required all of the precincts to have the same proportion of voters voting for a specific candidate. This requirement is obviously a bit stringent and not likely to be fulfilled in actual elections. Crewe and Payne sought to relieve this condition by allowing the inclusion of contextual variables in a multiple regression model. Hence, instead of treating

$$L = b_0 + b_1 M$$

as a simple regression where b_0 and b_1 are constants, Crewe and Payne proposed that it is more reasonable to assume that these values are linearly related to a set of predictor/contextual variables. Working off of this premise, Brown and Payne then proposed a specific aggregated compound multinomial model. In their model, the systematic effects are modeled on covariates through the parameters β. A likelihood analysis is then used to estimate the unknown parameters from the model.

Specifically, the model employed in this paper is a maximum likelihood estimation[1] of the logistic regression equation $Y = X\beta(\tau, z) + e$ where

$$\beta = \frac{1}{1 + exp(\tau_0 + z_1\tau_1 + \ldots + z_n\tau_n)}$$

Here, the values of the z variables can be any number of demographic characteristics such as income, education, or ethnicity. The number of z variables as well as the type of z variables are specificed at the discretion of the researcher. These can be respecified with each race to accommodate variability between races. In other words, the covariates are subject to change depending on their impact on the response probabilities. Each model can be and ideally should be fitted separately. Once the model is specified, the maximization is performed over the parameters τ. A straightforward Newton-Raphson

procedure, utilizing full specifications of both the first and second derivatives, is used to do the nonlinear optimization.

THE DATA

Obtaining the data for such a project is not a trivial task since finding a survey with sufficiently large numbers of members of each of the Asian subgroups is difficult. Hence, limitations in data dictate that only three groups will be examined: the Japanese, the Koreans, and Other Asians. The Chinese compose most of the group, "Other Asians." The "Other Asians" group, while slightly more liberal than the Chinese, will be referred to as "Chinese" hereafter. A surname dictionary was used to separate the different ethnicities. The data were received from the county registrar and were compiled by the California Assembly's Election and Reapportionment staff.

Three Bay Area counties, Alameda, San Francisco, and Santa Clara, are studied. The data set for Alameda county includes a data set of actual voters in the 1986 general election as well as the registered voters in the county. The actual voter data set includes everyone who went to the polls to vote in the 1986 general election. The registered voter data set includes everyone who is registered to vote. This is a larger set since everyone who registers to vote does not necessarily cast a ballot on election day. Only the registered voter data set was available for San Francisco and Santa Clara counties.

A difficulty of the data set might be seen in the internal heterogeneity that exists even within these smaller Asian subgroups. However, separating these subgroups into even smaller groups of immigrants and nonimmigrants or between different generations is extremely difficult and beyond the scope of this study. The ability, or rather the inability to find an adequate number of the major Asian subgroups in any given precinct hinders the accuracy of statistical inference already. It would be unwise to diminish these groups further since data collected from such a small sample would not provide useful results. However, this difficulty is eased by the fact that these three counties yield an interesting cross-section of Asians that seems to provide a good perspective for observing generational effects. While this view of a generational effect is by no means definitive or robust, its usefulness in shedding some light on the topic should not be discounted.

Demographics

With this disclaimer in mind, we can consider the census data in Tables 1 and 2 that show San Francisco to be a haven for most first-generation immigrants while the suburbs in Santa Clara reflect a group of Asians who are more assimilated into Western culture. The inhabitants of Santa Clara county

TABLE 1. Demographic Characteristics

	Alameda	San Francisco	Santa Clara
Persons	1,105,379	678,974	1,295,071
Under 18	25.1%	17.2%	27.7%
Over 65	10.3%	15.4%	7.5%
Natives of U.S.	88.15%	71.69%	86.42%
Born in Asia	8,918	64,540	10,373
Speak English very well	56.60%	46.81%	56.17%
Speak English well	26.41%	28.18%	26.55%
Speak English poorly	17.09%	25.01%	17.27%
Income less than $5,000	12.91%	15.30%	6.96%
Median income	$18,700	$15,866	$19,264
High school grad	76.0%	74.0%	76.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980).

are generally younger, wealthier, and better educated than the inhabitants of San Francisco county. This distinction in the data is also confirmed by surveys that have been done in the Bay Area. In particular, Din's work (1984) and Binder and Lew's survey (1992) provide further evidence that San Francisco's Asian population bears distinctions from Asian populations in other counties.

If we shift our focus to the Asian subgroups, we find distinctions there as well. Data from the Census Bureau show that the Japanese are older than the other groups. The Koreans are the most likely to be renters rather than owners. They seem to span a wider range of incomes, however, since the median

TABLE 2. Demographic Characteristics

	Total	Median Age	Renter	Median Home Value
Alameda county				
Japanese	11531	32.4	43.60%	$88,900
Chinese	32177	29.8	37.68%	$94,500
Korean	3641	26.6	58.17%	$98,300
San Francisco county				
Japanese	12046	35.5	67.25%	$118,800
Chinese	82480	31.8	53.58%	$121,200
Korean	3763	29.9	73.61%	$129,100
Santa Clara county				
Japanese	21907	33.0	30.59%	$107,500
Chinese	22891	28.7	30.54%	$124,400
Korean	6109	27.0	43.61%	$110,400

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980).

value of a Korean home in Alameda and San Francisco county is higher than the Japanese or Chinese median home. The data show clearly, but perhaps not profoundly, that certain groups are poorer while other groups are younger, and still other groups are more wealthy. In addition, we know that each ethnicity tends to congregate in a different area (Chinatowns, Japan town, etc). No "Asiatowns" that center around "Asian culture" exist. Hence, while we can see demonstrated heterogeneity and strong associations within the subgroups, there are few prominent outward signs of intergroup collaboration or collegiality.

