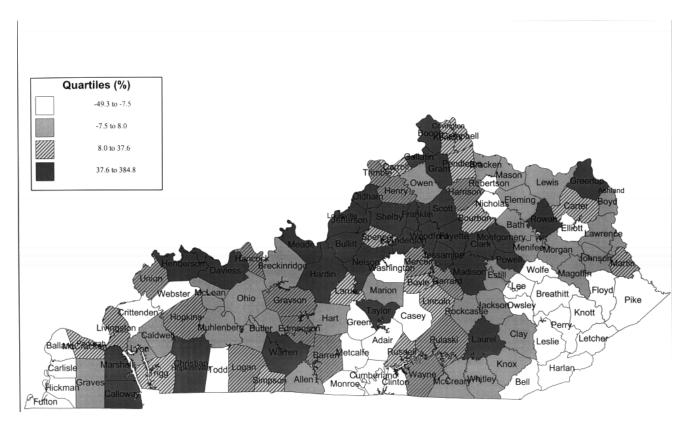
Kentucky: Biracial Balkanization

In May of 1998, the Immigration and Naturalization Service raided a tobacco company warehouse in Lexington, Kentucky, and deported 86 illegal immigrants to Mexico (Herron 1998). The following month, the mayor of Lexington announced several new policy initiatives aimed at dealing with a growing immigrant population, including new grants for providing healthcare to legal and illegal immigrants (Honeycutt 1998). The number of immigrants seeking public benefits in central Kentucky remains small by California standards, but it is growing. Why would immigrants be attracted to central Kentucky in the first place? The answer: agricultural labor. In the mid-1990s, about 8,000 Mexican workers were given temporary visas as part of a Department of Labor guest worker program. Only a few years earlier there were no immigrant laborers in Kentucky, when tobacco farmers relied exclusively on local labor markets. But the ease with which immigrants cross the border-and the low wages they will accept to work here-proved to be too great a temptation for Kentucky's tobacco producers to resist. For the near future, Kentucky's immigrant population is likely to remain small by the standards of larger states, but the state's agricultural employers are turning down the same path blazed by farmers in border states in the 1940s and 1950s.

As a Sunbelt state with the attractions of a nonunion, low-wage labor force, proximity to major national markets, and a pleasant climate, Kentucky has benefited from moderate economic growth in the last half of the twentieth century. The state's population stood at 3.7 million in 1990, up from just under 3 million in 1950. Due partly to the state's geographic isolation from the nation's major ports of entry, the population influx has not included many immigrants. By 1990, Kentucky had fewer foreign-born residents than Kansas, totaling only 34,119, less than 1 percent of the state's population. As map 5.1 shows, most of the population growth has occurred in the urban and suburban counties of central Kentucky, includ-



Map 5.1. Population growth in Kentucky counties, 1950–92. (Mean = 24.8, Moran's I = .15)

ing those around Louisville (Jefferson, Oldham, Bullitt), Lexington (Fayette, Jessamine, Woodford), and Cincinnati, Ohio (Boone, Kenton). This area has benefited from an excellent transportation infrastructure, including proximity to the Ohio River, along which major highways and rail lines were built. Central Kentucky is also the region where immigrants have chosen to concentrate. Sixty-eight percent of the foreign-born population lives in Kentucky's metropolitan areas, and half of those live in central city neighborhoods in Louisville and Lexington-Fayette, where housing is cheapest. Mexican immigrants are increasingly recruited to work in central Kentucky's tobacco fields, taking positions once worked by migrants from the poor counties of eastern Kentucky.

Rural eastern Kentucky, part of the well-known and thoroughly studied Appalachian region, has been in a state of economic decline since the 1950s (see map 5.1). Appalachia is culturally, geographically, and economically isolated from the rest of the state (Bowman and Haynes 1963, 25-26). Mountainous terrain cuts the area off from the urban centers that surround it. As a result of its inaccessibility, eastern Kentucky's poverty is a striking contrast to the wealthy horse farms and thriving suburbs to the north and west. In 1990, this region's median income averaged only 68 percent of that in the rest of Kentucky. Thirty percent of the area's families lived below the poverty line, compared to only 15 percent in the rest of the state. These counties continue to have the highest proportion of citizens on public assistance. Not well suited to agriculture, coal mining was the backbone of the economy until midcentury when competition from better located fields and an international coal market shut down many of the mines. Since the 1940s, people have been moving out (Bowman and Havnes 1963; Schwarzweller, Brown, and Mangalam 1971; Deaton and Anschel 1974), primarily to find work in the industrial areas of southern Ohio. Aside from its poverty, the population of southeast Kentucky is noteworthy for two extraordinary traits: it is homogeneously white and certain counties have a strong Republican tradition (Jewell and Cunningham 1968; Miller and Jewell 1990). Due to out-migration, however, the region's importance in state elections has declined.

