

## **Population Mobility and Political Change in the American Electorate**

Jumping into a time machine and traveling into the past to 1970, I would get out on the hill overlooking the town where I grew up and instantly recognize the view. Yes, a few buildings have been constructed, a few torn down, a new subdivision has gone up on the east edge of town, businesses have come and gone, people have died and been born, but based on an eyeball inspection things have not changed much. On the downtown streets, I would recognize all of the signs and storefronts and would even recognize some of the faces, although they would be much younger. A look at official statistics would reveal that the population in my hometown is slightly smaller in 2000 now than it was in 1970, but it is nearly identical in terms of its ethnic and economic composition. The population consists almost entirely of local natives—few have moved in from elsewhere. People are better educated than in 1970, but probably not relative to the rest of the nation. The politics, too, has remained pretty much the same, although scrutiny of the figures would reveal a slow drift toward the Republican Party as the generation that came of age during the New Deal has died. Visible differences, though, would be difficult to detect.

While real estate speculators would have found it impossible to make millions in my hometown, they might not have lost much either. There has not been booming prosperity, but the bottom has not completely fallen out of the local economy. In other places in the nation, though, a journey back to 1970 would reveal a far more active, prosperous, and ethnically diverse setting than exists today. The door to the time machine would swing open to busy streets, businesses, factories, and schools that are now either nonexistent, abandoned, or in a pathetic state of disrepair. Whole city blocks of homes and businesses that had vanished by the year 2000 would appear in photographs from that earlier time. These are places

where investors could have lost many millions. Several of the depressed old steel towns of the Monongahela Valley in western Pennsylvania come to mind as places that in 1970 would be hard to recognize for any of us whose vision of these towns had been shaped by visits during the 1990s. Compared to 1970, the populations of Homestead, Duquesne, Clairton, and McKeesport are smaller, poorer, older, and more hopeless (Gittell 1992; Serrin 1993). While industrial decline was well under way as early as 1960, the last of the major mills, the Homestead Works, did not close for good until 1986. Even in 1970 these towns had large middle-class populations, ethnically robust neighborhoods, strong main streets, and schools of which the residents were proud. At the turn of the century, these towns will head the list as the most economically and socially distressed places in Pennsylvania, if not the entire Northeast.

Population flight is not the only aspect of mobility that can render a place unrecognizable to the time traveler. I now live in a suburban setting, about halfway between two major East Coast cities in a corridor that has been rapidly developed. Pulling back a curtain to look at my neighborhood as it was in 1970 would reveal not a single familiar vista. Nothing was the same then. Farms and forests have been replaced with strip malls and low density subdivisions that house middle and upper income professionals. An overwhelmingly white population in 1970 is only predominantly white now, as a small black middle class and a sizable population of immigrants have changed the complexion of neighborhoods and schoolrooms. Where a visitor once would have been hard-pressed locate a burger joint or a Dairy Queen, one can now find restaurants named Ak-Bar, Hunan Manor, and Bangkok Delight, to say nothing of the ethnic grocery stores where no English is spoken and smaller restaurants where my ignorance of other languages prevents me from understanding the signs. I do not feel unsettled by these changes since I have contributed to them. My spouse is a Hispanic immigrant, and our children will be bilingual. I have not lived in my neighborhood long enough to experience the changes that have taken place since the 1970s, but I do find myself marveling at how different a place can come to look in less than half a lifetime. And ethnic diversity is not the only conspicuous indicator of change. Even the native-born white newcomers bear little resemblance to the ones who populated the area in 1970. As a white male, I am part of a new population, which earns more money, carries more debt, works longer hours, has younger children, and commutes further than the folks who lived here in the recent past. The political concerns of my neighbors and me bear scant resem-

blance to those of the residents of thirty years ago—and not just because times have changed. Those who represent my neighborhood in the local, state, and national legislatures at the beginning of the new century face demands that are entirely different from those that were voiced by a very different constituency thirty years ago.

The politics of a place are obviously determined by the people who live there—who they are and how their interests are defined. Because people make demands of the political system in a democracy, significant political change occurs in a place when its population changes. Populations change in myriad ways and at various paces. The pace of change is uneven across space, leading to the social, economic, and political stratification of neighborhoods, towns, and cities. In some places, old populations have been replaced with new ones, as in the rural to urban and urban to suburban transitions that have occurred in so many areas of the country. In other places, the population simply declines as the older residents die. Time brings change even to relatively stable populations as new generations replace the old. Economic booms may bring hordes of interstate migrants to some areas, leaving others untouched. Economic downturns move people out, sometimes leaving no one behind. Overcrowding diminishes the quality of life, and those who can afford to move to greener pastures do so, changing the population composition at both origin and destination. Because politics and population are linked through political participation in a democratic society, population changes produce consequential but rather uneven political changes across places.

In this book, I explore the political consequences of a particular type of population change, that produced by geographic mobility both internal to the nation and across its borders. I ask whether the reshuffling of the native-born population and the influx of immigrants have been politically consequential and whether the two migration flows are related. There are occasional hints from the popular press that internal demographic shifts have some political impact, and there are obvious political reactions to immigrants—as in California’s Propositions 187 and 209 (the latter known as the California Civil Rights Initiative or CCRI)—but there have been few studies of what internal and cross-national migration have done to politically stratify and otherwise change the politics of places.

In the existing literature, where the effects or consequences of migration and immigration have been addressed, the emphasis has been on the economics of the sending and receiving areas—what happens to earnings, employment, and the income distribution. In addition, the internal migra-

tion of the native born and immigration are usually treated as entirely separate subjects, with some studies specializing in the one and some in the other. There are good reasons for distinguishing the two groups, of course. Natives and the foreign born differ much more today than they did in the early twentieth century (Borjas 1990; Borjas and Freeman 1992). Domestic migrants have much higher skill and educational levels and are more likely to be white. They are led to their destinations by different forces and therefore do not settle in the same locales as the foreign born (Frey 1996, 1995a, 1995b). The native-born migrants are also less concentrated in the areas where they resettle and as a result are far less noticeable than the new class of immigrants. But there is increasing evidence that precisely because native-born migrants and immigrants are so different, these differences may conspire to generate radical changes in the spatial distribution of economic and political interests in the United States. The theoretical basis for this suspicion will be detailed shortly.

In the pages that follow, I will examine explanations of mobility and describe how they may be relevant to understanding the politics of states and localities across the United States. Looking for the political effects of new populations at the state and local levels makes sense because the inflow of foreign-born and native population groups is not occurring evenly across the nation or within states (Frey 1996, 1995a, 1995b; Clark 1995; Bartel 1989). Many states have experienced rather slow growth, or even a decline, in population over the last forty years. Others have been on the receiving end of massive waves of migration. There are differences in the volume and type of migration across the nation as well. In some areas, population change is mostly the result of native in- and out-migration. In others, the influx of the foreign born has altered the demographic composition of cities, regions, and states. There are a few areas to which both foreign-born and native migrants are drawn. Internally, population shifts within states have occurred with the suburbanization of both foreign-born and native residents.

It is entirely possible that by many measures migration within and immigration to the United States have not changed the politics of states and localities at all. In speculating about the consequences of these demographic trends, one must first be clear about the meaning of terms such as *political impact* and *political change*. Politics, after all, takes many forms. Arguably, one could find that almost anything produces political change if the terms are defined broadly enough.

