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Ethnic Cleavages and Voting  
Patterns in Los Angeles

by

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR. . .**

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ETHNIC CLEAVAGES AND VOTING PATTERNS IN U. S. CITIES:  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE ASIAN, BLACK AND HISPANIC COMMUNITIES OF LOS ANGELES

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INTRODUCTION

Immigration into the U.S. from countries in Latin and Asia is rapidly changing the ethnic and demographic composition of American cities. In Los Angeles alone, the Hispanic<sup>1</sup> population grew from 18 percent of the city's total population in 1970 to 28 percent in 1980. The Asian population, while smaller in total size, rose from 5 percent in 1970 to 7 percent in 1980. As the new wave of immigrants grows in size, much attention in both the academic community as well as the mass public is being devoted to their impact on the social and political composition of the communities in which they reside.

In terms of political development, the new wave immigrants pose new questions for research on ethnic politics. Most salient of these are the following: what form of political empowerment will take place in these ethnic communities? How adequate is the political assimilation model posed by Robert Dahl (1961) or the political incorporation model posed by Browning, Tabb and Marshall (1984) in explaining the political behavior of these ethnic groups? Moreover, given that new wave immigration is highly concentrated in American cities where Black Americans have come to constitute both sizeable proportions of the population and political office holding, what impact will the growing presence of new immigrants have on Black political development?

In order to address some of these concerns, this paper examines the political behavior of the Asian, Black, and Hispanic communities of Los Angeles in a comparative context. Attention is focused on the following issues: 1) the extent to which each group forms an ethnic voting bloc in the city 2) differences in comparative levels of local political involvement and the forces responsible, and 3) the potential for inter-ethnic coalition building among Asians, Blacks and Hispanics. Moreover, the work assesses the adequacy of the Dahl ethnic political assimilation model in explaining the political experiences of these new wave immigrants and discusses the nature and level of political incorporation developing within each group.

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<sup>1</sup>The Hispanic population is broadly defined to include immigrants from Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other countries in Latin and Central America.

<sup>2</sup>Broadly defined to include individuals of Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese descent.

## ETHNIC POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND VOTING PATTERNS: AN OVERVIEW

*Ethnic Group Cohesion*

In examining the literature on ethnic voting patterns in U.S. cities, one finds a number of competing theories linking ethnic group identity to ethnic voting behavior. For example, Robert Dahl offers a comprehensive model of the ethnic political assimilation process in his work on New Haven, Connecticut (Dahl 1961). According to his thesis, ethnic politics is a "transitional phenomenon." In his analysis Dahl closely associates the socio-economic status of the ethnic group with their political behavior (Dahl 1961, pp. 34-35). He argues that ethnic groups undergo three stages of political assimilation. In the first stage, members of the ethnic group are almost exclusively proletarian. Politically and socially group members are low in status, income, and influence. Dahl argues that these similarities generate an ethnic based identity which leads to homogeneity in political attitudes and voting. Thus, he hypothesizes that political homogeneity is a function of socio-economic homogeneity.

In stage two of his model, ethnic groups become more heterogeneous socio-economically. Those group members with higher incomes are able to gain political influence outside their ethnic group. However, while this process undermines overall ethnic cohesion, it does not destroy it. At this stage, ethnic groups theoretically become open for coalition building with other groups.

In the third and final stage of the Dahl model, an ethnic group is highly heterogeneous socio-economically. Group members have thoroughly assimilated into diverse social and economic environments taking on new identities. Ethnic politics at this stage is often times viewed as "embarrassing or meaningless" to individual group members (Dahl 1961, p.35).

While this model is comprehensive and intuitively appealing, it has not gone without its critics. More recent work on ethnic voting patterns have found cohesion in ethnic voting independent of the degree to which the group was socio-economically differentiated (see, for example, Wolfinger 1965). Wolfinger argues for example, that ethnic voting is even more pronounced at the middle income level.

Furthermore, some scholars have observed a relationship between ethnic voting and ethnic concentrations in municipalities with non-partisan elections (see Pomper 1966). They argue that such a relationship exists because of low levels of voter information on candidates and the lack of cues from political parties (see Pomper 1966). More recent studies in the political science and sociology fields report high correlations between ethnic identity and voting behavior (see London and Hearn 1977 and Nelson 1979). Nelson's work (1979) in particular formalizes ethnic identity as a determinant of political behavior.

Another major criticism of Dahl's model involves his concept of assimilation. In his analysis, assimilation is defined as taking on the dominant group's values and culture. However, in other analyses the concept has been used to describe how the dominant group accepts minority groups' values and culture (see Gordon 1967). In this regard, we find that Black Americans as an ethnic group failed to assimilate into New Haven society. While Dahl argues the contrary, his work fails to demonstrate convincingly that Black Americans present in New Haven at the time of his analysis had successfully assimilated into the mainstream of the New Haven economy. His work actually demonstrates that Blacks had been surpassed by ethnic groups

later entering the New Haven economy. Nevertheless, he argues that the assimilation process held true for Blacks as well.

Barnett (1976) and Pinderhughes (1987) both note this shortcoming in their critiques of the ethnic assimilation model as it relates to Black Americans. According to Barnett, "Blacks are external to the American ideological system and not effectively integrated into the political system." Pinderhughes demonstrates this point by comparing the political experiences of Blacks, Poles and Italians in the city of Chicago. She concludes that "Black economic life supported politics of a very different character than that proposed by the pluralist theorist."

White resistance to Black candidates running for public office further illustrates how minorities are excluded from the political process. Empirical studies have shown White racial bloc voting irrespective of the socio-economic status of the Black candidate (see Pettigrew 1967; Henry 1987; and Jackson 1987). In most of these cases, White voters have been unwilling to vote for Black candidates for public office or have shown high resistance to a Black candidacy (Jackson 1987). On the other hand, Blacks have been found more often to support the candidacy of Whites at the expense of Black challengers (Jackson 1987). This hostility toward Black candidates based on race has made the political assimilation of Blacks difficult.

In sum, I argue that the major void in the ethnic voting literature is the lack of a theoretical explanation for ethnic voting. Is voting along ethnic lines truly a function of one's socio-economic status as argued by Dahl? If so, why did the Dahl thesis fail to explain middle income ethnic voting patterns observed by Wolfinger? Secondly, given that Dahl's assimilation model explained poorly the experience of Black Americans, is it reasonable to assume that it will work in explaining the experiences of other non-European ethnics such as Asians and Hispanics?