Kentucky was largely bypassed by the black migration from the Deep South to northern industrial cities in the first half of the twentieth century. The black population of the state, at 7 percent of the total population in 1990, is located in just a few counties but is most highly concentrated in Louisville, where the population is 30 percent African American. Outside of Louisville, the most notable concentration of blacks is in a rural area known at the turn of the century as "the black patch" in the southwestern counties along the Tennessee border (especially Fulton, Trigg, Christian, Todd, Logan, and Simpson Counties). While the black patch is far more white today than it was in the early 1900s, there are still significant African American concentrations there. The counties of eastern Kentucky, by contrast, have minuscule black populations.

Almost nothing has been written about Kentucky's small and still politically inert immigrant population. For most of the twentieth century low-skilled immigrants would find it difficult to compete in a state that has so much native white labor willing to work for low wages in nonunion employment (Wright 1986; Cobb 1982; Serow 1981). The reason why so much industry has decided to move to the South since World War II, namely, the search for cheap labor, has made the southern and border states unattractive destinations for low-skilled immigrants from Asia and Latin America. Only in the 1980s and 1990s have local tobacco and vegetable growers drawn on immigrant labor to work their fields. Kentucky is one of the few states where a majority of the foreign born are still Caucasian, although this has steadily fallen since the immigrant preference system was changed in 1965. Of the immigrants in the state, though, it is noteworthy that a plurality of them are Asians (see fig. 5.1), 60 percent of whom have entered the country since 1980, mostly to settle in Louisville and Lexington. Europeans are the next largest group, and they are a much older population. Mexicans remained a very small proportion of the population, numbering less than a thousand in 1990. While Kentucky is not likely to become a major immigrant destination state anytime soon, farmers and food processing industries are changing the ethnic composition of certain counties through their recruitment efforts. Newly constructed chicken-processing plants in the western part of the state are in constant search for Mexican laborers.

Until recently, the state has not received much by way of internal migrants either. Prior to the 1970s, Kentucky was a net loser of population through migration, and its growth was mostly the result of natural increase (Long 1988; Shryock 1964). In stark contrast to California, Colorado, and Florida, fully 78 percent of the population had been born in the state as late as 1990, and this figure has fallen only since 1970. Where in-migration has occurred, it is in the predictable areas where it is found in Kansas (chap. 4): in prosperous cities and suburbs and bedroom communities that often lie on the borders with other states (see map 5.2). Boone,

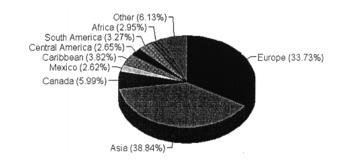
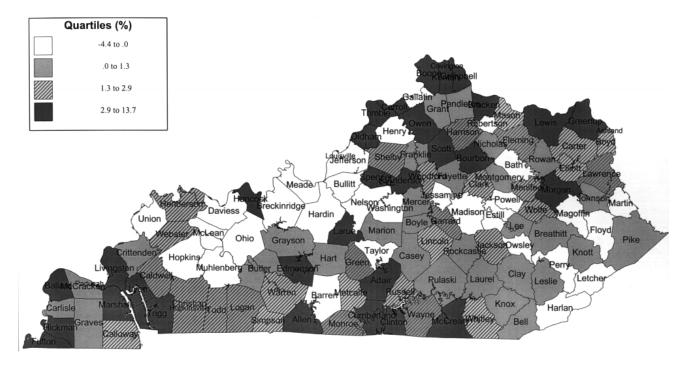


Fig. 5.1. Composition of the foreign-born population in Kentucky, 1990

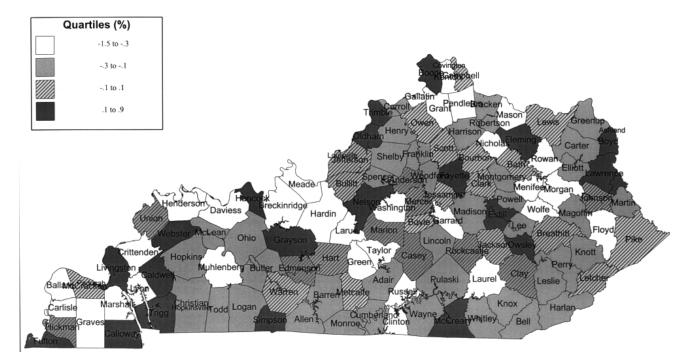
Kenton, and Campbell Counties, for instance, have predictably large populations of Ohioans who have left Cincinnati for suburbia. Louisville's development has spilled over into nearby counties—Meade, Bullitt, and Oldham—which have attracted a large nonnative work force looking to settle in transitional rural-suburban neighborhoods. Hardin County's large non-Kentucky work force, like that of Leavenworth, Kansas, is entirely the result of military employment at Fort Knox.

The state's counties are racially segregated, with eastern Kentucky having few minorities. Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics are concentrated in just a few areas. Growth in the ethnic population is occurring in the Cincinnati and Louisville suburbs, in Fayette County (Lexington), and in scattered other places. Map 5.3 shows the change in the proportion of immigrants in Kentucky counties between 1980 and 1990. The spatial pattern is nearly random given the small number of immigrants attracted to Kentucky. Growth in the proportion of immigrants across the state's 120 counties has been much slower than in most other states.