Perhaps the most striking differences between the Asian subgroups are exemplified in their disparate growth rates. Growth rates in Alameda and Santa Clara county fall nothing short of phenomenal. In those counties, it is more the rule than the exception for a group to double, even triple, in size over the period of just one decade! The Japanese are the only deviants from this rule. Because they seem to rely on birth rates instead of immigration to increase their population, their growth rates hovered at the low rates of 17.87 percent and 21.04 percent, virtually stagnant compared to the other groups. The Chinese grew by 113.15 percent and 184.07 percent while the Koreans grew by 161.93 percent and 154.79 percent. The difference is dramatic.

Another striking feature that is seen in Figure 1 comes from the comparison across counties. While San Francisco displays similar intergroup differences, its rates of increase are half the size of the rates of increase in the other two counties. The county where most non-English-speaking immigrants settle to find comfort in others of their own ethnicity is growing slowly while the suburbs are being inundated more rapidly by their descendants and other better assimilated immigrants. The differences in the rates of increase are extremely large. The recent census adds credibility to the claim that the ethnic mix in the suburbs is growing rapidly while the mix in major cities is not growing quite as rapidly.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* ran a series of articles on the huge influx of Asians where staff writer Frank Viviano (1991) summarized that the Bay Area region will emerge as the Western Hemisphere's first genuine Pacific metropolis, with an Asian community as large as some of Asia's major cities. However, unlike the past when almost the entire Asian community was concentrated in 19 square blocks of San Francisco Chinatown, Viviano further notes that the recent tide of immigration has diversified its area of settlement by positing that, "The Bay Area is no longer an urban region where immigrants are concentrated exclusively in the inner cities, nor is it a region that has grown more desperate as it has grown less white." Hence, the case is not simply that immigrants are settling elsewhere, but that the types of immigrants have recently changed also.

Three key points from the data should be highlighted. First, the Asians in

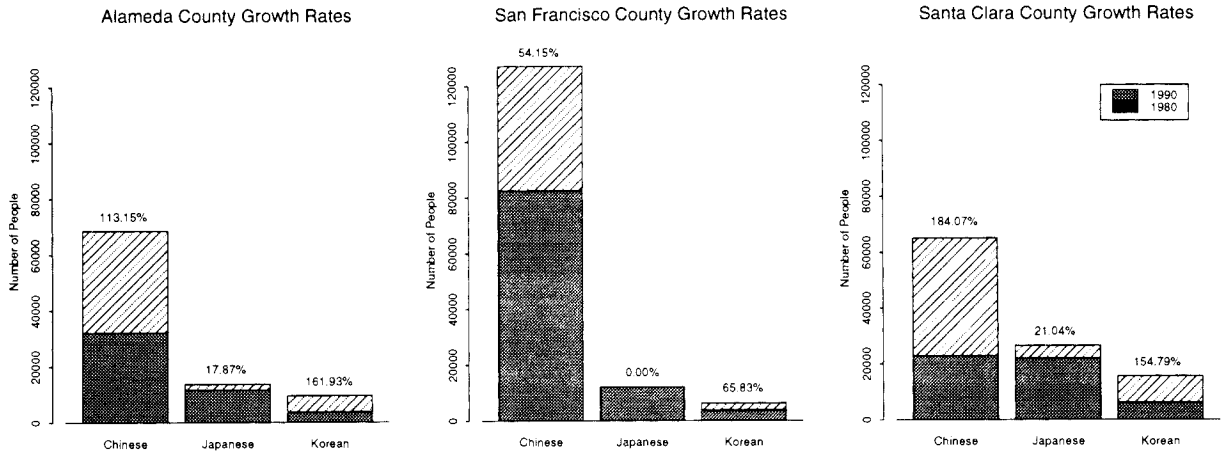

FIG. 1. Growth rates. Rates of increase are indicated above each bar.

each of the counties show differing levels of acculturation and socioeconomic status. These dissimilarities are likely to be important factors in explaining the vote differentials between the counties. Second, the counties are not growing at the same pace. Many of the new immigrants are settling into the suburbs instead of the aging inner cities. The city is growing slowly while the suburbs are experiencing a booming influx of immigrants. Lastly, because of the pattern of tremendous growth rates, we should expect to find a corresponding shift in political preferences among "Asians" in the coming decades. This will not necessarily be the result of a large-scale change in attitudes; on the contrary, it is likely to be the result of the nature of the changing demographics —the subordination of the Japanese voters and the increased influence of the immigrant population in the suburbs. Currently, Asian political preferences are largely skewed by the more politically active Japanese group. However, the influence of the other groups will unavoidably rise if their growth continues to vividly outpace the Japanese. It seems likely that we are witnessing the beginning of a trend where the Japanese will quickly be subordinated to one of the more minor subgroups as the Chinese and the Koreans begin to exert more influence.

VOTER REGISTRATION

What will change in the political scene as these changes occur among Asians? The first step to political participation is often just registering to vote. Although being registered with a party does not restrict one to always voting with that party, it is at least indicative of a person's general impression on a variety of issues. The party that one first registers with can have a large impact on one's view of politics (Campbell et al., 1960). Thus, registration figures should at least give us an impression of the general political tendencies of a group.[2]

If we begin with the Pan-Asian perspective, we see very clearly from Table 3 that Asians have definite Democratic leanings. Almost half of all the registered Asians registered with the Democrats while only 27.51 percent registered with the Republicans. In addition, the number of Asians that are registered Decline to State (hereafter "DCL") almost equals the number of Asians that are registered Republican. This number is not insignificant as it includes one in every four registered Asians. The numbers here are very lucid. Certainly, we could proceed from here with a very believable explanation of why most Asian officeholders are elected from the Democratic Party: most registered Asians are Democrats, so most Asian officeholders are Democrats. The result seems clear and simple.