In this study, I will look for specific kinds of political change—all rel-

evant to the electoral foundations of the American political system. First, I am interested in knowing whether population mobility influences levels of voter turnout and political participation in the areas where the migrants settle. Detailed time-series data, complete with annual or semiannual observations, would be best for such an inquiry, but it is generally not available and probably not strictly necessary. If migration does influence turnout, then a cross-sectional study of jurisdictions with varying numbers of migrants should show corresponding political differences. Other things being equal, areas with stable populations could be expected to have high participation rates, while those experiencing an influx of newcomers would exhibit lower turnout. Second, I want to evaluate how migration and immigration influence the relationship between party registration and partisan voting. Places where the electorate has been reconfigured due to migration may show less party loyalty than those where the electorate has remained unchanged. Third, I aim to discover whether population mobility has altered the political party balance of regions and states, either by reconstituting the electorate or by generating political reaction from natives. Partisan change is hypothesized to be uneven across space, varying directly with the influx of newcomers.

### **The Effects of Population Mobility on Politics**

If migration and immigration are a political wash, if they have had no impact, the presence and concentration of migratory populations should do nothing to influence political participation, party voting, or party allegiance in places across the country. In addressing these questions, there is surprisingly little previous research on which to build. Scholars with an interest in politics have been slow in studying the effects of recent migration and immigration in the American context. On the subject of internal migration, the key work has been that of Thad Brown (1988), which elegantly details how migrants' political views change with their new surroundings. Brown's work substantially modified the conclusion of Converse (1966; see also Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960) that partisan attitudes are resistant to geographic mobility. Brown argues that migration's main effect is to slowly unravel the party system by increasing the mover's tendency to defect from his or her party affiliation, perhaps eventually switching parties altogether (Brown 1988, 154–55; McBurnett 1991). At the very least, migration weakens partisanship as voters adopt highly individualized and personal approaches to thinking about politics.

There has been some similarly impressive work on the effects of residential mobility on turnout (Dubin and Kalsow 1997; Squire, Wolfinger, and Glass 1987; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Rosenstone and Wolfinger 1978). These studies conclusively demonstrate that mobility reduces turnout, especially in the presence of restrictive voter registration laws that obstruct the reregistration of new residents. Another line of original work has demonstrated that the spatial isolation of minority citizens in poor neighborhoods, resulting from the out-migration of wealthier residents, diminishes political efficacy and participation in central city neighborhoods (Cohen and Dawson 1993; Wilson 1996).

Several studies of political partisanship at the macrolevel have credited internal migration with altering the political balance of regions in the United States (Glaser and Gilens 1997; Rice and Pepper 1997; Gimpel 1996; Black and Black 1988, 1992; Frensdreis 1989; Brown 1988; Lamis 1988; Stanley 1988; Galderisi, Lyons, Simmons, and Francis 1987; Wolfinger and Hagen 1985; Wolfinger and Arsenau 1978). Along with generational replacement and partisan conversion, population migration has contributed to the nearly complete partisan realignment of the South and the sustained political independence of many voters in the Far West.

As for immigration's influence on American politics, there is a distinguished older body of work on particular ethnic groups (Glazer and Moynihan 1963; Wolfinger 1965, 1974; Handlin 1952). This research has focused on the watering down of ethnic identity over time and the role of immigrants in shaping a new social and political culture (see also Alba, Logan, and Crowder 1997; Ignatiev 1995; Erie 1988; and Alba 1981). While it accurately captures the assimilation patterns of many European immigrant groups, there is only mixed evidence that these works describe the experiences of the newer waves of immigrants from Asia and Latin America.

In response to recent immigration trends and new survey data on particular groups, a growing number of more behaviorally oriented studies has emerged (Tam 1996; de la Garza et al. 1992; Cain, Uhlman, and Kieweit 1990; Cain and Kieweit 1987). These studies have revealed new facts about the political attitudes of several immigrant groups. For instance, we now know that Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans have less in common than previously thought. The three groups have little interaction with each other and Cubans are more politically active than the other two groups. Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Mexicans do express similar views on many domestic policy issues, and they demonstrate greater

trust in government's capacity to solve major problems than Anglos do (de la Garza et al. 1992, 14–15). Cain, Uhlaner, and Kieweit show that over time Latinos in California acquire strong Democratic Party preferences as a result of the discrimination and lack of opportunity they perceive. Because Asians experience less discrimination, they are more divided between the parties (1990, 402).

In a widely read and controversial work on Mexican Americans, Peter Skerry has detailed patterns of assimilation and political attitudes within this large and politically consequential community (1993). Among other things, he documents the gulf between the political attitudes of Mexican elites and the rank and file, finding Latino leaders to be far more liberal than their constituents. But he also details important differences among Mexicans in various parts of the nation—in some areas Mexicans identify themselves and are identified by others as a racial minority, while in other areas their politics is much less racially oriented (318–19). His work offers one explanation for why the backlash against immigrants has been stronger in some states than in others. In California, immigrant minority groups are more likely than elsewhere to make aggressive political claims cast in the language of civil rights and racial discrimination—thus assuming the posture of black Americans. As a reaction against such claims, Propositions 187 and 209 garnered broad-based support in California. In places where the Hispanic population was less aggressive in pressing its demands in racial terms, such as Texas, Florida, and Arizona, restrictionist movements failed to get off the ground.

The political orientations of the new immigrants, and whether their presence in a place generates politically consequential reactions from natives, remains a fertile field for further inquiry. Perhaps we know so little about these topics because the linkage between migration, immigration, and political behavior is seldom direct. Although some immigrants are here for political reasons, natives rarely choose to move for political reasons, and even immigrants do not choose the areas where they resettle on the basis of politics (Glaser and Gilens 1997). So, if there are political consequences to migration, they are a by-product of other forces shaping the demographic destiny of cities, regions, and states. The migration and resettlement pattern of a given group ultimately affects its political power and visibility in the receiving community. For my purposes, altered political patterns are an *effect* of migration and immigration, and I am not especially interested in singling out those cases in which politics, war, or revolution may have caused the relocation to the United States. The causes of

population mobility are not trivial, however, as they determine what kind of people will move and where they choose to locate.

### **Population Mobility and Political Balkanization as an Attribute of Places**

Most of the work on mobility in political science has focused on the movers themselves, drawing data on mobility and politics from surveys of voters. There has been much less focus on what happens to the politics of places the movers settle in or leave behind. But the conventional reliance upon survey data is not totally adequate for my purposes because political balkanization is something that happens when places change. To be sure, individual change is at the bottom of changes that occur in places. The attributes of cities, regions, and states are produced by the aggregation of locational decisions by individuals (Schelling 1969, 1972, 1978; Kain and Quigley 1975). Ordinary polling data based on individual responses to survey questions are not capable of determining whether regions and substate sections have been influenced by population movement. It is possible to imagine a survey that could identify such influences, but the sample would have to be extraordinarily large—sufficient to represent substate sections as well as states. In conventionally sized polls, respondents might describe their mobility patterns and political views, but these responses will not provide much insight into whether *locations* are becoming more or less politically active, more Democratic or more Republican, or less loyal to parties altogether. While much of the data analysis in this project draws upon observations of mobility and political change at the aggregate, county, and census tract levels, these are exactly the kinds of studies that tell us whether places are changing. Keeping in mind that the decennial censuses are cross-sectional studies, it is possible to record successive census observations of a set of cases and infer change across the ten-year intervals in much the same way that panel studies of voters are used to discern changes in individual behavior and attitudes. Of course, an exclusive focus on aggregate-level data does not permit detailed examination of the individual-level processes that generate differences in the political behavior of places. Ideally, some mix of aggregate and individual data is optimal for understanding electoral politics (King 1997, 256; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995, 23). Wherever possible, I draw upon appropriate survey data to provide additional evidence about the individual-level processes that lie behind aggregate-level changes.