While immigrants may not be much of a force behind the social and political stratification of the state, there is a strong element of partisan balkanization. Many counties lack close two-party competition due mostly to Kentucky's Democratic heritage. When a diversity index (see chap. 2, n. 1) is calculated to measure the concentration of Republicans (or Democrats), it reveals that 36 percent of Republican (or Democratic) registrants would have to move for them to be evenly distributed across the state's counties. Nearly one-third of Republican votes come from the poor mountain areas of eastern Kentucky—an area that suffers from chroni-



Map 5.2. Change in the proportion of internal migrants in Kentucky counties, 1980–90. (Mean = 1.8, Moran's I = .15)



Map 5.3. Change in the proportion of immigrants in Kentucky counties, 1980–90. (Mean = -.11, Moran's I = -.02)

cally low turnout. It is no surprise that Republicans have had difficulty competing in statewide elections. In the 1991 gubernatorial race, for example, only 11 percent (13) of the state's 120 counties were two-party competitive. Eighty percent of the counties were solidly in the Democratic column, with only 8 percent going lopsidedly Republican. This segregation of ethnic groups and political party identifiers has little to do with immigration, although new internal migrants have improved Republican prospects.

The smaller the immigrant population in a state, the better off it seems to be. In Kentucky, immigrants reported higher average earnings than either internal migrants or those who were born in the state (see appendix A, table A4.1). Immigrants over the age of eighteen earned an average of \$14,045 in 1989, compared to \$13,823 for cross-state migrants and \$10,250 for native Kentuckians. The figures for median income show that internal migrants do considerably better than either natives or immigrants. That Kentucky's native population is especially poor is not surprising. Rural Kentucky is known for its low standard of living. What is different about this border state is that immigrants fare well by a variety of different standards. Immigrant respondents in the Public Use Microdata Sample had higher levels of education than either internal migrants or natives. As for racial characteristics, 57 percent of the immigrants in Kentucky in 1990 were non-Hispanic whites (table A5.1). Immigration will change the ethnic complexion of the state because natives and internal migrants are likely to be white, but this change will occur at a far slower pace than in states such as California or Florida with their far higher proportion of Hispanic and Asian newcomers. The selection process that determines where migrants and immigrants settle has made Kentucky an outpost for a relatively small number of well-educated and affluent immigrants, a majority of whom in 1990 were white. Because they have been so small in number, immigrants in Kentucky have not faced the level of discrimination and the same barriers to assimilation that more conspicuous immigrant communities face.

Settlement Patterns of Migrants and Immigrants in Kentucky

Because the population of immigrants to Kentucky is so small, it is worthwhile to consider whether any immigrant population is becoming more noticeable. Following the examples set out in the previous chapters, I model the change in a group's *proportion* of the population, rather than its actual numerical growth, from 1980 to 1990. In Kansas, Colorado, and California, the Mexican population was growing and becoming more concentrated. In Kentucky, however, the evidence in table 5.1 shows that none of the immigrant groups became a more significant presence relative to the rest of the population between 1980 and 1990. Indeed, the opposite occurred: Africans, Europeans, Canadians, Mexicans, and South Americans, became considerably less noticeable than they were in earlier times because the size of their communities was shrinking relative to the rest of the population. In some places, the *number* of immigrants has increased, but population growth from internal sources and natural increase has made these groups a smaller *proportion* of the population than they were in previous decades.

The state of the local employment market early in the decade is not clearly related to an immigrant group's changing concentration except in the instance of Africans-their presence shrank in areas where joblessness was high in the early 1980s. Increasing income in an area is associated with growth in the proportion of Europeans and Mexicans but not with any other group. Population density, reflecting the appeal of urban areas, is significantly associated with growth in the proportion of Asians and Canadians but not with any other group (see table 5.1). Apparently, émigrés from most parts of the world are becoming a smaller proportion of the population in the state's larger cities because growth in the native population has outpaced the growth of these foreign-born groups. Given the rather low appeal of Kentucky as a place to find low-skill immigrant work opportunities, some immigrant groups are growing merely as a function of their attendance or employment at the state's colleges and universities (see table 5.1). Finally, the spatially lagged dependent variable indicates positive spatial dependency in the growth pattern of U.S. internal migrants and South American immigrants and negative spatial dependency for Mexicans. Growth is occurring across county boundaries or in adjacent county clusters for both U.S. migrants and South Americans. For Mexicans, though, the growth is more concentrated within isolated counties than across groups of counties.