There are lessons also to be learned about ethnic voting through critically examining Dahl's critics. For example, in the Wolfinger analysis, the standard criticism has pertained to his attempt to directly link ethnic vote cohesion to ethnic identity. While ethnic voting patterns may naturally be correlated with the presence of a particular ethnic group in a community, there is no reason to believe that one's ethnic identification directly leads to or solely determines his vote choice. Such a proposition precludes other factors (e.g. issue saliency, candidate appeal, social class) from being considered as determinants of an ethnic member's political behavior. Aggregate analyses of ethnic voting such as the work performed by Wolfinger tend to undermine these differences.

In short, theory development on ethnic group voting behavior has been largely descriptive, plagued with inference problems and confined to the European immigrant experience. While we know that voting along ethnic lines does occur, we don't know why or under what conditions. How do we explain cases where members of an ethnic group fail to vote along ethnic lines? Furthermore, how does one account for groups that find it difficult to assimilate in American society? These are definitely issues to consider as we explore the political experiences of new wave immigrants.

### ***Ethnic Identity and Political Mobilization***

With the advent of the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Protest Movement of the 1950's and 1960's, Black political participation in the American political system increased. In the early 1970's the work on Black group consciousness and political participation by Verba and Nie captured some of

the dynamics of these changes. A major question posed by these scholars was whether or not Black Americans could use "participatory mechanisms as a means of overcoming their deprived status in social and economic terms?" (Verba and Nie 1972, p. 149).

As a group, the socio-economic status of Blacks is depressed compared to American society as a whole. The Verba and Nie analysis demonstrates a high correlation between socio-economic status of Blacks and their representation in the various modes of political participation examined (voting, campaign activity, cooperative activity, and citizen initiated contact) thus explaining their low levels of participation. However, they found that when socio-economic status was controlled, Blacks were over represented in co-operative activity and campaign activity but remained under represented in voting and citizen-initiated contact. The major finding by Verba and Nie regarding Black Americans was that Blacks with a sense of group consciousness had average participation rates higher than their White counterparts (Verba and Nie 1972, p. 158-170).

In sum, these findings tend to suggest that while one's socio-economic status is important in determining the level of political involvement, other sources such as one's ethnicity, can stimulate involvement. This point was dramatized in the 1983 Chicago mayoral election where 84% of Black voters turned out to vote compared to 82% of White voters.

A number of studies have been critical of the Verba and Nie analysis. For example, in a recent analysis of group identification and political behavior, Miller, P. Gurin, G. Gurin and Malanchuk (1981) rightfully criticize Olsen (1970) and Verba and Nie (1972) for attempting to directly associate "group identification" with "political group identification." Miller et al. (1981) draw a distinction between group identification and politicized group consciousness. They argue that "group identification connotes a perceived self-location within a particular social stratum along with a psychological feeling of belonging to that particular stratum." Group consciousness, on the other hand, "involves identification with a group and a political awareness or ideology regarding the group's relative position in society along with a commitment to collective action aimed at realizing the group's interest." The scholars note that there is no theoretical reason to expect a direct relationship between group identification and political participation (Miller et al. 1981: p. 495). They conclude:

participation is not simply a reflection of the social conditions that people experience. How people perceive and evaluate their position is an important link between the experience of certain social situations and political participation. If the experience is politicized through group consciousness and assessments of social justice, it can indirectly motivate social action (Miller et al. 1981, p. 503).

In other words, "politicized group consciousness" as opposed to "ethnic affinity" is important in determining ethnic political behavior.

Drawing from these studies on ethnic identification and political participation we ask the question: under what conditions is ethnic identity likely to emerge as a force shaping an ethnic group member's political participation? Secondly, how does ethnic consciousness conflict with other forms of group identity (e.g. religion, gender, social class) in affecting political behavior. From the above discussion we learn that ethnic mobilization is not automatic, yet ethnic groups with ethnic group consciousness can be mobilized on ethnic related issues.

### ***Coalitions and Ethnic Group Politics***

Dahl raises another question on ethnic group behavior which deserves further exploration. He suggests that as ethnic groups improve their socio-economic status, they will attempt to coalesce as a group with other groups in society to improve their political condition. A number of studies have explored political coalitions within urban areas.

Most of the early studies focused on the relationship between Blacks and Whites. For example, Harry Holloway (1968) provides three forms of Black-White electoral coalitions based on experiences in Southern cities: the conservative coalition, the independent power strategy and the liberal coalition. According to Holloway, the conservative coalition consisted of the linkage between the Black community and powerful White business and financial interests; the independent power strategy was one where Black leaders exchanged the Black vote for political concessions; and the liberal coalition consisted of Blacks uniting with low income Whites labor unions, Chicanos and liberal Whites. Using the cities of Atlanta, Memphis, and Houston respectively, he illustrates the formation of each of these strategies (Holloway 1968).

A recent work by Browning, Tab and Marshall (1984) has examined both Black and Hispanic groups seeking political empowerment. Using a typology similar to Holloway's they outline the following forms of minority group mobilization: co-optation, protest and exclusion, weak minority mobilization and political incorporation. According to these analysts, incorporation into a broad liberal coalition was a precondition to minority group political success in the cities that they studied.

Based on these cases, it is clear that the form and character of urban ethnic coalitions vary from one urban context to the next. Both the Holloway and Browning et al. work suggest that the political leadership found in urban areas as well as the "racial climate" impact upon the character of the political coalitions formed.

Internal differences within minority group communities have been found to undermine the development of coalitions. Social class differences and ideological differences within minority communities tend to weaken the unity of these communities and the external as well as internal coalition building process. Competition among ethnic leaders and organizations over scarce resources within minority communities have also been attributed to undermining the coalition building process.

These concerns are important for this analysis as they provide a framework for examining the comparative political experiences of the ethnic groups under study. In this analysis we will seek to understand both the nature and character of coalition politics within Los Angeles ethnic communities.

### **A COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR STUDYING ETHNIC POLITICAL BEHAVIOR**

From the literature above, a number of questions about the future of new wave ethnic groups seeking to assimilate into the mainstream of American society were raised. Among these are the following: 1) how closely will they follow the assimilation model laid out by Robert Dahl? 2) what signs are there that ethnic groups will vote according to ethnic lines? 3) what is the relationship between ethnic identity and political mobilization? and 4) what kind of political coalitions can one expect to emerge within and among these groups?