In speaking of political balkanization, then, I am referring to inequalities across space in the propensity to vote or identify with one party or the other. States in which inequalities across substate jurisdictions (counties, municipalities) are extreme are said to be more balkanized than those in which jurisdictions are roughly the same in their propensity to turn out or identify with a particular party. Given this understanding of the term, political balkanization is neither a recent nor an uncommon feature of the American political scene. Some areas are dominated by one political party, other areas by the other. Some areas have very high political participation rates, others very low ones. Depending on the level of aggregation, that is, the size of places one examines, political inequalities of this type may be the norm rather than the exception. In the case of two political parties, given a single set of boundaries, one party is going to dominate (Schelling 1978, 141). Unsurprisingly then, neighborhoods are almost never perfectly integrated by partisan preference (or by most other traits) and often take on monolithic characters that sharply demarcate them from places nearby (Lieberman 1963). At times, even entire states will take on uniform political habits and attitudes, as V. O. Key's work on the mid-century South clearly demonstrated (1949; 1956).

The *extent* of political balkanization, however, does change with population trends. Neighborhoods age, decline, or gentrify, driving old populations out and replacing them with new ones. Republican areas go Democratic, and politically lopsided areas become more competitive. With time, even entire states and regions change, as we have witnessed in the southern United States. Not all of these changes in political complexion are driven by population replacement and geographic mobility, but at least some of them are. Linking population mobility to political change requires some understanding of the causes of mobility and the selection process at work in determining who moves and who stays behind.

### **The Economics and Sociology of Migration**

From the voluminous work on the subject by demographers and economists, we have learned a lot about the causes of migration (for a survey, see Long 1988; Ritchey 1976; and Greenwood 1975). Much of the work on population migration has focused on understanding why people move from one place to another. Economists have favored explanations rooted in theories of human capital investment. People pay the financial and psychic costs of moving in hopes of reaping greater future returns. Mobility,

then, is seen as an instrument of self-development, like investments in education or the purchase of health care (Cadwallader 1992, 115; Sjaastad 1962; Schultz 1963; Becker 1964). Typically, people move in order to find better paying jobs or avoid unemployment in a market with surplus labor. Certainly the desire to escape economic hardship accounts for the massive waves of rural to urban migration that occurred throughout this century as agricultural employment declined. Movement from one region to another, such as the flow of southwestern migrants to California or the movement of blacks from the rural South to northern cities, can also be understood as a function of economic incentives. International migration, in turn, can be explained in part by economics. The demand to enter the United States by citizens from less developed countries suggests that there are economic motives at the bottom of the decision to emigrate (Rolph 1992; Muller and Espenshade 1985). The economic incentives are so strong that entry into the United States by the foreign born is legally restricted. These restrictions and the risk of arrest by immigration authorities are not enough to deter the many who still want to take advantage of employment opportunities unavailable to them in their countries of origin.

Some do not move to find a better job, but are instead interested in improving their quality of life. The internal migration of elderly retirees to the Sunbelt is mostly a factor of considerations such as climate, low crime, recreation, and better health (Cadwallader 1992; Barsby and Cox 1975). Some movers are apparently willing to trade long-run income gains for improvement in quality of life. Amenities such as good schools, desirable housing, open space, and transportation may draw some residents from city to suburbs (Teaford 1997; Lewis 1996; Burns 1994; Harkman 1989; Peterson 1981; Cebula 1980; Tiebout 1956). Income may actually drop as a result of such moves, but the improvement in public services and amenities is considered to be worth the exchange.

Of course, the economics of labor markets and amenity differentials cannot explain all internal migration and immigration flows. Sociologists have highlighted previous migration patterns and the presence of networks of friends and family as powerful influences on population movement. Movers may be economically motivated, but their decisions about where to relocate are mediated through and influenced by social relationships (Portes 1995; Portes and Rumbaut 1990). A Mexican migrant, for example, may have better economic prospects in one state than in another but be constrained in his choice by family members who are already established in the less advantageous locale. Sometimes, existing social networks

enhance a migrant's economic prospects. Family and friends may provide supplementary resources such as no-interest loans, discount housing, and information about jobs (Portes 1995, 12). Immigrants with no skills and little English are particularly drawn to areas in the United States where they are likely to find a warm reception among fellow nationals (Espenshade and Fu 1997). For migrants who face prejudice and discrimination from natives, the only real opportunity to get ahead may be provided by relocation near some compatible social network. In this sense, a migrant's context interacts with whatever skills he or she may bring to determine that person's capacity to prosper at their destination (Portes 1995, 24).

There are, to be sure, migrants who are not drawn to any particular destination but are simply fleeing oppressive conditions in their home countries. Refugees and asylees fall into this special category of migrants. While most political refugees settle in immigrant-dominated states such as California, Illinois, New York, and Texas, they sometimes wind up in an area by virtual accident of where their sponsors are located or as a result of government policy. Many Hmong refugees from Laos and Cambodia were relocated in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota, in communities that were 95 percent white, because the government desired to limit refugee resettlement in California and midwestern church groups were involved in reuniting refugee families (Hein 1994, 286).

### **Socioeconomic Mobility, Geographic Mobility, and Political Balkanization**

The main reason for suspecting that internal migration may have political effects that alter the political complexion of an area is that the economics and politics of migration are linked. Geographic mobility is frequently the result of upward socioeconomic mobility (Massey and Denton 1993). People who are confident that they can improve their economic position by means of relocation, and have the resources to pack up and move, will relocate. Insofar as political allegiances are related to class and economic position, socioeconomic mobility has implications for the partisan and political balance of cities, regions, and states. Internal migrants in recent times have been people of means who have obtained information about opportunities elsewhere and can afford to pay the costs of relocation. As stated earlier, they are usually choosing to relocate in areas that present economic opportunities coupled with the public services that contribute to a higher quality of life (Peterson 1981; Tiebout 1956). In this manner,

movers are self-selected, as they calculate positive and negative factors at origin and destination (Borjas, Bronars, and Trejo 1992; Sandefur, Tuma, and Kephart 1991; Clark and Ballard 1980; Yezer and Thurston 1976; Ritchey 1976; Lansing and Morgan 1967; Blanco 1963; Leslie and Richardson 1961). Depending on what kinds of jobs are being created, specific classes of citizens can be drawn from one part of the country (or state) to another. Many migrants have distinct political preferences that they then import into their new neighborhoods. Most native-born migrants will eventually reregister to vote, although it may take some time. Once registered, these new arrivals can express their views directly at the ballot box. With sufficient numbers, migrants may expand the size of the electorate and reconstitute the mix of interests within it.

Suburbanization is the most obvious pattern of geographic mobility that has had clear political implications. Suburbs first draw upper- and middle-class residents out of central cities, leading to the typical patterns of racial and class segregation visible in metropolitan areas (Morrill 1995; Massey and Denton 1993; Massey 1989, 1988; Kain and Quigley 1975). Poor unskilled workers are the least likely to move (Clark and Whiteman 1983; Sandefur, Tuma, and Kephart 1991). The research on movement to suburbs has demonstrated that the economic attitudes as well as the race and motivation of those who are first to move to suburbia are not randomly distributed. In recent times, these movers appear to be *positively* selected, focusing on considerations at the destination, such as higher wages and amenity differentials, for example, levels of public service (police protection, public schools, open space) that are not available in the old neighborhood (Peterson 1981; DeJong 1977). Positively selected migrants are most likely to be better educated, young, white, and upwardly mobile (Gabriel and Schmitz 1995; Borjas, Bronars, and Trejo 1992; Sandefur, Tuma, and Kephart 1991; Long 1988, 237; Ladinsky 1967; Hobbs 1942), and these traits are strongly associated with Republican Party identification (Wolfinger and Arsenau 1978; Perkins 1974). Bolstering this conclusion about the party leanings of movers to suburbia are results from the American National Election Study Cumulative Datafile showing that Republicans are more likely to report a shorter duration of residence in their current locale even after controlling for age, race, and income (see table 1.1). Apparently Democratic identifiers are less mobile than their GOP counterparts, especially when the distance involved imposes higher costs. This is not an especially new finding. Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes (1960) found in their 1950s election studies

that 71 percent of the Democrats raised in a central city still lived there, compared to only 46 percent of the Republicans (465).