Kentucky's immigration flows suggest that if the state is balkanized by ethnicity and race, immigrants are not contributing significantly to that stratification. It is important to underscore the fact that internal migration has been a force for change in the most urban areas of the state but that many immigrants are a declining presence in such places. Of course, in most cities immigrants are becoming less noticeable, and many jurisdic-

Variable	U.S. Migrants	African Immigrants	Asian Immigrants	European Immigrants	Canadian Immigrants	Mexican Immigrants	Central American Immigrants	South American Immigrants
% 1980	05	-1.00**	.04	27**	88**	46**	05	24**
group population	(.03)	(.02)	(.10)	(.03)	(.06)	(.11)	(.08)	(.08)
% unemployment,	12	002**	007	001	001	.0007	002	0005
1980	(.09)	(.001)	(.008)	(.004)	(.002)	(.001)	(.002)	(.001)
Change in real	.15	001	.002	.009*	.001	.006**	.003	006
median family income, 1980–90	(.09)	(.001)	(.002)	(.005)	(.01)	(.002)	(.003)	(.004)
% net population	.03	.0005	.003	.0003	.0006	0004	0003	.0003
change	(.03)	(.0003)	(.003)	(.001)	(.001)	(.0004)	(.001)	(.0003)
Population density	002**	00002**	.00009**	.00001	.0002**	00004	00001	.00001
	(.0006)	(.00001)	(.00005)	(.00006)	(.00001)	(.00004)	(.00003)	(.000005)
% college students	09	.003**	.007	003	.004**	.002**	.0005	00004
-	(.07)	(.001)	(.007)	(.003)	(.001)	(.001)	(.002)	(.001)
Spatial lag	.32*	.03	18	.08	02	71**	08	.69**
	(.19)	(.03)	(.21)	(.17)	(.08)	(.15)	(.27)	(.22)
Constant	3.12	.04	.04	.06	.02	003	.03	1.00
N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
R^2_{a}	.18	.96	.11	.42	.61	.33	.06	.13

TABLE 5.1. Influences on Population Concentration in Kentucky Counties, 1980–90

Note: Spatial autoregressive model, weighted for population; income is expressed in thousands of constant 1992 dollars; dependent variable = change in population group as a percentage of total population. For a full description of variables, see appendix A.

p* < .10. *p* < .05.

tions report having no immigrants at all. But these differences in the migratory flows of internal migrants and immigrants do suggest a path toward greater ethnic balkanization of the kind found in populous port of entry states. As of the 1990s, however, Kentucky's ethnic composition was still pronouncedly biracial, and segregation by county, city, and neighborhood was a function of white and black attitudes.

Ethnic Balkanization and Naturalization Rates in Kentucky

Immigration may be coming to Kentucky belatedly, but other aspects of population mobility clearly help explain residential settlement patterns within Kentucky jurisdictions. The isolation of minorities from whites is related to the size of the minority groups and to the percentage of residents who have moved in from outside the state. Segregation is not only the consequence of white flight or out-migration. It is the consequence of inmigration as well, as the selection process brings white upper income settlers into the state who then choose to reside in neighborhoods that are inaccessible to lower income groups.

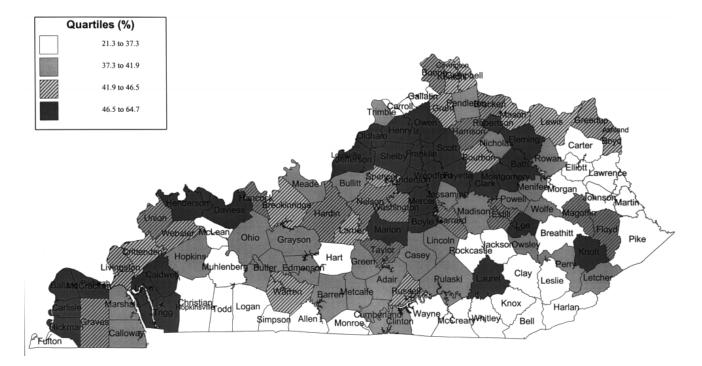
In other chapters we have observed that the concentration and isolation of immigrant groups within states depress naturalization rates. In this manner, the residential separation of newly arriving immigrants from the native born has an adverse impact on the assimilation of the former (Lieberson 1961). This might not be true of a state such as Kentucky given that true immigrant enclaves are hard to find. While the immigrant population is drawn to just a few places in the state, these concentrations are too small to bear much of a relationship to naturalization rates. Surprisingly, though, when put to the test even this state's rather modest concentrations of immigrants are associated with low levels of citizenship (see appendix A, table A5.2). For 1980, in particular, a 1 percentage point increase in the proportion of immigrants across counties drops the naturalization rate about 4.7 points. Even in a state where immigrant concentrations are modest at best, the same relationship holds between the size of the immigrant population in an area and the propensity to naturalize. Asian and Hispanic segregation from whites within counties also contributes to lower naturalization rates, although multicollinearity in the model has undermined the statistical significance of the coefficient estimates. In 1990, naturalization rates are highest in the most densely populated areas of the state and in places where the general population is poorly

educated. These results reflect the fact that the older, more established immigrant population is found in Kentucky's urban areas and in places that have been less attractive to more recent immigrants, who are slower to naturalize.