Answers to these questions are both basic to our understanding of ethnic political behavior and intricately linked to the more fundamental issue of the openness of our democratic political system. That is, does the pluralist system in America provide access for all would-be competitors (Gamson 1975)?

## ANALYZING ETHNIC VOTING IN LOS ANGELES

### ***Social Setting***

As of 1980, Asian and Hispanic immigrants represented over three-fourths of the immigrants entering the U.S. In Los Angeles County the Asian population increased by 123% between 1970 and 1980 compared to 97% for the Hispanic population. During the same period, the Anglo and Black populations increased by 21 and 24 percent, respectively.

Generally, the majority of the Asian, Black and Hispanic populations of Southern California are located in the Los Angeles County Region. According to a Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) report, 75 percent of the Hispanic population and 90 percent of the Black population of Southern California (Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles and Ventura counties) reside in the central portion of Los Angeles County. The same trend holds true for the Asian population with heavy concentrations of Asian residents in the cities of Los Angeles, Monterey Park and Alhambra.

Examining the city of Los Angeles, Table 1 offers a comprehensive profile of the changes in the ethnic distribution of the city's population between 1970 and 1980. While we find that the majority of the city's population was White in 1970 and 1980 (59% in 1970 and 48% in 1980), there has been a sharp decline in the growth rate of this group relative to Asian and Hispanic groups over the 10 year period under examination. We also find that the relative size of the Black population has remained about the same over the 10 year period (18%) (see Table 1).

The Hispanic population grew from 18% of the total population in 1970 to 28% in 1980. Within the Hispanic population we find that Hispanics of Mexican origin by far constitute the majority of the population (77%).

Among Asians, the Japanese, Chinese, Filipino and Korean populations constitute the largest groups. As of 1980, the Japanese and Chinese represented the largest components of the Asian population in Los Angeles. They were also the first two Asian groups to settle in the Southern California region (see Sowell 1970).

Table 2 summarizes basic economic and demographic characteristics of Anglos, Asians, Blacks and Hispanics in the area using 1980 Census data. Here we find that the Anglo population is older compared to the other groups in Los Angeles. Eighteen percent of Anglos fall in the 16-24 year old category compared to 35% of Hispanics, 25% of Blacks and 21% of Asians. At the other extreme, we find 18% of Anglos are 65 years of age or older compared to half that percentage for Hispanics. Blacks and Asians have 12% and 9% of their population groups represented in the 65 years or older category respectively (see Table 2).

There are also sharp differences in terms of education among the groups. While well over 50% of both the Anglo and Asian populations have a college education or better, only 35% of the Black population and 14% of the Hispanic populations fall into this category. We also find that 47% of the Hispanic population has less than an 8th grade education.

These differences carry over to the relative economic positions of the groups in the city. For example, while 11.5% of the Anglo population and 19% of the Asian population fall 125% below the poverty line, 33% of Hispanics and 30% of Blacks fall in this category.

In terms of home ownership we find that 57% of Anglos own their own homes compared to 47% of Asians, 43% of Blacks, 27% of Hispanics. Within the Asian community it is important to note that 56% of Japanese residents own their own home. Similarly, among Hispanic residents 43% of Puerto Ricans and 37% of Cubans compared to only 27% of Mexican-Americans own their own homes.

Occupationally one also observes differences among the ethnic groups. Anglos are highly represented in professional and managerial positions and have lower levels of representation in service and manual labor jobs. Asians are similarly represented. On the other hand Blacks and Hispanics are highly represented in service and manual labor jobs.

In sum, these data show significant differences in the socio-economic and demographic make-up of the ethnic communities in Los Angeles. The profiles discussed here are quite comparable to the ones described by DeLeon (1988) for the city of San Francisco.

The Anglo population is older, well educated and socio-economically well off. The Asian population, while younger, is also highly educated and socio-economically well off. However, Blacks and Hispanics are the least well off of the groups under investigation. Members of both groups are comparatively younger and on average less educated than Anglos and Asians. Both groups also have high levels of poverty and under representation in the major income earning professions. Taking these differences into consideration, we now turn our attention to the ethnic political assimilation process in Los Angeles.

### ***Study Design***

The data for this analysis were obtained primarily from election result files maintained by the Los Angeles County voter registrar's office. From these data a special data set was created using voter turnout and vote outcomes for the 1982 and 1986 California governor races and three state and local ballot initiatives for the 2,500 voting precincts in the city of Los Angeles. These data were aggregated at the census tract level. Demographic information identifying the socio-economic and ethnic composition of these precincts was added based on the census tract in which each precinct was located. The state and local initiatives that will be used are: 1) the 1982 Gun Control initiative 2) 1982 Local Rent Control Measure and 3) the 1986 Proposition 63 (English Only Proposition)

### ***Background and Analysis Plan***

The 1982 and 1986 California Gubernatorial Elections offer an excellent opportunity to explore ethnic voting patterns at both the state and local level. In both elections, Tom Bradley a Black Democrat from Los Angeles, was defeated by George Deukmejian, a White Republican.

In 1982 two ballot initiatives at the state and local level generated divisions across both ethnic and class lines. These measures were a statewide initiative calling for the registration of handguns (Gun control) and a local measure calling for rent control. In 1986, proposition 63, another ballot initiative that proved controversial was voted upon.

Proposition 63 called for the use of English Only as the official language of the state of California. The initiative passed by a large margin.

Taken together the vote for governor and the vote on each of the propositions provide a basis for exploring the levels of ethnic group cohesion both within the Asian, Black and Hispanic communities as well as among the communities. Furthermore, it provides a basis for evaluating how cross cutting cleavages such as social class can undermine ethnic cohesion.

## Data Analysis

***Ethnic Identity and the Bradley Vote.*** Figure 1 illustrates the 1982 gubernatorial vote for Bradley by income and ethnicity. As shown in figure 1, Blacks gave Bradley 90% or more of their vote. We also find that within the Black community, no substantial variation of the vote by income existed.

In terms of the Hispanic communities examined, the Bradley support was high but not as strong as in the case for Blacks. On average, Bradley received roughly 70% of the vote in predominately Hispanic communities. However, it is interesting to note the variation in the Hispanic vote by the income of the neighborhoods. Here we find that the percent for Bradley was negatively related to the income level of these communities.

The Anglos vote for Bradley in 1982 was strong but divided. Hispanic support in these communities ran across class lines. In this regard, it is important to note the strong support his candidacy received in relatively low income Anglo communities.