The selection process at work in spatial mobility is rendering some cities and regions more demographically homogeneous and geographically segmented by race and class (Cohen and Dawson 1993; Wilson 1996, 1987). The spatial segregation of ethnic groups is also reshaping the politics of places. In spite of the movement of blacks and Hispanics to older suburbs, suburban politics remains overwhelmingly white and committed to maintaining political distance from large central cities (Teaford 1997). By the mid-1990s, inner cities were even more the province of minority political elites and electors than they had been in the 1960s. This segregation has simultaneously made it easier to elect black and Hispanic politicians and in some places has made white suburban politicians safer. But the empowerment of minority political elites has come at the expense of the geographic isolation of ethnic minorities from whites and low-income from upper- and middle-income voters (Massey and Denton 1993, 14). For most of the twentieth century, large central cities have been the predictable home turf of voters who reflexively cast Democratic ballots. The suburbs, particularly the growing suburbs, have been tilting almost as strongly in a Republican direction. There are fewer and fewer truly com-

TABLE 1.1. The Relationship of Party Identification, Race, Income, and Age to Length of Residence in Present Community

Variable	Coefficient (standard error)
Party identification ( $D = 1, I = 2, R = 3$ )	-.84*** (.11)
Income (in quintiles)	-1.05*** (.10)
Race (1 = white, 2 = minority)	2.56*** (.34)
Age (in years)	.56*** (.01)
Constant	-1.69
$N = 22,955$	
$F = 2,241.3; p \leq .0001$	
$R^2_a = .28$	

Source: ICPSR, *American National Election Studies, Cumulative Datafile, 1952-94.*

Note: Ordinary least squares estimation; dependent variable = years of residence in current location.

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

petitive electoral contests in metropolitan election districts. This lack of general election competition, in turn, depresses voter interest and denies citizens the benefit of meaningful choice. With only one real candidate for a given office, elections “become ceremonies which ratify rather than institutions through which choices are made” (Eulau and Prewitt 1973, 451). Officeholders are delighted with these segregated constituencies because in safe districts the threat of electoral sanction for bad leadership is more remote than it would be if there were serious competition. Lacking an effective mechanism to ensure accountability, constituents must depend upon the goodwill and conscience of their incumbent politicians.

The figures for the percentage of voters in each party from central city, suburban, and rural areas across four and a half decades reveal some interesting developments (see table 1.2). First, Democrats and Republicans have fewer voters to draw upon in rural and small town areas, as we begin the new century, than they did in earlier times. While both parties have gained in suburban areas, the Republicans have made the most impressive gains—almost half of their electorate is suburban, compared to less than a third in the 1950s. By contrast, Democratic gains in the suburbs have only risen about ten points since the 1950s. Republicans have experienced their losses in central cities. Their central city constituency has dropped from 25 percent of their party registration base to just 18 percent. The Democrats’ central city base has remained a stable 30 to 31 percent of their constituency, even as most central cities have lost population. Independent identification has also risen dramatically in the suburbs (from 29 to 44 percent), while dropping about 8 points in the central city. The rise of independents in the suburbs verifies Thad Brown’s contention that mobility often results in an individualized politics characterized by weakened party attachments (Brown 1988, chap. 7).

The geographic separation of the population groups comprising rival electoral coalitions has important implications for the future of both major parties. Within the Republican Party, the geographic isolation of minority and low-income voters from white, middle- and upper-income voters has made it more difficult for Republicans to broaden their base. With homogeneous, white, middle- and upper-income constituencies, Republicans find it to their electoral advantage to advocate policies that benefit a narrowly focused set of interests. Democrats, on the other hand, are threatened internally by having to represent both minority groups and conservative, working-class, white populations clustered in older suburbs who often express virulent racism (Massey and Denton 1993, 94; Cum-

mings 1980; 1977). This balancing of interests has been maintained so far, but as the interests of minorities become more distant from the interests of the majority the disparate components of the rainbow coalition are harder to hold together.

### Immigration and Differences in the Mobility of Populations

Internal migration has been a source of political stratification, but it is not the only source of spatial inequalities. High levels of both legal and illegal immigration are accelerating the political balkanization of the nation. A recent body of research has developed the link between contemporary internal labor flows and the influx of immigrants (Frey 1995a, 1995b; Alba, Denton, Leung, and Logan 1994). Evidence from the 1990 census

TABLE 1.2. Political Party Affiliation by Place of Residence, 1952–94 (in percentages)

Years	Democrat	Independent	Republican	All	Summary Statistics
1950s					
Central city	31.1	29.4	25.4	28.7	$N = 6,250$
Suburban	26.3	28.5	31.9	28.4	$\chi^2 = 44.6$
Rural town	42.6	42.1	42.7	42.9	$p < .0001$
1960s					
Central city	30.1	27.5	20.8	26.7	$N = 6,897$
Suburban	28.7	33.2	36.5	31.5	$\chi^2 = 83.7$
Rural/town	41.2	39.3	42.7	41.8	$p < .0001$
1970s					
Central city	30.7	21.7	21.5	26.6	$N = 10,339$
Suburban	32.1	37.7	36.7	34.4	$\chi^2 = 119.5$
Rural/town	37.1	40.6	41.8	39.2	$p < .0001$
1980s					
Central city	30.9	21.6	18.9	25.3	$N = 9,505$
Suburban	37.5	40.9	45.7	40.9	$\chi^2 = 174.1$
Rural/town	30.6	37.5	35.4	38.1	$p < .0001$
1990s					
Central city	31.9	21.7	18.4	24.2	$N = 6,049$
Suburban	37.6	44.4	48.3	42.9	$\chi^2 = 165.5$
Rural/town	30.4	33.8	33.3	33.0	$p < .0001$

Source: ICPSR, *American National Election Studies, Cumulative Datafile*, 1952–94.

strongly suggests that internal migrants and immigrants are not drawn to the same destinations (Nogle 1996; Kritz and Nogle 1994). Most new immigrants are non-Caucasian, with 85 percent coming from Asia and Latin America. It is also well known that these new residents are less educated and have lower skill levels than natives (Borjas 1990; Borjas and Freeman 1992). Consequently, the natives who are less educated are the most threatened by the arrival of new immigrants in a labor market (Filer 1992, 269). Through preferential hiring practices, immigrant groups create niches that exclude outsiders. "Outsiders lack the traits, histories and relational ties conducive to collaboration or trust; on these grounds alone, rational considerations lead insiders toward economic exchanges with their own" (Waldinger 1996, 26). In New York since the 1970s, native-born blacks have seen a sharp decline in their labor market position while the employment of immigrants has expanded (56). Of course, one solution to bad economic conditions is to leave. If native blacks fare so poorly in urban labor markets, why don't they go elsewhere? The answer to this question takes us back to the selection process at work in determining who is mobile and who is not. Not everyone facing bad economic times can afford to leave. Geographic mobility requires resources and information about opportunities elsewhere. Some groups have the resources and information, while others do not. The ones lacking resources and information are likely to remain stuck in the worst labor markets in the country. Add to this the fact that public assistance programs make it possible for people to remain in a bad labor market long after they should have left it and we can understand how some groups end up immobile in an economy in which only movers get ahead.