Migrants, Immigrants, and Voter Turnout in Kentucky

Places in Kentucky, as in other border and southern states, are highly stratified in their political behavior (Miller and Jewell 1990). Much of the time, race and poverty are blamed for differences in turnout across the state, but mobility is also relevant. The presence of non-Kentucky natives in an area decreases participation. Map 5.4 shows average turnout rates in Kentucky counties for the 1991 and 1995 gubernatorial elections. There is an obvious difference between the high-turnout counties in north-central Kentucky and the low participation of the rural eastern and southern counties. The object of the analysis in table 5.2 is to provide an account of this variability in turnout. In Kansas (chap. 4), the presence of out-of-state residents in the eastern part of the state was associated with lower turnout, especially in state-level elections. In Kentucky, the same pattern is observable, although it is not always statistically significant once related variables (such as education) are included in the model (table 5.2). Still, it is no accident that in the 1979, 1983, 1991, and 1995 gubernatorial contests, turnout was lower in those areas with the most out-of-state migrants. For the presidential contests of 1980 and 1992, turnout is positively related to the proportion of out-of-state migrants. The reasoning behind the disparate patterns for presidential and state contests is the same as in chapter 4. For newcomers, especially those who commute to jobs across state borders, Kentucky state politics is not likely to be a burning issue. Presidential elections, though, are of much higher salience across the country and will generate high participation as much, if not more, among the highly educated newcomers as among natives (Miller and Jewell 1990, 279-80).

Another noteworthy pattern is that areas with large black populations are apparently far more active than those with predominantly white populations. In the pooled results, a 1 point increase in the percentage of black residents in a county is associated with a .14 increase in the participation of registered voters (see table 5.2). This is contrary, of course, to the usual individual-level findings, which show blacks to have lower participation rates than whites. In the Kentucky context, however, the very low turnout in the poor white counties of eastern Kentucky explains this bizarre pat-



Map 5.4. Average turnout rates in Kentucky gubernatorial elections, 1990–94. (Mean = 41.9, Moran's I = .42)

Variable	1979	1980	1983	1991	1992	1995	Pooled 1990s
% college educated	1.15**	.60*	.68**	.60**	.34**	.71**	.54**
-	(.37)	(.36)	(.28)	(.19)	(.09)	(.11)	(.08)
Isolation of minorities from	04	01	.008	01	002	.006	004
whites (within counties)	(.03)	(.03)	(.02)	(.03)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)
% born out of state	31**	.05	08	11	.02	08	05
	(.14)	(.14)	(.11)	(.09)	(.05)	(.06)	(.04)
% post-1970 immigrants	5.34	1.39	2.25	-1.81*	75	-2.57**	-1.77**
	(3.50)	(3.48)	(2.61)	(2.00)	(1.00)	(1.21)	(.87)
% black	.008	.17	13	.22	.07	.10	.14**
	(.20)	(.20)	(.16)	(.17)	(.08)	(.10)	(.07)
Population density	.0003	.001	.005**	.002	.004**	002*	.001
1 2	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)
Spatial lag	.22*	.31**	.57**	.40**	.61**	.62**	.54**
1 0	(.13)	(.15)	(.11)	(.13)	(.09)	(.09)	(.06)
Presidential race							8.26**
							(1.16)
Constant	44.44	43.11	19.57	22.30	18.91	11.07	15.35
N	105	105	120	105	105	105	360
R^2_{a}	.18	.22	.55	.45	.78	.61	.81

TABLE 5.2. Impact of Population Mobility on Voter Turnout in Kentucky Counties, 1979–95

*p < .10. **p < .05.

tern. It is not uncommon for turnout in rural Kentucky counties to run 10 to 12 points behind those of the Louisville and Lexington metropolitan areas, where much of the black population is concentrated.

The immigrant population is so uniformly small that it is not likely to have much influence on turnout patterns aggregated at the county level. Even so, after 1983 the proportion of recently arriving immigrants is negatively associated with participation. In the pooled model for the 1990s, a one-point increase in the proportion of recent immigrants drops participation a substantial 1.8 percent.

High levels of political participation are an important sign that citizens are engaged with their political system. This state's counties are obviously cleaved according to their level of interest in politics. Kentucky's participation patterns show a separation between high and low turnout areas that corresponds to familiar class patterns in American politics. Counties with some combination of high education and income have higher turnout rates than poor areas with low educational attainment. Because the poor white areas of rural Kentucky are often inactive, there is less of a racial component to the political stratification of places than in other states. In gubernatorial contests in off years, the state's turnout patterns are also separable between locales with many out-of-state migrants and those with few. This corresponds to the individual-level finding that migrants have difficulty getting involved in the political system once they have moved. Aside from barriers to reregistration, local parties and candidates may have a difficult time getting the non-Kentuckians interested in local politics. In presidential contests, turnout is higher in the cities, where minorities are concentrated, and lower in the rural white areas.

The spatially lagged turnout variable is included in the models in table 5.2 to account for the possibility that the participation rates of places are related to the participation rates of areas nearby. In every instance, the observations show a highly significant pattern of positive spatial dependency. Turnout in Kentucky is not stratified by county as much as it is by region, with groups of adjacent counties displaying similar turnout rates.