Taken together these findings illustrate the diversity in voting patterns found in the Los Angeles electorate. Clearly, ethnic identity among Blacks played a tremendous role in the Bradley vote. However, the Hispanic vote, illustrate how the vote could be explained not only by "ethnic pride" but also by group interest. That is, Tom Bradley was perceived as being able to represent the interest of the Latin community better than George Deukmejian. Certainly such a perception by Blacks could also aid in explaining the Black vote as well.

Bradley's second attempt for governor was met with skepticism over his ability to win, demoralization from those who thought he should have won and a lack of enthusiasm from those who saw very little change in his 1982 and 1986 strategies. Old allies such as the Jewish community were found distant to his candidacy due to problems with the Louis Farakahn visit and Bradley's apparent reversal on oil drilling in the Pacific Palisades. Moreover, many speculated that the Black community was also disenchanted with Bradley for failing to explicitly include issues relevant to the Black community in his campaign agenda.

Figure 2 outlines the effects of these speculated defections by examining the percent decrease in the Bradley vote between 1982 and 1986. Here we see that the Black community was clearly Bradley's strongest ally with the average defection rate around 1.5%; followed by the Hispanic community. Among Whites the defection rate was as high as 15% and on average approximately 7 to 10 %.

Table 3 attempts to capture more precisely the ethnic differences in support for Bradley in 1982 and 1986. In addition, party affiliation, income and issues are taken into consideration. In both cases the level of support for Bradley in each neighborhood was estimated as a function of the ethnic composition of the neighborhood (Black, Hispanic, and Asian with Whites as the excluded category), the percent democrats in the neighborhood, the median income of the neighborhood and issues that Bradley

supported in each gubernatorial campaign (gun control 1982 and regulation of toxic waste 1986).

From the analysis, we find that ethnic cleavages far outweigh other factors in determining the level of Bradley support. Social class measured in terms of median income turns out to be statistically insignificant.

**Issue Voting in Ethnic Communities.** In order to further investigate the effects of ethnicity of voting behavior in the city, an analysis on voting on selected ballot propositions from the 1982 and 1986 elections was performed. The following propositions were examined:

<u>1982</u>	<u>1986</u>
Rent Control	English Only
Gun Control	

Figure 3 represents voting patterns on the 1986 English only proposition. As pointed out earlier, this proposition called for the use of English Only as the official language of the state of California and established measures to prevent the displacement of this objective. As expected, we find that this measure was strongly opposed in the Hispanic community. However, Hispanics in higher income neighborhoods were more likely to support the measure than those in low income neighborhoods.

Black communities voted solidly against the English only proposition as well. While the vote was not as strong as found in the Hispanic community, it is far different from voting in the Anglo community. In most Anglo neighborhoods, the measure passed by a solid majority.

From the analysis thus far one can see distinct patterns of voting found in each ethnic community which is characteristically distinct from the Anglo community. While there have been slight variations in social class within the Black and Hispanic Communities, class voting among Anglos has not appeared to manifest itself.

The rent control measure was selected precisely for this reason. On issues that affect one economically, does class supersede race and ethnicity in determining one's voting behavior? The 1982 rent control measure which was adopted by citizens in the city of Los Angeles shows an interesting configuration of voting patterns. Figure 4 outlines these patterns. Here we find ethnicity and class operating simultaneously. For example, while Black communities were overall more supportive of the measure compared to other groups, support declined in the Black community as income increased. The same pattern existed in Latin neighborhoods. Nevertheless, overall support for the measure in the Hispanic community was far less enthusiastic than in the Black community.

Support for the rent control measure increased with income in the predominately Anglo neighborhoods. This could suggest a number of things. For example, home ownership rates among Anglos at the lower levels of income could have been higher than in the case of Black and Hispanic neighborhoods at the same level. Or the vote may have been ideological, suggesting that this group was more ideologically opposed to the government intervening in the market place in this fashion. Also, the Anglos at this income level could more often than not be landlords themselves and voted to protect their economic interest. Richard DeLeon (1988) has found support for this latter hypothesis through his San Francisco analysis.

The 1982 gun control initiative produced still another configuration of voting patterns that demonstrated polarized voting based on group interest. Figure 5 shows that while the Anglo community voted widely in support of the gun control measure across class lines, the Black community was strongly opposed to this measure. There is reason to believe that voting on

this measure may have been related to the level of crime found in the communities. In the Black communities where crime is high and police protection is perceived as low, guns are viewed as necessary for self-protection. Therefore, the voting patterns appear to represent a clear difference in the Anglo and Black communities. Latin voters were also found to be in opposition to control. However, less so than Blacks.

The general assessment that evolves from this analysis is that there is extreme polarization between the Black and White communities of Los Angeles, which manifest itself in terms of voting behavior. The Latin community also demonstrates a distinct pattern of voting which falls in between Blacks and Whites but parallels Black voting behavior.

In examining the Dahl (1961) and Wolfinger (1965) argument concerning the role of social class versus ethnicity in determining one's political behavior, we find both forces at work. While ethnic identity is found to set the general ideological context in which voting takes place (e.g. Blacks overall liberal, Whites overall more conservative), social class within the Black community moderates this behavior. That is, high income Blacks are shown to vote differently from low income Blacks. As in the case of rent control, this voting could be based on economic interest.

These issues will be addressed more fully later in this paper. At this point however, we turn our attention to political mobilization defined in terms of voter turnout.

**Mobilizing the Minority Vote.** Socio-economic status has been the major variable used in explaining levels of citizen participation in the U.S. As pointed out earlier, ethnicity has been added to this model as a determinant of levels of political involvement. While the data available do not allow for an extensive analysis of political participation in the ethnic communities under investigation, they do show comparative differences in the area of voter turnout. Controlling for income, what effect does ethnicity have on turnout?

Table 4 estimates the difference in turnout rates for Asians, Blacks and Hispanics relative to Anglos in the 1982 and 1986 California gubernatorial campaigns within Los Angeles city neighborhoods. As shown in Table 4 the Black turnout rate in both elections is not significantly different from Anglo turnout. However, for both Hispanic and Asian communities the turnout rate was substantially lower than the Anglo's rate.

In 1986 the Asian turnout rate was 27 percentage points lower than the rate for Anglos which represented a further decrease from 1982 of 14 percentage points. The rate for Hispanics only fluctuated slightly between 1982 and 1986 (from 15% less to 13% less).