Apparently, many native-born whites have both the information and resources to leave surplus labor markets behind. Evidence from the 1990 census indicates that native-born whites leave regions and states that are experiencing an influx of immigrants, leading to a sharp rise in the minority composition and low-income populations of some areas (Frey 1995a, 736; 1995b). In New York, the result of immigration influx has been the expansion of all-minority ghetto areas—all-black and black-Hispanic neighborhoods (Alba, Denton, Leung, and Logan 1994). In California, white lower- and middle-income out-migrants are being pushed out of the state by competition for jobs and housing and the increased social costs associated with immigration (Frey 1995b, 363; Walker, Ellis, and Barff 1992; Muller and Espenshade 1985). Whether the movement of native



whites from these areas is the result of displacement or white flight from population groups of color, no one questions that this development will reinforce the existing patterns of geographic segregation by race and class.

The political consequences of the spatial separation of natives from immigrants obviously depend upon where the immigrants find their political home, with Democrats or Republicans, and how politically active they become. There is evidence to suggest that spatially isolated immigrant groups fail to get involved in politics at all. Geographic isolation prevents minorities from voicing demands to outsiders (Kwong 1996; Lamare 1977; Garcia 1973). Members of an ethnic enclave make demands only within the enclave, not on institutions outside their insular community. If we find that newly arriving minorities do become involved in state and national politics in spite of their spatial isolation, then fears of increased political balkanization resulting from sustained immigration have been overblown. Moreover, if a new group's involvement in politics is roughly divided between the parties, then perhaps there is no troubling consequence of the settlement and mobility patterns of native and immigrant groups. But if one party, most likely the Democrats, finds itself becoming the exclusive party of the disadvantaged immigrant population, then a new political sectionalism will result—one that will further undermine the utility of competitive elections as instruments of accountability while further polarizing the American polity by race and class.

The idea that newly arriving immigrants may be totally captured by one party or the other is not as far-fetched as it may sound. Press reports from California during the 1996 elections indicated that newly naturalized immigrants were registering as Democrats by a five to one ratio and that in immigrant receiving cities such as San Jose the ratio was closer to ten to one. Of course the Republican-led U.S. Congress was responsible for pushing many new immigrants away from the GOP with its determined effort to cut most forms of public assistance to legal permanent residents (Gimpel and Edwards 1999). There are serious political risks in alienating any growing population of voters, regardless of their ethnicity. But independent of whether any of the new immigrants naturalize and register to vote, political consequences may follow from the reaction of natives to their presence, with the California referenda of 1994 and 1996 serving as clear examples. Measures intended to cut back on the admission of legal immigrants are popular in many quarters, and they reflect the growing uneasiness of natives and older immigrants with the new wave of foreign-born arrivals.

### Political Assimilation and Adaptation of Migrants

*Assimilation* is customarily thought to mean the gradual erasure of distinct cultural identity, hence the cognate term *melting pot*. Cultural assimilation is thought to work through intermarriage and equal status contact with other groups (Jobu 1988). By the second and third generations, so the traditional theories would have it, ethnic languages, cultures, and behaviors are lost (Massey 1995; Wolfinger 1965; Gordon 1964). The challenge of assimilating is not something that only the foreign born confront. All migrants, both internal and cross-national, face some degree of difficulty in adapting to their new settings. Not every aspect of a group's ethnic identity is given up in the assimilation process, but some learning of new habits and ways of thinking inevitably takes place in the adaptation process. Ethnic insularity develops whenever sizable groups of newcomers, in distinct geographic locations, assimilate at different rates.

Part of what it means to assimilate is to acquire the civic values and practice the civic virtues prevailing in the new locale. Political assimilation refers to the tendency for a group to adapt its political behaviors and attitudes to conform to the standards of the new community. Granted, sometimes those standards are low. Many native-born citizens of the United States have few of the civic virtues and values so highly prized by democratic theorists. Arguably, in some communities nonparticipation is the prevailing norm and to assimilate would mean to stay home on election day with the majority of the native born. In other words, it is worth asking, from time to time, to what the new populations are assimilating. Nevertheless, concern for the political "Americanization" of new immigrants has been expressed recently by no less an authority than the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, which was chaired by Barbara Jordan until her death in 1996. To emphasize Americanization, the commissioners recommended support for English classes, streamlining the naturalization process, and emphasizing individual rights as a component of civic education curricula.

Political stratification occurs when political assimilation occurs unevenly across the migrant population. Some groups acquire the civic values and norms of participation of the host society in less than a generation, while others do not. The populations that are slower to politically assimilate are at a serious disadvantage in a polity in which political power is conveyed through elections that are tied to geographically specific districts.

For some, simply asking whether new populations assimilate is threat-

ening because information about the maladaptation of a group might be used as a justification for its exclusion. The ridiculous doubts that were raised throughout the cold war era about the commitment of Asian immigrants to democracy are an example of how degrees of assimilation can be used as a justification for low visa quotas. Interestingly, internal migrants are suspect for the same reasons. Native-born Californians regularly expressed worries about the political and social values of southwestern migrants during the 1930s.

“Okie” was soon to become a derogatory term. Private citizens and public officials would, over the next few years, blame the Okies for crime and lawlessness, disrupting the public schools, overburdening the hospitals and social services, draining the state budget and creating a communist menace. Okies would be derided as dirty, lazy, immoral, disease-ridden, lawless and fanatically religious. In short, bigoted Californians ascribed to Okies all the inhuman characteristics once assigned to Irish, Polish, Italians and Jews arriving in the urban centers of the north. (Morgan 1992, 77)

It is noteworthy that the Okies were not simply typecast as dirty, lazy and disease-ridden but also lawless and politically suspect as communists. In other words, their capacity to politically assimilate was forcefully questioned. Doubts about a group’s capacity to politically assimilate or adopt American civic values have sometimes served as a justification for nativist policies. Nevertheless, studies of political assimilation should not be avoided for fear that they might show some groups to be less adaptable than others. Research is likely to crush many misconceptions, as the Latino National Political Survey did in showing that English was far more prevalent in the households of Latino citizens than commonly supposed (de la Garza et al. 1992). Inquiry into the political values of Asians showed them to be no more sympathetic to communism than natives, and some, such as the Vietnamese and Koreans, were a great deal less so. Studies of political adaptation yield valuable information about the challenges groups face in their new communities. If migrants have lower political participation rates than nonmigrants, that fact is worth knowing. If new arrivals change the politics of a place by importing new interests and values, generating knowledge about how such change occurs strengthens our capacity to anticipate and cope with changes that are on the way.

A study of the political impact of migration is likely to show that when

new populations flow into an area at a sufficiently slow pace, the recent arrivals may be absorbed without much notice and even socialized into the political habits of the established majority. Under such conditions, the political impact of migration may be slight. Even adults are subject to the influence of peers—their new friends and neighbors—who over time reward the adoption of conforming attitudes (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Huckfeldt 1986; Burbank 1995; McBurnett 1991). Upwardly mobile citizens have been found to change their political orientation to suit their new status and location. Presumably this is how many Republican areas maintain their Republicanism in spite of in-migration from Democratic areas. Some political science research has found that migration does not change people's political orientations (Brown 1988, 10; Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960). In the early 1960s, a pair of studies of New York City suburbs found that new arrivals from the city showed no sign of adopting the political views of the older Republican residents (Straetz and Munger 1960; Wallace 1962). The early socialization process is so strong that it stays with a person for life, regardless of socioeconomic or geographic movement.