The implications of these spatial patterns of participation are not trivial. Kentucky's poor rural areas wind up underrepresented relative to the urban areas of the state in presidential contests. In 1992, for instance, turnout in the most rural counties in the state ran twelve points behind the most urban counties. In state-level contests, fast-growing counties are underrepresented relative to areas with higher proportions of natives. Established residents have probably always voted in higher numbers than

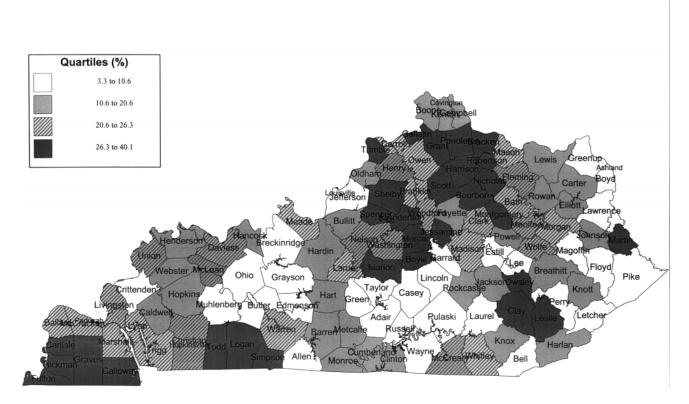
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newcomers, but state government and policy are important to all residents regardless of their tenure. The net effect of weak turnout in southeastern Kentucky's Republican counties, and among residents new to the state who have imported Republican affiliations, is to reduce Republican voting margins in these areas. Of course, many Democratic registrants regularly abandon their party affiliation to support Republican candidates, but this occurs far less often in state-level contests than in presidential ones. By the year 2000, Republicans had not held the state's governorship since 1967 and the state legislature was controlled by overwhelming Democratic majorities.

Migrants, Immigrants, and Party Regularity in Kentucky

As in previous chapters, party regularity refers to the extent to which an area's voting can be predicted from the balance of its Democratic and Republican Party registrants. Its relevance to this discussion is that it is an indicator of the volatility of an electorate and the durability of its underlying partisan attachments. Those areas where party voting neatly matches the balance of registrants are said to be regular. These relatively regular locations are pictured by the lightly shaded areas in map 5.5 for two gubernatorial races in the early 1990s. Party irregularity is pronounced in Kentucky, where as many as 40 points separates party registration from voting in the darkly shaded counties. To explain the variation described by map 5.5, I model party irregularity as a function of the variables in table 5.3. Several consistent and statistically significant results stand out in the table. First, places with highly educated populations are more irregular in their behavior than those with less well educated populations. In 1980, for example, a 10 point increase in the percentage of residents with a college degree was associated with a 5.8 point rise in the difference between party registration and actual gubernatorial voting across counties. In 1995, the effect was even greater and still significant. This is an unusual finding because education is often associated with high-turnout elections. Highturnout elections, in turn, generate electoral margins that are usually closely related to the balance of party registrants.

To understand why Kentucky is different, a closer examination of the observations is in order. A useful comparison is that of impoverished Pike and Letcher Counties in southeastern Kentucky, on the one hand, and Boone County, near Cincinnati, on the other (see map 5.5). Pike and Letcher, with the highest poverty rates in the state, saw George Bush run



Map 5.5. Extent of dual partisanship in Kentucky gubernatorial elections, 1990–94. (Mean = 19.3, Moran's I = .46)

Variable	1979	1980	1983	1991	1992	1995	Pooled 1990s
% college educated	.58**	.38	.18	.26	.43**	.84**	.48**
	(.35)	(.37)	(.34)	(.18)	(.16)	(.21)	(.11)
% born out of state	04	.19	.09	.04	.19**	.09	.10*
	(.13)	(.15)	(.12)	(.09)	(.08)	(.10)	(.06)
% post-1970 immigrants	-1.74	-2.47	1.53	-4.27**	-8.32**	-9.26**	-7.23**
	(3.30)	(3.52)	(3.10)	(1.92)	(1.76)	(2.04)	(1.12)
% black	09	.17	.02	.45**	.61**	.58**	.51**
	(.19)	(.21)	(.18)	(.17)	(.16)	(.18)	(.10)
Population density	01**	01**	007**	009**	01**	01**	01
	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.001)
Turnout	05	20**	.25**	09	02	05	05
	(.09)	(.10)	(.10)	(.09)	(.14)	(.14)	(.06)
Spatial lag	.71**	.68**	.75**	.47**	.64**	.74**	.72**
	(.11)	(.09)	(.11)	(.11)	(.10)	(.08)	(.05)
Presidential race	_					_	1.05
							(1.31)
Constant	7.27	-10.01	-10.53	9.16	1.03	91	1.22
Ν	120	120	120	120	120	120	360
R^2_a	.43	.46	.36	.44	.56	.60	.57

TABLE 5.3. Similarity of Party Registration to Party Voting in Kentucky Counties, 1979–95

Note: Spatial autoregressive model, weighted for population; dependent variable = Abs (% Republican vote – % Republican registration); high positive values indicate counties where voting differed from registration. See appendix A for a full description of variables.