In sum these findings support the notion that ethnicity is related to political involvement. In the case of Blacks, it is "politicized group consciousness". For Hispanics and Asians, the findings represent a lack of politicization. While the data are insufficient to make a strong assessment, it is worthwhile to note that Asians are economically the most affluent of the ethnic groups but the least active politically.

## CONCLUSIONS AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

The analysis presented here points to some interesting trends in terms of ethnic voting patterns. It is important to review the findings in light of the theoretical concerns and the initial questions raised at the outset of this work. The leading theoretical question is does economic differentiation lead to political differentiation among ethnic voters? How

accurate is the Dahl (1961) model in explaining the political assimilation of ethnic groups?

Certainly, with the data available one cannot address this question at the individual level, however, the aggregate level data offer some insight. In this analysis we find that Black and Hispanic voters form distinct ethnic communities with voting patterns different from the Anglos community. Generally, if we were to use the concept liberal and conservative loosely to describe the communities, we would find Blacks at the liberal end of the spectrum and Anglos at the conservative end. Hispanic voters would fall in between. Within each ethnic community we find homogeneity in terms of the vote more so in Black and Hispanic neighborhoods than in Anglo neighborhoods.

Given the general socio-economic status of the two groups, support is found for Dahl's ethnicity, social class, and vote thesis (also see more recent work by Gilliam and Whitby 1987). That is given the relative homogeneity of these groups along economic lines one would expect homogeneity in terms of political behavior within them. This turns out to be the case.

Furthermore, examining behavior within ethnic neighborhoods we find class trends emerging. Higher income Black and Hispanic neighborhoods voted differently as a whole from low income neighborhood on issues such as rent control. The higher the income of the neighborhood, the lower the support for rent control. For Hispanics, this behavior also manifested itself in voting for Bradley. Higher income Hispanic neighborhoods were less likely to support Bradley than low income neighborhoods.

The general shortcoming of the Dahl model is what it fails to address. Roughly 80 to 90% of Blacks residing in Los Angeles, reside in racially homogenous neighborhoods. With the many exclusionary devices used in the past to restrict the movement of Blacks to other areas, social integration has been severely hampered. Social isolation, along with slow economic advancement makes assimilation difficult if not impossible for members of this ethnic group.

Likewise, while Hispanics and Asians are more geographically dispersed than Blacks, communities both within Los Angeles as well as on the periphery have become known as Asian and Hispanic enclaves (e.g. Koreatown, Little Tokyo, China Town, Monterrey Park, Rosemead, East Los Angeles and Alhambra). Unlike European immigrants, the process of suburbanization does not appear to bring assimilation. Consequently, the prospect for ethnic voting within these communities is likely to remain undaunted thus, casting doubt on Dahl's pluralist thesis.

Turning to ethnic mobilization, we find that ethnic identity can make a difference in terms of political mobilization. Blacks in Los Angeles seem to have reached a stage of "politicization" that the turnout rate in Black communities is comparable to the rate found in Anglo communities when income is controlled for. Furthermore we find that the Asian and Hispanic turnout levels are much lower than those of Blacks and Anglos.

Finally, what are the prospects for inter-ethnic coalitions emerging in the city of Los Angeles? According to Charles Hamilton and Stokely Carmichael, the following factors are pre-conditions for a coalition between Blacks and other groups in society:

- the recognition by the parties involved of their respective self-interest
- the mutual belief that each party stands to benefit in terms of that self-interest through joining with the other or others
- the acceptance of the fact that each party has its own independent base of power and does not depend for ultimate decision-making on a force outside itself
- the realization that the coalition deals with specific and identifiable as oppose to general and vague goals (Hamilton and Carmichael 1967, p. 79-80) <sup>g</sup>

The voting data presented here clearly demonstrate the prospect for a coalition forming between the Black and Hispanic communities of Los Angeles. However, as Henry (1980) points out the suspicion of one group exploiting the other as well as competition and conflict over inducements offered by Whites both serve as major obstacles in this process.

For example, the issue of redistricting of county supervisorial districts and city council seats set the stage for struggle between these two groups as one group attempts to gain its fair share of representation (Hispanics) while the other group seeks to maintain their share. Conflict over job opportunities in the public and private sector also serve as sources of conflict (see Johnson and Oliver 1984).

Nevertheless, there is no reason to believe that these groups are not capable of recognizing their common interests and acting upon them. This is particularly true given that both groups occupy similar economic positions in the city. Black support for the defeat of proposition 63 and Hispanic support for Bradley are examples of working on behalf of a common interest.

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<sup>3</sup>Charles Henry uses these criteria in assessing the general prospects of a national Chicano-Black coalition (Henry 1980, p. 224).

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TABLE 1  
Changes in the Ethnic Composition of the City of Los Angeles  
1970-1980

Race	Population Size 1970	%Total	Race	Population Size 1980	%Total
Angl os	1, 654, 909	59.0	Angl os	1,419,413	<b>48</b>
Asi an	129, 683	5. 0	Asi an	196,017	7
Japanese	54, 878		Japanese	49,335	
Chi nese	27, 345		Chi nese	44,353	
Fil i pi no	19, 392		Fil i pi no	43,713	
Other	28, 068		Korean	33,066	
			Vietnamese	13,257	
			Other	12,293	
Bl acks	503, 606	18. 0	Bl acks	495,723	16.7
Hi spani cs <sup>1</sup>	518, 791	18. 5	Hi spani cs	816, 076	28
			Mexi can	615, 887	
			Cuban	15, 864	
			Puerto Ri can	13, 835	
			Other	170, 490	
Native Ameri cans	9, 172	.3	Native Ameri cans	14, 731	.5
Total	2, 809, 596		Others Total	2, 966, 850	

Sources: 1970 Ethnic Composition of Cities and Places-Los Angeles County  
Compiled by Los Angeles Regional Office of U.S. Census Bureau

1980 Census of Population and Housing-Census Tracts: Los Angeles-  
Long Beach, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>1</sup>Not considered as a racial category by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.  
Persons of Hispanic origin have been extracted from racial categories in  
this table.