Some conversion must take place, however, because if it did not New York City's suburban counties would not be nearly as Republican as they are today. Without some partisan conversion, the rapid inundation of the suburbs with former residents of the boroughs would have generated suburban Democratic strongholds. Whether people adapt to new neighborhoods by changing their political orientations or remain steadfast adherents to their political upbringings, is an important question that remains unsettled. Unquestionably it must depend upon individual characteristics such as the strength of one's political beliefs and partisanship at the time of the move as well as the political character of the new community—including the pressures for conformity within it. The more general point, however, is that it is not clear whether places change the politics of migrants or migrants change the politics of places. Most of the evidence points toward the latter, especially when the volume of migration is high. When an area is inundated with those of alien disposition, there will be far less pressure to conform to the existing community's values since those values are likely be challenged by a larger group in which migrants can find compatible social support for expressing divergent views (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954, 126; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Huckfeldt 1986). In these circumstances, the migrants change the community. By contrast, when migration is only a trivial part of an area's population

growth, the pressure on new arrivals to adapt is much higher. In these cases, migrants are more likely to conform. The foregoing considerations permit the formulation of a reasonable expectation: that the potential for political change due to migration is highest in states where the population of new residents is consequential. To be consequential, the population of migrants and immigrants need not be large by national standards—only large relative to the local population of natives.

### **Natives, Discrimination, and the Prevention of Assimilation**

Migrants and immigrants of color face special obstacles to conformity and assimilation in a predominantly white society. As Massey and Denton (1993, chap. 4) indicate, many want to conform, but whites will not permit their assimilation. The propensity of natives to discriminate against newcomers raises the possibility that movers may generate social and political change by their very presence—independent of whether they become politically involved. Across the nation, townspeople in such out of the way places as Wausau and Appleton, Wisconsin, and Storm Lake, Iowa, have erupted in nativist protest to non-Anglo immigrants whose presence has strained these communities' capacity to deliver public services (Grey 1996).

Native protests are not only directed at those of a different race or those who speak a different language. Even native interaction with internal migrants may provoke hostile reactions, giving the host community a measure of cohesion it had never had in the premigrant period. James N. Gregory's heartrending accounts of discrimination against southwestern migrants by native Californians in the 1920s and 1930s comes readily to mind (1989, chap. 4; see also Morgan 1992). Apparently the maltreatment was so severe that Gregory found elderly Oklahomans who remain ashamed of their origins some fifty years after their arrival on the West Coast (Gregory 1989, 121). In the early 1990s, Oregon became well known for its nationally broadcast television ads, which urged people to visit the state but implored them not to stay. California, Colorado, Oregon, Florida, Arizona, and Washington state have been very aggressive in adopting slow growth initiatives that effectively discourage some would-be migrants by raising the costs of relocation.

Discriminatory barriers to prospective migrants exist in many forms. One of the most common involves legislation governing municipal incorporation and land use. Nancy Burns chronicles the history of the use of

municipal incorporation as a means of preventing racial integration, pointing out that “cities are now more frequently racial boundaries than are neighborhood borders” (1994, 81; see also Teaford 1997). Often, though, discrimination has not taken such a subtle form. One of the strongest barriers to assimilation has been the violence and intimidation practiced by natives against newcomers. Migrants and immigrants of color are particularly vulnerable to exclusion from the mainstream.

The study of the opposition to newcomers by natives involves serious consideration of the well-known “contact hypothesis,” which has been the subject of extensive investigation across several disciplines (Hood and Morris 1998, 1997; Sigelman, Bledsoe, Welch, and Combs 1996; Giles and Hertz 1995; Ellison and Powers 1994; Rothbart and John 1993; Hewstone and Brown 1986; Allport 1954; Key 1949). The contact hypothesis has actually been posed as two rival hypotheses. Some have postulated that contact between one group and another reduces negative feelings between groups while others have suggested that proximity breeds hostility and rivalry between the groups. Those believing that contact reduces intergroup tension base this conclusion on the idea that knowledge and hostility are inversely related. Familiarity breeds not contempt but friendship. Others have been less sure about contact leading to peaceful intergroup relations. In the South that V. O. Key Jr. studied, contact with large black populations triggered perceptions of threat among whites and resulted in determined efforts by white elites to preserve Jim Crow. The results of testing the contact hypotheses depend crucially on the way in which contact is operationalized. The use of broad brush contextual variables for contact, such as the population composition of cities and neighborhoods, has generally produced results consistent with the notion that contact breeds rivalry and tension between groups. Lacking detailed individual level data on the quality and type of contact between group members, I am inclined to believe that the aggregate measures of contact utilized in this study will produce results similar to Key’s findings. More generally, I expect to find that political changes resulting from population mobility will be most visible in areas of ethnic heterogeneity, for example, where diverse racial and ethnic groups come into contact.

### **Summary: Population Mobility and Political Change**

Admittedly, internal migrants and immigrants may have little in common except for their mobility—but that is a sufficiently common denominator

to raise the question of what this mobility does to change the politics of places. There are three ways in which internal migrants and immigrants can change the political landscape in the areas where they resettle. First, there is the element of geographic isolation by race and class that can result from the selection process at work in population mobility. Older inner city neighborhoods are abandoned by suburban-bound Republicans to be replaced with minorities and immigrants whose eventual political allegiances convert the area into a one-party Democratic stronghold. The sorting process in migration clusters poor voters of color in high concentrations in inner cities and white middle- and upper-income voters in suburbs. The evidence showing that immigrants and internal migrants do not settle in the same locations is indicative of a new pattern of geographic clustering that may have profound political implications as politicians emerge who represent highly homogeneous, unidimensional constituencies, leading to a breakdown in electoral accountability and the political extremism encouraged by one-sided electoral districts.

Second, by importing new political preferences, which they express directly at the polls, new residents may alter the political and partisan balance of the neighborhoods where they settle. Relatively competitive areas may become monolithically one-sided as the selection process leaves some groups out. One-party neighborhoods become two-party competitive as new populations mix with old. Southwestern migrants came to be the dominant population group in central California in the 1940s and 1950s, eventually making the Democratic Party a competitive force in a state where it had been weak for decades.

The first two ways in which politics may change assumes that mobile groups will eventually become politically active upon resettlement. But the prospect for political change does not depend upon this assumption. Natives often resent the fact that new arrivals compete for jobs and make claims upon public services for which the established residents must help shoulder the cost. This is particularly true for migrants and immigrants with little means who have school-age families and may eventually come to depend on some form of public aid. Needy newcomers are the least likely to receive a warm welcome from long-time residents. Burns argues that the manipulation of city boundaries is designed to define some as residents and some as nonresidents in order to minimize the costs imposed on the former by needy population groups: "if cities play their boundary cards right, they may not even have citizens in need of social services" (1994, 114).

### Selecting Cases for Study

Observers of American politics can be confident, of course, that political change does occur at the macrolevel, even though the microlevel processes that produce it have not yet been pinpointed (Gerber and Green 1998). We can also be certain that at least some of this change within the United States is attributable to the mobility of some populations and the immobility of others. Even those who have recently argued that the political realignment of the American South is primarily the result of the conversion of southern whites do not deny that migration from the North has also played a role in altering the partisan balance of the region (Wolfinger and Arsenau 1978; Wolfinger and Hagen 1985; Stanley 1988; Petrocik 1987). Given the variability of migration and immigration flows, the extent to which population changes alter the electoral politics of an area must be highly variable across the nation. One would expect, for example, that the impact of mobility on the political development of California, Florida, and other Sunbelt states might be much more extensive than, say, the impact in interior states that have experienced lower rates of growth. But simply because some states have more new residents than others does not mean that states with small populations escape the changes that result from mobility. In rural states, it takes fewer strangers to remake the electorate or generate hostile political reactions from long-time residents.