However, can we really describe all Asians with a blanket statement point-

TABLE 3. Asian Registration Rates

The Pan-Asian Perspective	Dem	Rep	DCL
All Asians	48.45%	27.51%	24.04%
The Ethnicities Separated	Dem	Rep	DCL
Chinese	43.16%	28.46%	28.38%
Japanese	57.28%	25.75%	16.97%
Korean	45.87%	28.14%	25.99%

ing toward Democratic sympathies? Are we convinced and ready to treat the entire Asian group as a Democratic ally in the same way that other minorities are thought of as foregone Democratic votes? Before proceeding to such a bold conclusion, we must ask if anything is being hidden by the aggregation of the Asian groups. Table 3 shows that, in fact, a disaggregation of the registration levels leads to distinct registration patterns for the different Asian groups. While each group still has more registered Democrats than Republicans, the Democratic tendencies we saw before are largely fueled by the overwhelming fervor of the Japanese. The other groups are not as democratically inclined. In addition, the large numbers of DCLs are supported by the less politically active groups, the Chinese and the Koreans. The Japanese are more likely to register with a specific party. The differences between the Japanese and the other Asians seems to be notable in all aspects. The Chinese and the Koreans are generally similar. The only conspicuous difference is found in the fact that the Chinese are slightly more likely to register DCL than the Koreans while the Koreans are slightly more likely to register with the Democrats than the Chinese. However, this difference is minor in comparison to the distinctions borne by the Japanese.

At least this is the case when the counties are considered in the aggregate. If we proceed further to view the counties separately, however, Figure 2 shows that the tendency to register DCL is fueled by the voters in San Francisco county, the larger immigrant population. The other more assimilated Asians tend to register with a specific party. The voters in Alameda county are more likely to register with the Democrats than are their counterparts in the other two counties. Likewise, Santa Clara county's voters are more likely to register with the Republican Party. Suddenly, generational effects and questions of assimilation rise to join ethnicity as possibly important variables to consider.

Strangely enough, the observed registration patterns do not necessarily co-

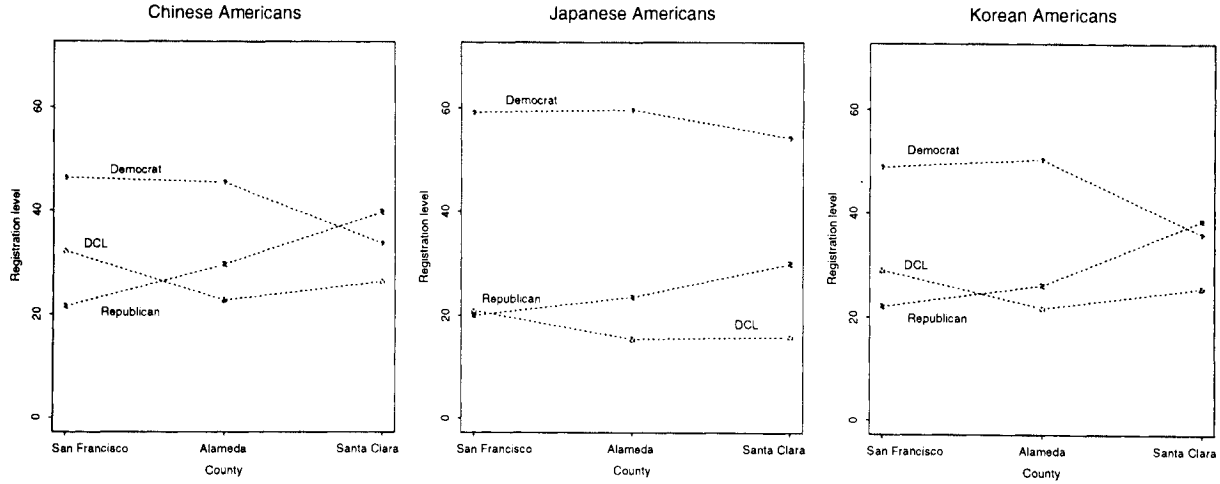

FIG. 2. Registration patterns. *Note:* The dashed lines are provided to emphasize the relationship between counties and do not indicate any type of continuity.

TABLE 4. Overall Asian Demographics

	Japanese	Chinese	Korean
Income	$24,987	$24,637	$22,774
Below poverty	3.8%	9.5%	12.9%
Median age	33.7	30.0	27.8
HS graduates	85.7%	71.9%	81.5%
Foreign born	28.77%	62.31%	67.66%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980).

incide with conventional wisdom about the effects of socioecconomic status. For instance, even though the differences are not dominating, Table 4 shows that the Japanese are generally the more wealthy, better educated, and native-born group. Hence, if we see any effect generated from these distinctions at all, we would expect these characteristics to translate into more conservative political tendencies (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). However, as we can see, almost the opposite case is true—the Japanese are the most likely to be left of the center in the political spectrum. This gives us an indication that even though the socioeconomic status of Asians might still purport to be of substantive importance, other factors may be significant if not overwhelming. However, we would need survey work to properly identify the relevant ethnic or other contextual, historical, or cultural variables; otherwise we are only left to speculation.