TABLE 2  
Economic and Demographic Profile of Los Angeles Ethnic Communities

	Angl os	Bl acks	Hi spani cs	Asi ans
<b>Tenure</b>				
Homeowners	57%	43%	27% <sup>1</sup>	47% <sup>2</sup>
Renters	43	57	63	53
<b>Poverty</b>				
%125 Below Poverty Line	11.5	30.4	33	19
<b>Occupati ons</b>				
% Managerial -Prof	34	15	5	25
Tech, Sales-Adm	38	35	17	36
Service	9	21	20	13
Farm, Forestry				
Fishing	7	1.3	2.6	2.4
Craft	10	8.6	15.2	8.2
Laborers	9	18.3	38.5	14.9
<b>Educati on</b>				
% 8th Grade or Less	7	12	47	12
High School 9-12	40	53	39	34
College	40	31	12	43
College+	14	4	2	12
<b>Age</b>				
16-24	18	25	35	21
25-32	18	19	27	22
33-40	13	14	14	17
34-48	10	11	9	12
49-56	12	10	--	12
57-64	11	10	7	8
65 & above	18	12	9	8

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing 1980 Public-Use Microdata Samples-Los Angeles.

1. 43% of all Cubans were found to own their own homes, 37% of Cubans and 27% of Mexicans.

2. 50% of Japanese were found to own their own homes and 52% of the Chinese.

TABLE 3

Regression Analysis of Ethnic Vote for Tom Bradley in 1982 and 1986

1982 Variables	1986 Variables	Parameter Estimate 82	Parameter Estimate 86
Intercept	Intercept	-5.50 (2.87) <sup>1</sup> (.057) <sup>2</sup>	-17.04 (4.39) (.0002)
Median Income	Median Income	-.00003 (.00003) (.354)	-.00002 (.00003) (.337)
Black Neighborhood	Black Neighborhood	27.39 (2.60) (.0001)	25.54 (3.74) (.0001)
Hispanic Neighborhood	Hispanic Neighborhood	10.06 (1.96) (.0001)	<b>4.50</b> <b>(1.56)</b> <b>(.005)</b>
Asian Neighborhood	Asian Neighborhood	3.84 (2.57) (.14)	2.72 (3.66) (.345)
Percent Democrat	Percent Democrat	.63 (.0598) (.0001)	.82 (.064) (.0001)
%Yes Gun Control	***	.43 (.0457) (.0001)	
***	%Yes on Toxic Reg.		.27 <b>(.0812)</b> <b>(.0011)</b>
		R <sup>2</sup> .97	R <sup>2</sup> .97

<sup>1</sup> Standard Error

<sup>2</sup> Significance Level

TABLE 4

Regression Analysis of Los Angeles Voter Turnout for the  
1982 and 1986 Gubernatorial Elections

1982 Variables	1986 Variables	Parameter Estimate 82	Parameter Estimate 86
Intercept	Intercept	74.28 (12.26) <sup>1</sup> (.0001) <sup>2</sup>	73.04 (12.36) (.0001)
Median Income	Median Income	.0004 (.0001) (.0005)	.0001 (.00001) (.19)
Black Neighborhood	Black Neighborhood	-2.17 (10.03) (.83)	-.97 (7.45) (.89)
Hispanic Neighborhood	Hispanic Neighborhood	-14.97 (6.37) (.02)	-12.63 (6.24) (.05)
Asian Neighborhood	Asian Neighborhood	-13.97 (7.94) (.08)	-27.33 (11.6) (.02)
Percent Democrat	Percent Democrat	.23 (.18) (.19)	-.24 (.18) (.19)
%Yes Gun Control	***	-.28 (.13) (.03)	
		R <sup>2</sup> .33	R <sup>2</sup> .31