*p < .10. **p < .05.

about ten points ahead of what a strict party line vote would have predicted, although he lost both counties. In Boone County (suburban Cincinnati), an area with a far better educated population, Bush ran eighteen points ahead of Republican registration, winning a majority of the vote (52.2 percent) in a three-way contest. In both poor and wealthy counties, Republicans did better than their registration figures would have predicted, but the counties with the highly educated migrants, including Boone, were far more likely to abandon traditional party cues. This finding is clearly consistent with the individual-level study conducted by Thad Brown (1988), which showed that voters are more likely to abandon party labels when they have relocated than when they have remained in the same place.

The GOP is usually capable of winning the state's presidential vote, but Republicans have had consistent difficulty in statewide races (Miller and Jewell 1990, 291–93). With few exceptions, areas of high population density are more consistent in the aggregate than rural areas are because rural counties are more likely to be one-party strongholds, usually Democratic, where Republicans are an attractive choice because rural Democrats are more conservative (297, 307). In all six elections, increasing population density is associated with a propensity to vote in line with party registration. In the most urban areas, Republicans and Democrats more evenly divide the electorate (Miller and Jewell 1990). There was only a 3 percent difference between Republican registration and voting in Jefferson County (Louisville) in the 1991 gubernatorial contest.

In locales with high proportions of black voters, the balance of party registrants bears little resemblance to voting outcomes (table 5.3). In 1991, for example, a 10 point increase in the proportion of black residents across counties is associated with a corresponding 4.5 point increase in the gap between party registration and the party vote. This result can be best understood by both the low turnout of black voters in statewide elections and the correspondingly high turnout of white voters in areas of black concentration. The Democratic candidate in 1991, Brereton Jones, won an overwhelming victory over a scandal-tainted opponent, Larry Hopkins, who mustered only 35 percent of the total vote. But in the counties where there was a large black population, such as Logan, Todd, Christian, and Fulton in southwestern Kentucky (see map 5.5), Hopkins did far better than Republican registration figures would have predicted. Again, in 1992, George Bush won a plurality in heavily black Christian County (Hop-

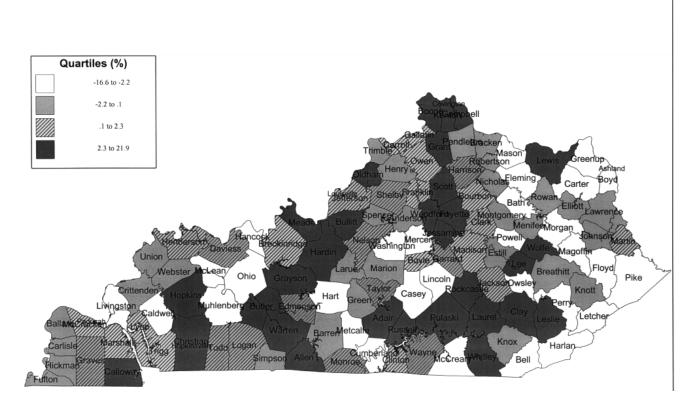
kinsville), with 47.5 percent of the vote, even though Republican registrants constituted a mere 15 percent of the electorate there.

In counties where black voters participate in high numbers, they boost party irregularity by making these places less Republican than party registration would predict. Major turnout efforts in Louisville funded by Washington-based groups in 1995 ensured a narrow Democratic victory in the governors' race when the tide was running in the Republican candidate's favor. Jefferson County's Republican percentage of the vote ran thirteen points below its Republican registration that year. Blacks have rarely played this decisive a role in Kentucky elections. As Penny Miller and Malcolm Jewell have indicated, Kentucky is a Democratic state, but it is also one characterized by low turnout (1990). The dismal participation rates of Democrats sometimes makes Republicans far more competitive than they would be otherwise. This is why high turnout is generally associated with party regularity in table 5.3, although the association between high turnout and regular party voting is still weaker than in Kansas and other states.

Migrants, Immigrants, and Changes in Party Registration in Kentucky

Republicans improved their share of party registrants in the state by a slight 2 percent from 1980 to 1990, bouncing back from losses during the 1970s. The improvement is associated with strong population growth across more areas of the state during the 1980s than in the 1970s. Internal migration from other states to Kentucky is associated with lower turnout, but it is also associated with improved Republican registration shares according to the findings in table 5.4. From 1970 to 1980, and again from 1980 to 1990, Republican registration grew as a proportion of total registration in those counties with a rising tide of out-of-state migrants. Map 5.6 shows where the GOP made its most dramatic gains during the 1980s. Gains were particularly significant in suburban Louisville and Cincinnati, in Lexington (Fayette County), and in a cluster of rural counties in south-eastern Kentucky directly north of Knoxville, Tennessee. In places where population growth was especially low, as in the easternmost counties, the proportion of GOP registrants declined.