If we probe yet further into our data to look at the differences among the actual voters instead of just registered voters, we can gain even more insight into the nature of the Asian electorate. Our two data sets from Alameda county should help us in this endeavor. Certainly we know that everyone who registers to vote does not actually go to the polls on election day to cast their ballot. Getting Asians to register is certainly a task in itself. However, getting them to vote is a hurdle that must be overcome not just once in a lifetime but once every election. Tables 5 and 6 display the actual counts and corresponding percentages of registered Asians and actual Asian voters in Alameda county respectively. It is interesting to note that while the Japanese have the fewest registered voters, they still command the largest group of Asian voters. For instance, there are 290 more registered voters of Korean descent than of Japanese descent. However, in the actual election, the Japanese outnumbered the Koreans by 329 voters. The numbers are significantly and completely turned around! There is a world of difference between registered voters and actual voters.

The trends of Japanese participation in Alameda county are probably evident elsewhere as well. In San Francisco county, the Japanese have the few-

TABLE 5. Alameda County Registered Voters

	Chinese	Chinese %	Japanese	Japanese %	Korean	Korean %
Democrat	2947	45.53%	3682	59.69%	3251	50.33%
Republican	1915	29.59%	1451	23.52%	1684	26.06%
DCL	1469	22.70%	949	15.38%	1402	21.71%
Other	141	2.18%	87	1.41%	122	1.89%
Total	6472	100%	6169	100%	6459	100%
		1986 General Election Data				

est number of registered voters, but this really implies nothing about the profile of Asians who actually vote since the registered Japanese voters tend to vote at far higher rates than the other Asian ethnicities. In addition, San Francisco has an unusually high percentage of people who register DCL, so we must consider the fact that people who register as DCL or with a minor party turn out to vote in significantly fewer numbers than those registered with one of the two major parties. Hence, while the Japanese are outnumbered even more significantly than they were in Alameda county, their impact on the political scene as far as Asians are concerned has probably not been significantly reduced. Their high rates of political participation are still serving them well. Their returns are not diminishing; instead, they are flourishing. Only their relative percentage of the Asian population is diminishing.

In San Francisco, we can see that while the Chinese outnumber the Japanese by better than 6 to 1, this number goes down to about 2 to 1 when we consider only registered voters. Combine this with the fact that the Japanese are more liberal and vote at higher rates. It can hardly be disputed that the Japanese viewpoint heavily skews any analysis that combines the Japanese and the Chinese people together into one group.

The story is repeated once again in Santa Clara county where the Japanese also leave a large impression of their political zeal. While the Japanese make

TABLE 6. Alameda County Actual Voters

	Chinese	Chinese %	Japanese	Japanese %	Korean	Korean %
Democrat	1743	48.51%	2370	63.41%	1773	52.02%
Republican	1126	31.34%	906	24.24%	953	27.96%
DCL	669	18.62%	418	11.19%	637	18.69%
Other	55	1.53%	43	1.15%	45	1.32%
Total	3593	100%	3737	100%	3408	100%
		1986 General Election Data				

TABLE 7. Percent of Registered Voters Who Actually Vote

	Chinese	Japanese	Korean
Democrat	59.14%	64.37%	54.54%
Republican	58.80%	62.44%	56.59%
DCL	45.54%	44.05%	45.44%
Other	39.01%	49.43%	36.89%
Total	55.52%	60.58%	52.76%
	1986 General Election Data		

up a scant 19.60 percent of all registered Asians in San Francisco county, the Japanese comprise a commanding 43.99 percent of the registered Asians in Santa Clara county. Without data on the actual voters in the county, we can only speculate about the extent of the Japanese influence on the total "Asian vote." However, past patterns would indicate that any description of Santa Clara's Asian voting population would, in some cases, almost be entirely the result of the Japanese voters.

Even though the three counties have differential makeups, the main story line is not diluted: the Japanese exercise overwhelming influence on the "Asian vote." Even though the Chinese are by far the dominant group in San Francisco, the Japanese probably still make a significant contribution to "Asian voting behavior" in that county. In Alameda, there are more registered Chinese voters than Japanese voters; there are also more registered Korean voters than Japanese voters. However, if we look at those who actually vote, the ones who make the real difference in politics, we see that the Japanese are better represented than either the Chinese or the Koreans. This turnaround in numbers runs counter to our initial intuition. When we move progressively from examining population to registration to those who actually voted on a certain issue, the Japanese share of influence becomes increasingly larger. Their share of influence is simply phenomenal compared to their share of the Asian population.

Japanese Dominance of Asian American Politics

Even though it is impossible to ascertain the true reason for the higher registration among the Japanese without an extensive amount of survey work on the topic, one possible avenue of speculation we might consider stems from their racial heritage as well as their socioeconomic status. It has been hypothesized that the Asians who have come from communist countries might be more adverse to participating in politics. They have never had any inclination to participate in politics, nor have their previous political experi-

ences been positive. The Japanese, on the other hand, are mostly native born, and those who are foreign born have come from a more democratic homeland. They have had an entirely different set of past political experiences.