<sup>1</sup> Standard Error

<sup>2</sup> Significance Level

FIGURE 1

# 982 Gubernatorial Vote for Bradley

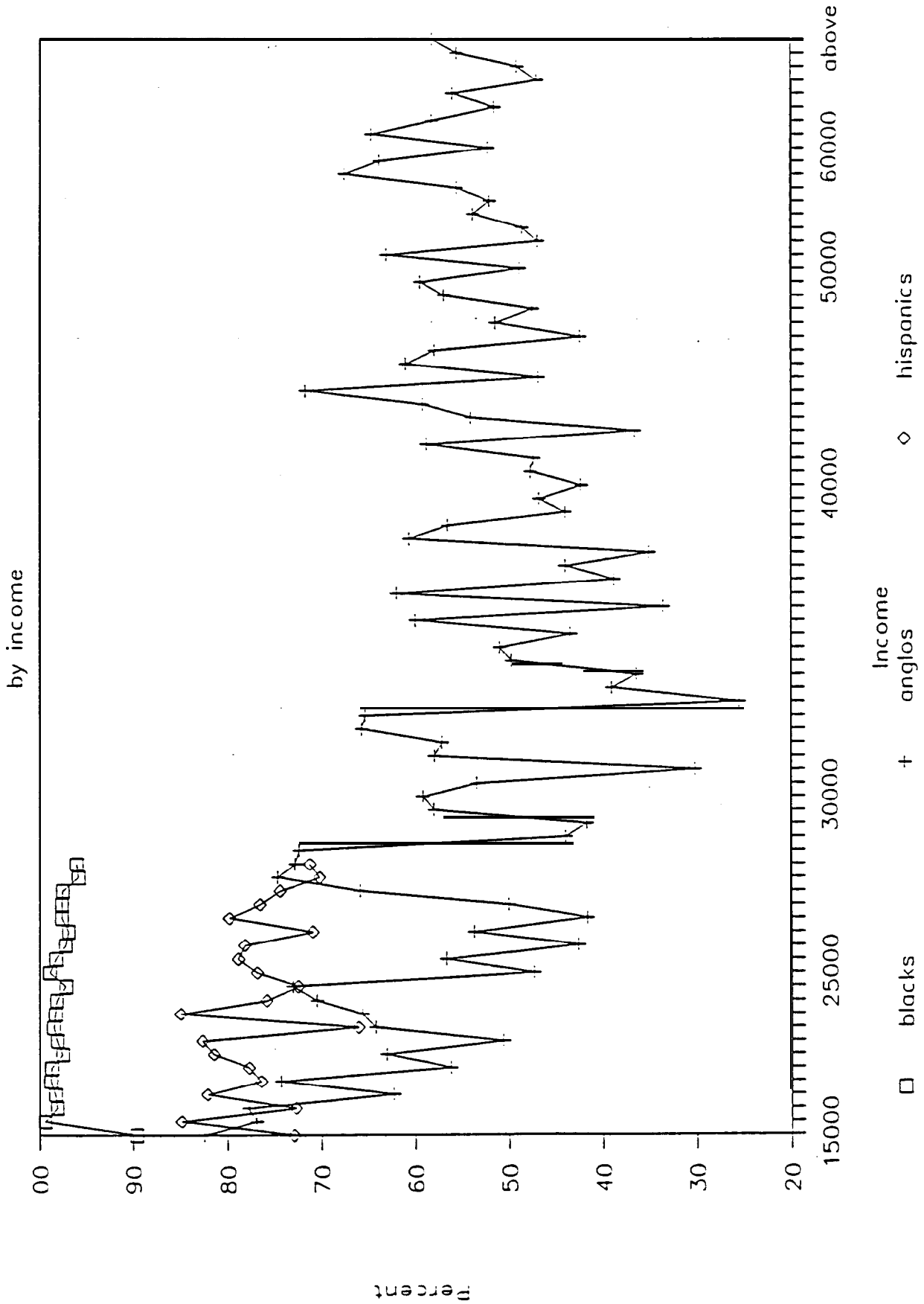


FIGURE 2.