Because I am interested in studying contexts that vary in the scope and nature of their population mobility, the selection of cases cannot be done casually. Areas with few immigrants and internal migrants must be included alongside those with many. My goal in this book is to focus on seven states that show varying degrees and types of population mobility and population growth in order to evaluate the extent to which electoral politics has changed along with the demography. States are important units of analysis in studies of American electoral politics because they are the source of rich and interesting political variation. More specifically to this project, states are relevant because the consequences of immigration and migration fall heavily upon services financed by state government, including infrastructure, environmental protection, growth control, taxation, welfare, and law enforcement. The selection of states is also dictated by convenience. I have chosen to study New York, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Kentucky, Florida, Colorado, and California partly because of the availability of party registration data—changes in partisan balance will serve as an important indicator of political change. Certainly other interesting



high- and low-mobility states (such as Texas) could be included, but these were ruled out because they do not enroll voters by party.

### **The Population Composition of Selected States**

A basic description of the population composition of the seven chosen states appears in table 1.3. These figures show that in 1990 New York and California had the highest percentages of foreign-born residents, although a surprisingly low percentage of California immigrants have naturalized. Figures for internal migrants show that Florida has the highest percentage of residents born in other states, although a majority of Colorado's population has migrated from elsewhere too. Kansas and Kentucky are noteworthy for having both a low number and a low percentage of immigrants. Pennsylvania has a significant immigrant population, nearly 370,000, but this figure constitutes a low percentage (3 percent) of the state's total population. Sixty percent of Pennsylvania's foreign-born population is naturalized, the highest of any of the seven states examined here.

Where do these seven fit in the overall distribution of all states on variables such as the percentage of migrants from elsewhere and the size of the foreign-born population? Figure 1.1 shows the univariate distribution of all fifty states (and the District of Columbia) for the percentage of migrants from other states (but not U.S. territories) in 1990. Florida, situated in the right-hand tail of the distribution, is among the few states with the largest proportion of residents from elsewhere, over 55 percent. In the left-hand tail, Pennsylvania and New York have the fewest migrants from other states. Clearly this shows that the deindustrializing Northeast has not been an attractive destination for internal migrants. Kansas is the closest to the mean of the distribution with 35.4 percent, and Colorado is more than one standard deviation above the mean at 51.1 percent.

Figure 1.2 illustrates where the seven states fit in the distribution of the percentage of immigrants residing in each state in 1990. In the far right tail, alone, is California, with 22 percent of its population reporting that they were foreign born. New York is a distant second with 15.9 percent. At the other end of the distribution, Kentucky is among the states with the fewest foreign-born residents. Only two other states, Mississippi and West Virginia, have a smaller proportion of immigrants than Kentucky. Cases that are more typical can be found near the mean, including Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Kansas.

New York and Pennsylvania are in the old industrial core. They are

TABLE 1.3. Population, Foreign-Born Population, and Naturalized Population in Seven States, 1990

State and Variable	California	Colorado	Florida	Kansas	Kentucky	New York	Pennsylvania
Population	29,760,021	3,294,394	12,937,926	2,477,574	3,685,296	17,990,455	11,881,643
Foreign born	6,458,825	142,434	1,662,601	62,840	34,119	2,851,861	369,316
% Foreign born	22	4	13	3	1	16	3
Naturalized	2,017,610	67,277	713,505	27,236	15,890	1,297,020	218,209
% Naturalized	31	47	43	43	47	46	59
% Born in other states or U.S. territories	41	55	65	37	22	20	17

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.

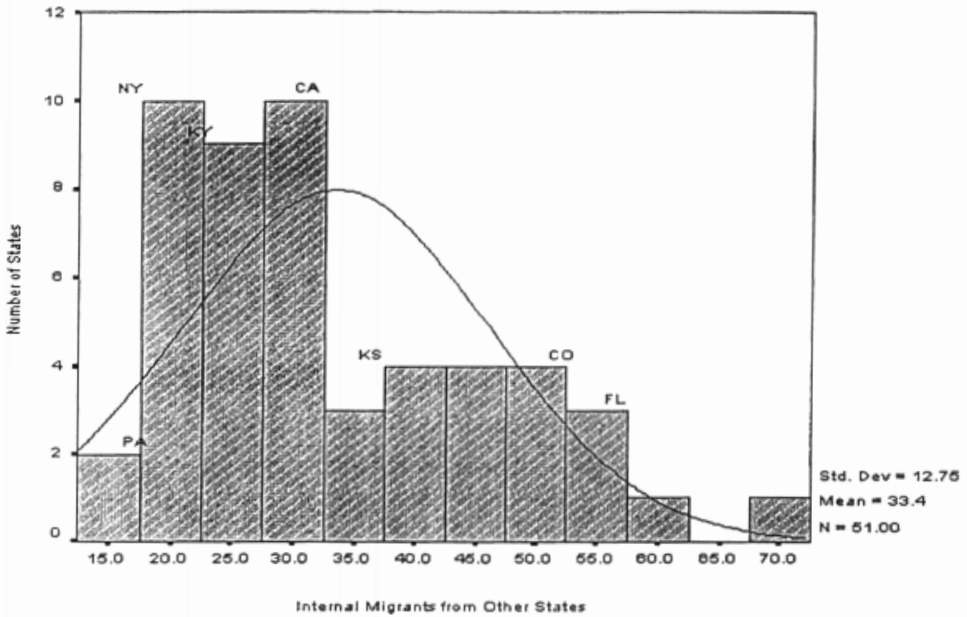


Fig. 1.1. Distribution of states by proportion of residents born in other states, 1990

important cases because both have experienced economic stagnation and slow growth from internal migration over the past twenty years (*American Demographics*, June 1985, 38–42). Although neither state has seen much net growth in population, there has been considerable internal redistribution with the rapid suburbanization of Philadelphia and New York City. In addition, New York is a major port of entry for immigrants. Between 1985 and 1990, 769,000 foreign-born newcomers settled in New York.

Kansas has also seen very little net growth, mostly due to the gradual decline in agricultural employment. While it ranks low among states as a destination for immigrants (fig. 1.2), it does not take many immigrants to generate political reaction in small rural communities. Parts of rural southwestern Kansas have experienced an influx of Latino and Asian immigrants in the last twenty years. Half of the immigrants in the state have arrived since 1980. Some of this is the result of internal migration of Mexicans eastward across the border from southern Colorado and north from Texas. The attraction is driven by the labor market, especially by