One additional argument we might consider stems from the fact that others have hypothesized that the Japanese experience is different in one very unique historical perspective; they were interned during World War II, and as a result, they have always had more incentive to assimilate into Western culture. During the war, Japanese Americans found a need to prove their loyalty to the United States. One telling story recounts the words of a young Japanese American who was released from an internment camp so that he could continue his education. The University of Nebraska student reported, "All of us have tried to avoid being seen in conspicuous groups and have tried to spread out as much as possible" (Daniels, 1988). In another enlightening comment of this period, Kitano (1969) writes, "One of the most influential events hastening acculturation was the evacuation of the Japanese during World War II. It broke up the power of the Issei and the ethnic ghettos; altered family life; scattered Japanese throughout America through resettlement; sent many males into the armed forces and overseas; and made many renounce everything Japanese." Hence, we see how some have speculated about why World War II might have given the Japanese an aversion to reverting back to their culture and encouraged them to a more acculturated life, to act and look as Americans would.

It may not be entirely clear why the Japanese are more inclined to political participation than the other Asian groups. It is clear, however, that while the Japanese are more politically active, they are also quickly being outnumbered by the other Asian subgroups. So, while they may register at higher rates and vote at higher rates, soon this political zeal will become less consequential. Asians currently seem to be more sympathetic to the Democrats. Their composite vote would indicate liberal tendencies. Moreover, almost all Asian elected officials are Democrats. However, much of this Democratic bent can be attributed to the Japanese whose representation among the group "Asians" is currently dominating but quickly and definitively diminishing.

Soon the views and perspectives of the other subgroups will dominate the Japanese view. Even if the subgroups continue to vote as they always have, the face of voting behavior for the all-encompassing Asian group will inevitably change because the dynamics of growth within the monolithic Asian group are forcing the changes. The more Democratic Japanese are being overshadowed by the faster-growing and less Democratic Chinese and Koreans. It cannot be emphasized enough that the numbers we are currently observing are only pieces of a larger picture that explain how the future of Asian American politics will unfold. The current state of affairs might not be

indicative of the years ahead. This volatility is an insightful and unique feature of Asian American politics.

RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

While the analysis of registration patterns is enlightening, it is not enough to make inferences onto how Asians vote because the correspondence between registration and voting preferences is not necessarily isomorphic. Hence, the next logical question is: How do they vote? Are there ethnic cues that are unique to Asians or is their perspective on issues similar to the perspectives of other voters?

The analysis here uses data from the 1986 general election.[3] Three races are examined. The Secretary of State race, where Chinese candidate and incumbent March Fong Eu ran against Republican Bruce Nestande, should give us an indication of the impact of an Asian candidate. The Controller's race between incumbent Democrat Gray Davis and Republican Bill Campbell bears no distinct or obvious appeal to Asians. However, its results should help us see how Asians tend to vote when there is no "Asian concern" at stake. The gubernatorial race between Democrat Tom Bradley and Republican incumbent George Deukmejian possibly adds a feature of whether or not racism between Asians and blacks is prevalent in Asian voting behavior. We will have to approach this interpretation gingerly, however, since this aspect is difficult to separate from other possibly confounding variables. In addition, Proposition 63, commonly known as "English Only," was also analyzed. It made English the official language in California. Ethnic groups with high proportions of people who do not speak English or speak English poorly were obviously disinclined to support the proposition. Translating this analysis to the Asian groups would lead to a prediction that the Japanese generally supported the measure while the Chinese and the Koreans probably would not support the measure since their populations have higher proportions of immigrants.

Our first view of the data will be from the Pan-Asian perspective presented in Table 8. Several interesting patterns are evident here. However, the most compelling argument arising from the data seems to be that Asians are more sympathetic to the Democratic Party than they are to the Republican Party. A small exception can be seen in the Governor's race where the preference cannot be ascertained because the vote is statistically indistinguishable. However, the Asians voted for the Democrat in the Controller's race as well as the Secretary of State's race. In addition, akin to Democratic tendencies, they voted against the passage of Proposition 63. "Asian interests" would probably have led us to predict the preference for March Fong Eu in the Secretary

TABLE 8. The Pan-Asian Perspective: Asian Ethnicities and Counties Combined

	Asians	All Voters
Controller°		
Democrat	.07784	0.5148
	(0.0563)	
Republican	0.2216	0.4414
	(0.0368)	
Governor		
Democrat	0.4891	0.3737
	(0.0306)	
Republican	0.5109	0.6054
	(0.0301)	
Secretary of State°		
Democrat	0.9916	0.6884
	(0.0448)	
Republican	0.0084	0.2643
	(0.0009)	
Proposition 63°		
Yes	0.3092	0.7325
	(0.0224)	
No	0.6908	0.2675
	(0.0303)	

Standard errors in parentheses.
°$p < .05$ for H_0: Democratic vote = Republican vote.

of State's race as well as the vote against Proposition 63. The result in the Controller's race only serves to provide further evidence of the Democratic leanings of the Asian group. From the perspective of one who begins with a Pan-Asian hypothesis, all indicators point to the same conclusion: Asians are sympathetic to the Democrats. While it is not clear that they are wholly inclined to Democratic tendencies, we see that at least in several instances, their views are more aligned with Democratic views.