%Difference in Brad Vote 82-86

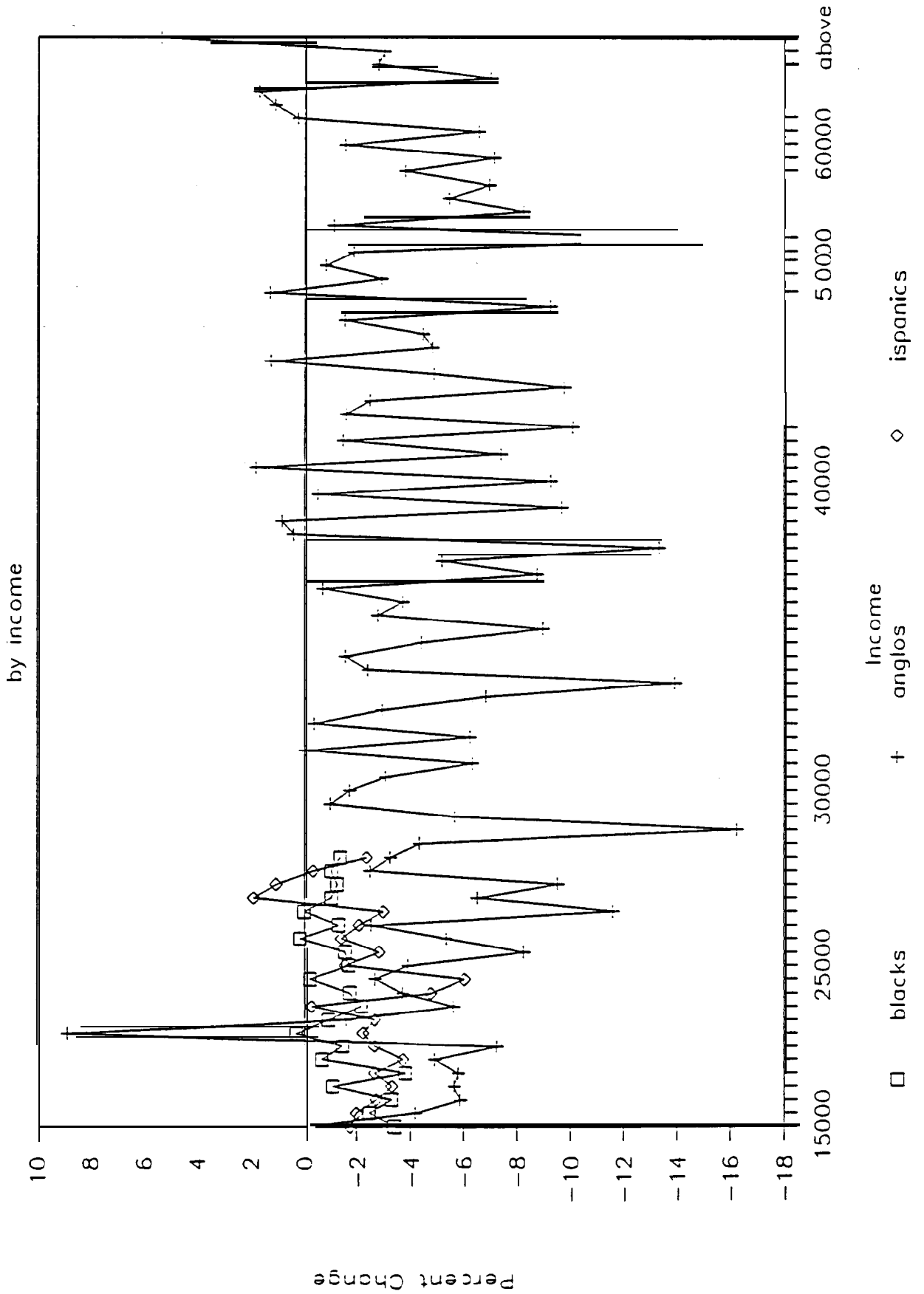


FIGURE 3

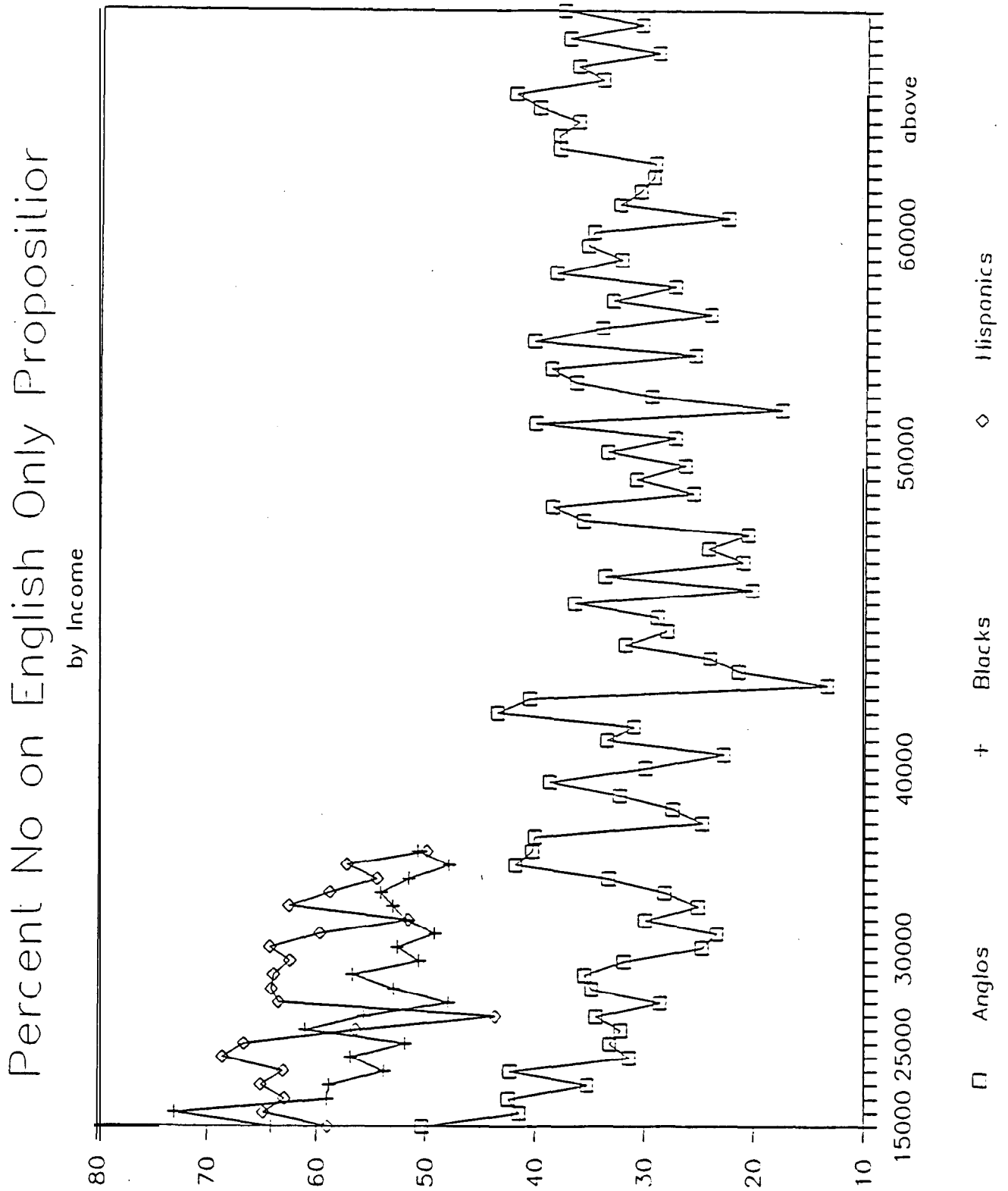




FIGURE 4

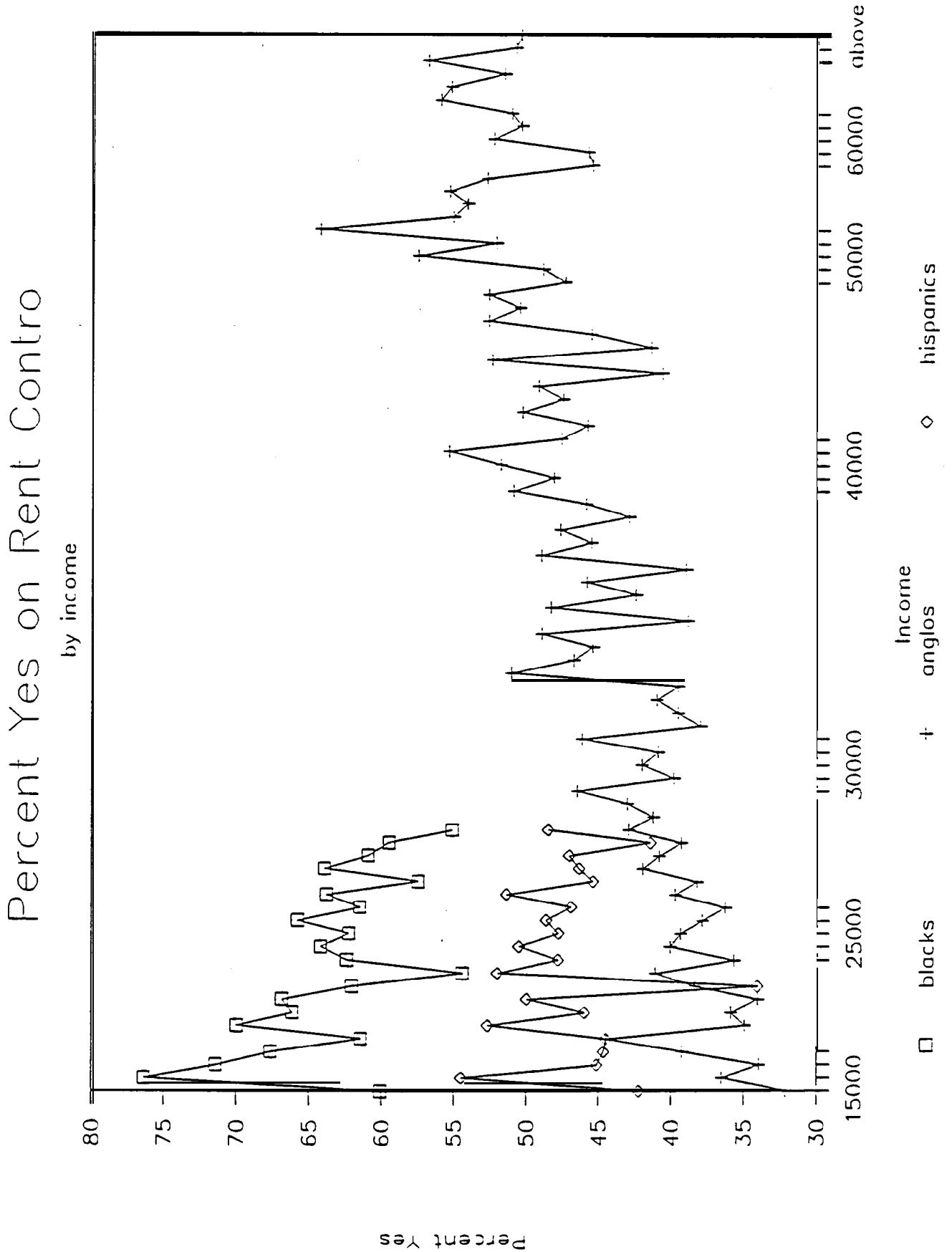


FIGURE 5