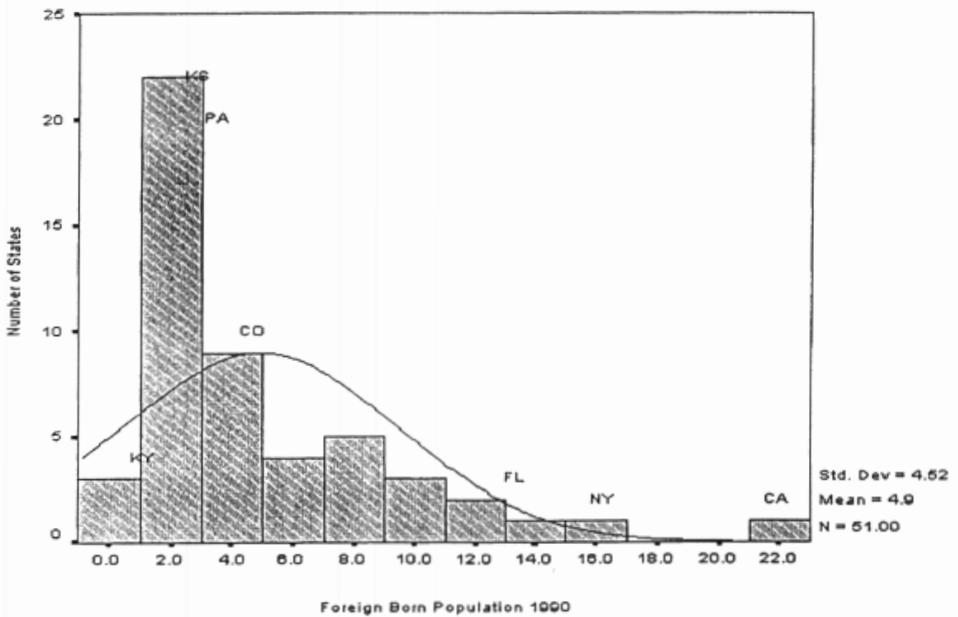


Fig. 1.2. Distribution of states by proportion of foreign-born residents, 1990

employment in agriculture, food processing (including meatpacking and livestock production), and petroleum production.

Kentucky and Colorado have experienced moderate to high growth due to internal migration over the last twenty-five years. Colorado, in particular, is known for attracting a very highly skilled work force to its high-technology industries around Denver. Neither state is an especially popular destination for immigrants, although southern Colorado has had a large Latino population for most of this century in the working-class town of Pueblo, where the first Mexican immigrants were brought to work in the steel mills after 1910. Sugar growers have long hired cheap Mexican labor to work in the beet fields in the Platte River basin in northeastern Colorado. Accounts of local historians indicate that Anglo-Coloradans have long fought to remain separate from blacks and Hispanics, considering immigrants a “necessary evil” while resisting all forms of integration (Abbott, Leonard, and McComb 1982, 295–98).

Kentucky’s growth has occurred in the suburbs of its large cities—Louisville, Lexington, and the Cincinnati area. Migration from northern

states, including Ohio next door, is leading to the emergence of the Republicans as a competitive force in state and local politics. The foreign-born population of the state constituted less than 1 percent of the total population in 1990, and only about half of those were naturalized (see table 1.3). Immigration is as close to being a nonissue in Kentucky as it is anywhere in the country.

Finally, California and Florida are extraordinary for their seemingly unstoppable pace of both internal migration and immigration. In Florida, the political impact of population mobility seems clear-cut. Florida's internal migration consists mostly of well-educated northerners in white collar employment and large numbers of elderly retirees. These migrants appear to have slightly more liberal attitudes than the native whites, particularly on racial issues, but most are Republicans (Craig 1991). Florida's most familiar immigrant enclave is Miami's Cuban exile community. During the 1980s, Cubans were joined by 123,000 more of their own from the Mariel boatlift in 1980 as well as 40,000 Haitians. This was followed by substantial waves from El Salvador, Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic (Gannon 1990). The majority of Cubans identify with the Republican Party, but the party loyalties of non-Cuban Hispanics are more evenly divided.

Whereas migration and immigration have aided Republican registration growth in Florida, the political impact of population influx to California is less clear. Most recent internal migrants are like native movers elsewhere: white, well educated, and intending to resettle in wealthy Republican suburbs. But cross-state migration flows to California have not always been Republican. The southwestern and black migrations from southern states between 1920 to the mid-1950s helped resurrect the state Democratic Party from oblivion.

As for immigrants, no state has been more active in searching for ways to deal with massive waves of legal and illegal immigration than California. In spite of their sizable numbers in a state with a long multiethnic history, Latinos and Asians in California remain spatially concentrated in the state's most urban counties. Ethnic conflict is familiar in Los Angeles politics. The riots of May 1992 brought the conflict between Asians and blacks into clear view. Latinos and blacks are also alienated from one another, as blacks consider themselves at a competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis Latinos in the labor force (Wilson 1996; Skerry 1993, 83–84). Latino immigrants are also moving into neighborhoods in once all black areas such as Watts and Compton, putting pressure on housing prices.

Together, these seven states cover varying points on the relevant distributions of internal migration and immigration and should therefore make for meaningful contrasts that are representative of other states and regions. An alternative to comparing the numbers of new residents migrating to these states is to compare growth *rates*, that is, the percentage change in the migrant and immigrant populations from 1970 to 1990. These figures yield the fourfold classification table displayed in figure 1.3. Kansas and Colorado, at the upper right, are representative of states that have registered a surprisingly high immigration rate combined with rather modest growth from domestic sources. While both Kansas and Colorado are home to rather small fractions of the total U.S. immigrant population, the number of foreign-born residents more than doubled between 1970 and 1990. Kentucky, in the bottom left cell of the figure, reflects states where immigration has been limited but internal migration has been high. New York and Pennsylvania are states with low population gains from internal migration and rather low increases from immigration as well. Even though New York's immigrant population increased by 35 percent from 1970 to 1990, this rate of increase is dwarfed by all states except Pennsylvania, where the foreign-born population declined by 17 percent over the same period. Finally, Florida and California (bottom right), are high on both dimensions of population growth. California's immigrant population has increased by 267 percent, and Florida is close behind at 205 percent.

### **Plan of the Book**

In the chapters that follow, I will examine each state's trends in population growth and mobility with an eye toward evaluating whether these trends have had any impact on electoral behavior across places. In each chapter, I will begin by providing an overview of the state's demographic development since 1970. In this opening section, I will determine where various population groups have settled and whether they appear to be responding to economic opportunities at their destination or the existence of prior coethnic communities. The settlement pattern of a group determines the potential visibility and political impact that group may have. Whether immigrants settle in enclaves or disperse into the majority population may also be indicative of their capacity to assimilate.

The next section of each chapter will contain the results of several hypothesis tests of the effect of internal migration and immigration on

		Immigration Growth Rate	
		Low	High
Internal Migration Growth Rate	Low	NY, PA	KS, CO
	High	KY	FL, CA

**Fig. 1.3.** Classification of states by internal migration and immigration growth rates, 1970–90

political participation, partisan voting, and the balance of party registrants at the county level. These aggregate-level results must be interpreted with caution, as ecological data contain many ambiguities. Conclusions about the politics of places can be advanced only tentatively. This data analysis will be supplemented, wherever possible, by available individual-level data from surveys that represent states. Additional data on immigrant and migrant settlement patterns at the subcounty (census tract) level are appropriate for highlighting demographic developments not visible at higher levels of aggregation.

Each chapter will also draw upon appropriate contextual information gathered from secondary sources and interviews. Such material will permit the discussion of particularly important cases and examples of immigrant-native interaction and political behavior. Each chapter concludes with a discussion of what has been learned from the analysis and prospects for the future relationship between immigrants, natives, and internal migrants and their communities.

The final chapter will make comparisons across all seven settings and draw conclusions based on a broader perspective. Here the point will be to mine the large accumulation of factual results in an effort to advance theorizing about the role of population mobility in shaping ethnic relations and political change. The spatial clustering of population groups with homogeneous political interests has important implications for the style and substance of political representation such monolithic communities encourage. I will close with thoughts about how the spatial sorting process resulting from differences in the relative mobility of populations relates to questions of legislative districting and the practice of pluralist politics.