This result speaks for the Asian group as a whole. We have yet to consider whether this Democratic leaning translates to each of the Asian ethnicities separately. Does it matter that the Asian group is actually composed of several different ethnicities? Table 9 displays the results of the races after we separate the Asian groups and posits a strong argument that all Asian ethnicities do not necessarily have Democratic leanings. When we view each group as their own political entity, distinctions that were once hidden become apparent. While viewing all Asians together gave us the impression that the Chinese fit into a Democratic mold, the separate analyses show that this associa-

TABLE 9. Asian Ethnicities Estimated Separately

	Chinese	Japanese	Korean
Controller			
Democrat[a,c]	0.5567	0.7208	0.7980
	(0.0639)	(0.0138)	(0.0559)
Republican[a,c]	0.4433	0.2792	0.2020
	(0.0421)	(0.0510)	(0.0398)
Governor			
Democrat[a,c]	0.4226	0.7397	0.6514
	(0.0434)	(0.0044)	(0.0666)
Republican[a,c]	0.5774	0.2603	0.3486
	(0.0444)	(0.0457)	(0.0645)
Secretary of State			
Democrat	0.9032	0.9202	0.9901
	(0.0593)	(0.1128)	(0.1041)
Republican[c]	0.0968	0.0798	0.0099
	(0.0162)	(0.0376)	(0.0043)
Proposition 63			
Yes[a,b,c]	0.2838	0.6574	0.0131
	(0.0364)	(0.2425)	(0.0335)
No[a,b,c]	0.7162	0.3426	0.9869
	(0.0719)	(0.0362)	(0.0246)

Standard errors in parentheses.
[a]$p < .05$ for H_0: Chinese vote = Japanese vote.
[b]$p < .05$ for H_0: Japanese vote = Korean vote.
[c]$p < .05$ for H_0: Korean vote = Chinese vote.

tion may have been made a bit hastily. In the Controller's race, we see that the Japanese and the Korean votes are still Democratic but the Chinese vote becomes statistically indistinguishable between the two parties. In addition, the Chinese vote on the Governor's race deviates from the other groups. They voted Republican while the other two groups remained with the Democrats. Moreover, the Chinese are not the only group to bear different political tendencies. The Japanese exhibit their own unique mark on the issue of having English as the official language. They voted for Proposition 63 while the Chinese and the Koreans voted against its passage.

Hence, we see that the decision of whether to view Asians as a single group or as a conglomeration of groups is critical and can have a large impact on our results. If we believe that "Asians" are a politically meaningful category, then we should be satisfied with the analysis starting from the Pan-Asian hypothesis. However, if the different ethnicities do not act in unison or do not consider themselves to be politically akin to the other ethnicities, our analysis would greatly benefit from the separation of the Asian groups. This allows us

to uncover the previously hidden and differing political tendencies unique to each nationality.

At this point, we reach somewhat of an impasse. We have seen that the underlying hypothesis about whether Asians are one group or many is crucial to the subsequent interpretation of the results. However, we have not established or looked at the question concerning politically meaningful categories. Are Asians as a whole a politically meaningful category or is it more useful to look at each ethnicity as a separate political unit? In order to answer this question, we will examine our results a little more carefully and discuss them in the light of some historical and cultural variables.

Ethnic Cues?

One would expect that March Fong Eu would have a large following in the Asian community since she is the highest Chinese elected officeholder. Even among the electorate-at-large, her vote margins have consistently been much higher than a strict party vote would imply. Tables 8 and 9 show that Asians as a whole as well as each separate ethnicity have also supported her in very high proportions. An interesting note is further seen in Table 10 where not only each Asian ethnicity but each of the counties is also estimated separately. We see hints that some factor influences the Asian subgroups themselves. For instance, while the Chinese support for March Fong Eu is very high in both Alameda and San Francisco county, her support drops considerably when we look at Santa Clara county. For the Japanese, her support is generally high but it plummets dramatically in San Francisco county.

At this point, in search for explanations, studies of voting behavior usually turn to the partisanship variables that are generally rife with explanatory power. However, it seems that something other than partisanship is at work here. The results appear to be more in the realm of contextual or socioeconomic effects. For instance, it is odd that the voters in San Francisco, the ones who are the least likely to express their partisanship by registering with a specific party, displayed overwhelming levels of partisanship in the Secretary of State race. Is this a display of partisanship or of some other variable? Perhaps this vote represents the ability of a Chinese candidate to bring out the Chinese voters of San Francisco. It is difficult to conjecture. However, the evidence pointing away from partisanship and toward an ethnic voting cue is strengthened from the fact that the San Francisco Chinese, the group that is most likely to be apathetic according to our traditional partisanship analyses, turned out to produce the most overwhelming vote margin for March Fong Eu.

We find a similar but opposing story when we examine the Japanese vote. While we would expect the Japanese to vote for March Fong Eu by virtue of

TABLE 10. Asian Ethnicities and Counties Estimated Separately

		Chinese	Japanese	Korean	All Voters
Controller					
Alameda	Dem[c]	0.5209	0.8339	0.8652	0.6822
		(0.1406)	(0.2628)	(0.0287)	
	Rep[a,c]	0.4791	0.1661	0.1348	0.3178
		(0.1329)	(0.0923)	(0.1017)	
San Francisco	Dem[a,b,c]	0.1048	0.6649	0.1746	0.7484
		(0.0081)	(0.1831)	(0.0212)	
	Rep[a,b]	0.8952	0.3351	0.8254	0.2516
		(0.0766)	(0.1121)	(0.1481)	
Santa Clara	Dem	0.4694	0.5590	0.5859	0.5737
		(0.0918)	(0.0839)	(0.1108)	
	Rep	0.5306	0.4410	0.4141	0.4263
		(0.1020)	(0.0631)	(0.1814)	
Governor					
Alameda	Dem[c]	0.3274	NA	0.2472	0.4903
		(0.0218)		(0.0218)	
	Rep[c]	0.6726	NA	0.7528	0.5197
		(0.0168)		(0.0200)	
San Francisco	Dem[a,b,c]	0.1645	0.5157	0.0582	0.3833
		(0.0386)	(0.0972)	(0.0145)	
	Rep[a,b]	0.8355	0.4843	0.9418	0.6167
		(0.0668)	(0.0867)	(0.1164)	
Santa Clara	Dem[a,c]	0.0228	0.2973	0.2586	0.6140
		(0.0120)	(0.0598)	(0.0467)	
	Rep[a]	0.9772	0.7027	0.7414	0.3860
		(0.0348)	(0.0185)	(0.2087)	
Secretary of State					
Alameda	Dem	0.9770	0.9755	0.9667	0.8545
		(0.1416)	(0.1388)	(0.0309)	
	Rep	0.0230	0.0245	0.0333	0.1455
		(0.0230)	(0.0229)	(0.0148)	
San Francisco	Dem[a,c]	0.8848	0.5611	0.5236	0.8931
		(0.0899)	(0.0514)	(0.0887)	
	Rep[a,c]	0.1152	0.4389	0.4764	0.1069
		(0.0337)	(0.0303)	(0.0289)	
Santa Clara	Dem	0.6646	0.7791	0.6648	0.7808
		(0.1169)	(0.1177)	(0.1621)	
	Rep	0.3354	0.2209	0.3352	0.2192
		(0.2308)	(0.0692)	(0.1566)	
Proposition 63					
Alameda	Yes	NA	NA	0.5199	0.6364
				(0.3857)	
	No	NA	NA	0.4801	0.3636
				(0.1681)	
San Francisco	Yes[a,b,c]	0.0477	0.3300	0.1660	0.5307
		(0.0101)	(0.1042)	(0.0149)	
	No[a,b]	0.9523	0.6700	0.8340	0.4693
		(0.0829)	(0.0782)	(0.1404)	

TABLE 10. *(Continued)*

		Chinese	Japanese	Korean	All Voters
Santa Clara	Yes	0.8344	0.7786	0.5210	0.7279
		(0.0374)	(0.0356)	(0.5166)	
	No	0.1656	0.2214	0.4790	0.2721
		(0.1295)	(0.1749)	(0.3885)	

Standard errors in parentheses.
[a]$p < .05$ for H_0: Chinese vote = Japanese vote.
[b]$p < .05$ for H_0: Japanese vote = Korean vote.
[c]$p < .05$ for H_0: Korean vote = Chinese vote.
The "NA" table entries indicate that an estimate could not be obtained because the maximum likelihood procedure did not converge. This does not imply that no maximum exists. It merely indicates the inability to find a good starting estimate.

her Democratic label, we might also expect them to react differently toward her because of the ill will that exists between the Japanese and the Chinese. In fact, this possible animosity reveals itself only in San Francisco. In the other counties, the Japanese generally support March Fong Eu in high proportions. Speculating about this discrepancy can lead us in several directions. One explanation we might consider is that the Japanese may not see a Chinese candidate as one of their own even though the two groups are joined together under the "Asian" group heading. But why would the Japanese see the Chinese as their kin when historically the Chinese and the Japanese have not even been friendly races? Many still remember the horrors of the Sino-Japanese War. Especially among the older generations, the past is likely to vividly revive itself in their political perspectives. The older Chinese remember the loss of dignity and self-worth that came with the occupation. Indeed, the horrors of the war are embedded memories not easily forgotten. It is not simply a historical account. Some of these prejudices may subside as future generations tend to forget their ancestors' past since it is certainly not the same experience to just hear about the war through stories or textbooks. Although the outrage may still be evoked, the emotions are not usually quite as manifest. Hence, it may not be so surprising that the older Japanese population in San Francisco county displays disparate voting behavior from the younger generations living in the suburbs. Of course, these are only hypotheses. Extensive survey research would be needed to confirm these suppositions.

Strangely, or perhaps not so strangely, we find the same sort of pattern in the Korean vote. The Korean vote for March Fong Eu is high with the exception of the San Francisco voters. Certainly, these patterns strike of significant ethnic divisions among the Asians. The Chinese bear the only consistent vote for March Fong Eu across all of the counties. Their vote for her spans from the young to the old, from low socioeconomic levels to high socioeconomic

levels. Although we cannot be certain of the origins of this unusual pattern, the pattern itself speaks strongly against those who would hold to the Pan-Asian theory. At least for the older Asians, the thought that all Asians are alike seems to be a fallacy.

The Secretary of State race exhibits many intraethnic problems. When we move to the Governor's race, however, the interesting question switches from intraethnic effects to possible interracial effects. Although Asians and blacks do not necessarily have past dismal relationships in the form of wars, their attitudes toward one another have been known to be unfavorable. This may account for Tom Bradley's lack of support in the Governor's race. Both the Chinese and the Koreans displayed Republican leanings while the Japanese wavered on the race. However, the Japanese are definitely more inclined than the other two groups to Democratic tendencies. Again, there seems to be some sort of ethnic cue at work here. While it is difficult to isolate a particular effect, we should take note that some alternate cue seems strong enough to thwart the strength of the partisan cue.

Finally, we switch from candidates to the issue of an official language. For the Chinese, especially those who live in Chinatown, English is often a second language if they speak it at all. For the Japanese, however, since their English proficiency numbers are proportionately higher, Proposition 63 would not be as detrimental to their interests. The data analysis supports this reasoning with an addendum. All of the groups in San Francisco county opposed Proposition 63 with the Chinese and the Korean levels of opposition at higher levels than the Japanese level of opposition. All of the older generations seemed to have an interest in the defeat of the proposition. However, the younger generations in Santa Clara county, the wealthiest and youngest of the counties, completely shift the vote in favor of the proposition. This seems to be a generational effect spurred on by the differing demographic characteristics among the three counties. Those who speak English better were more likely to vote for English Only. Again, some factor other than partisanship seems to have been the key explanatory variable.

It is clear from examining the voting patterns that each of the Asian subgroups bear distinctions that uniquely describe and distinguish themselves from the others. Party identification does not generate as much explanatory power for Asians as it does for other groups in the electorate. We saw how the Chinese and the Japanese reacted oppositely in San Francisco county. Forces other than party identification fueled their decisions. The Chinese heritage of March Fong Eu seemed to have more of an impact on Asian voting behavior than party allegiance. In a similar way, English Only supporters were not uniformly members of one certain party; rather, factors such as an ability to read and write English as well as immigrant status played larger roles. The numbers do not reflect a strong pattern of partisanship.

The effect of parties is not entirely dissipated though. Party identification

begins to have the expected effect in Santa Clara county. It is interesting to note that the voting patterns of the different groups begin to resemble each other more and more as we move into the suburbs. Party labels begin to evoke an overarching effect that dilutes the ethnic distinctions that were so clear among the first generations. Party labels seem to become increasingly important with future or more assimilated generations. If this hypothesis is true, the ensuing decades should sense less animosity between the Asian ethnicities. Younger and future generations seem to act differently than the older generations. Thus, while an Asian coalition does not appear to be credible now, a unified front in the future should not be ruled out.

The curious behaviors that we are observing are likely to be generational effects unique to Asians. These forces may stem from historical events. They may stem from simple racism within the monolithic group "Asians." Without party identification as a cue, the Chinese in San Francisco are more likely to vote for someone if they can relate to that person. Certainly Chinese immigrants can relate to a Chinese candidate. The older Japanese probably relate to the Chinese differently than future generations will relate to the Chinese. Asian racism seems to subside with later generations. Different generations seem to react to different cues. Party identification seems to provide more effective cues for future generations than it does for the earlier generations. At least for the younger Asians in Santa Clara county, party loyalty plays a larger role in their decisions than perhaps the aspects that provided the cues for the earlier generations.

Party identification certainly has its place in political science literature. When we are discussing Asians, however, many factors seem to relegate party identification to lower, more insignificant ranks. Party identification makes a difference to those who understand what it means and what its ramifications are, but it makes less of an impact when the voters are largely foreign born and not proficient with the English language.

CONCLUSION

Asians should not be neglected from political science literature. Their numbers tell the story. As a group, they have experienced unprecedented growth in recent decades. While the number of registered Asian voters is not quite commanding today, their growth rates foreshadow a day that is rapidly approaching. However, Asians present some unique problems to traditional research on minority politics. Because the monolithic Asian group is heterogeneous in several respects, it often becomes important to separate the group into its component parts. If, however, the relevant interest is the potential impact of an Asian coalition, then the ethnicities should be considered jointly but care should be exercised in interpreting the results lest some bias clouds

the perceptions. In addition, the research is complicated by the often disparate tendencies of different generations as well as the immigrant population.

We saw the value of adhering to these precautions in the research presented here. For instance, we saw that although the Asian groups are quite distinctive in San Francisco, the younger, more wealthy generations who live in the suburbs begin to close this intraethnic gap. While the younger generations' political tendencies tend to depart from the older generations, they also begin to become more similar, more akin to the younger generations of other Asian ethnicities. Hence, what now seems like disparate groups lacking the ability to form a coalition may well present a unified front when the younger generations come into positions of political leadership. The patterns of growth imply that this day of unification is close. The migration of subsequent generations out of the city more than doubled this past decade while migration into San Francisco hovered meagerly around 50 percent. The younger generations are also likely to bring with them a stronger desire to participate in the political process.

For those interested in questions of votings rights, the answer, at least now, cannot be definitive. It seems that the context of the case is a relevant factor. No blanket conclusions can be drawn. The Asians in San Francisco might not warrant special consideration under the Votings Rights Act; however, it would be more difficult to argue that the Asians in Santa Clara county do not warrant special protection. One very significant implication of this study is that sensitivity to the concept that the Asian ethnicities *may* be very distinct entities is of utmost importance. For academics, lack of sensitivity may confound one's research and cause its results to be meaningless. For politicians, it could thwart otherwise well-intentioned strategies.

Lastly, it is important to remember that the Asian American politics of tomorrow will not be like the Asian American politics of today. Today, the Japanese dominate the Asian groups in the political realm, but their rate of growth is minuscule compared to the other groups. They register in greater numbers. They vote in higher percentages. But none of these things will matter if the other groups outnumber the Japanese by better than 10 to 1. The liberal bent of the Japanese will soon translate into a more conservative outlook for Asians as a whole.

Asian American politics is at an exciting and critical time. The ensuing decades will see their full emergence into the political process. The numbers are there. Apathy is now their last and greatest barrier.

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NOTES

1. Incidentally, one excellent method of obtaining initial guesses for the maximum likelihood routine is McCue's (1990) cluster analysis routine. A full description of this routine can be found in his article *The Inference of Individual Probabilities from Aggregate Data—A Homogeneous Approach*.
2. The data presented here include only registered voters and thus only citizens. These people provide the most useful sample of Asians for the purpose of studying distinctive voting patterns among the Asian subgroups. An analysis of citizenship rates would not add to our analysis of actual voting patterns. Thus, this task is not undertaken. However, probing in this direction would be a useful and interesting topic for future studies.
3. The numbers presented in this section on Asian voting are obtained from the model described in the Methodology section. The voting percentages for all voters is obtained from the Statement of the Vote compiled by the Secretary of State.

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