Net population growth, a variable I did not include in table 5.4, is also associated with Republican growth, especially in the latter period. In Boone County, for example, just across the Ohio River from Cincinnati,



Map 5.6. Change in the proportion of Republican registrants in Kentucky counties, 1980-90. (Mean = .27, Moran's I = .12)

the population grew by 30 percent during the 1980s, and Republicans finished the decade with one-third of the registered voters, up from only 23 percent in 1980. Similarly, in suburban Louisville (Oldham County) population growth contributed to a six-point rise in the share of Republican registrants during the 1980s.

The variation in GOP growth across Kentucky does bear some relation to the concentration of the foreign-born population (table 5.4). Places that had a large proportion of immigrants in the early 1980s saw their share of GOP registration rise significantly. The precise relationship in exploratory scatterplots is nonlinear. Republican registration growth rises quickly when immigrants are from zero to 1 percent of a county's population, then it levels off once immigrants reach a threshold of 1 to 2 percent. The data are consistent with the notion that once the foreign-born population reaches a threshold it begins to restrain Republican growth. One should not be convinced that the relationship of immigrant concentrations

Variable	1970-80	1980–90
% born out of state, 1970 (1980)	.15ª	06
	(.13)	(.07)
Change in % born out of state	.06	.63**
	(.15)	(.14)
% foreign born, 1970 (1980)	-1.98	3.04**
	(3.14)	(.87)
Change in % foreign born	.14	.82
	(2.09)	(1.03)
% Republican registrants, 1970 (1980)	10**	.01
	(.03)	(.02)
Population density	004**	001
	(.001)	(.001)
Spatial lag	.27	.28**
	(.17)	(.14)
Constant	84	-1.17
Ν	120	120
$R^2_{\ a}$.22	.24

TABLE 5.4. Impact of Population Mobility on Changes in Republican Party Registration in Kentucky Counties, 1970–80, 1980–90

Note: Spatial autoregressive model, weighted for population; dependent variable = change in Republican Party registration. See appendix A for a full description of variables.

^aIndicates low tolerances and high standard errors due to multicollinearity.

*p < .10. **p < .05.

to Republican registration growth at the county level signifies anything causal at the individual level. The connection could be entirely spurious given the small number of immigrants in Kentucky. But the relationship does not disappear when related variables, such as population density and percentage African American, are included.

The association between increasing numbers of out-of-state migrants and improved Republican prospects is clearly consistent with the theoretical considerations laid out in chapter 1 as well as the findings in other chapters. Those who can afford to move are upwardly mobile and able to finance the costs associated with relocation. They most often seek to relocate in middle and upper income communities, particularly in suburbs. Although Kentucky seems to be following this pattern, Republican growth from out-of-state sources has not contributed to Republican victories in many local elections. This is probably the consequence of low turnout in these communities (see table 5.2). Even well-educated, upper-income migrants may take time to develop an interest in local affairs and reregister to vote. And, while Kentucky's patterns of population growth are clearly benefiting the Republicans, the GOP is starting from a sizable deficit. By 1994, the average county was composed of 68 percent registered Democrats and only 29 percent Republicans. Sustained growth will be required to bring Republicans into a truly competitive position vis-à-vis the Democrats locally. At the statewide level, the Republicans are fortunate that they have gained considerable ground in the heavily populated suburban and urban counties, where 2 or 3 percent growth is enough to overcome the Democratic bias of many sparsely populated areas of the state.

Ethnicity and Political Behavior at the Individual Level

The aggregate-level findings show a pattern of development common to states in the South. Republicans are taking ahold of the region's burgeoning suburbs. There is still a legacy of the one-party-dominated rural jurisdictions described so clearly in V. O. Key's *Southern Politics* (1949) in reference to other states, but usually these places have resisted political change because they are remote and untouched by demographic change. As a biracial state, where even the black population is a small minority, immigration has not had any sweeping consequences. Whatever political changes have taken place in the state, they have been the result of the conversion of long-time residents and the in-migration of non-Kentuckians.

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Survey data that would accurately identify the partisan leanings of Kentuckians are scarce due to the scheduling of gubernatorial races in off years when networks do very little political polling. A 1995 poll conducted by the University of Kentucky's Survey Research Center is of some help. By selecting only those respondents who reported voting in the 1995 gubernatorial race, I have tried to render the responses in this poll comparable to the VRS exit polls reported in table 5.5. The polling figures do show that there are major differences between off-year and on-year elections as to who shows up to vote. In 1990, only 18.8 percent of the white voters surveyed leaving the voting booth claimed to be Democrats. More than half of the white voters that year were Republicans, in spite of the Democrats' lopsided two to one registration edge statewide. In presidential election years like 1992 and highly salient gubernatorial contests like the one in 1995, however, the true colors of the Kentucky electorate emerge. The Republican share of the white electorate drops and the Democratic share jumps to at least half. The number of reported independents also drops off from 1990 to 1992 and 1995.

For black voters, too, judging from the figures reported in table 5.5, low turnout in off-year elections gives Republicans an edge relative to their actual registration figures. In presidential election years, however, the black vote is at least two-thirds Democratic, and 19 percent Republican. The small number of Hispanics sampled makes conclusions drawn from

Race/Ethnic Group	Year	Democrat	Independent	Republican
White	1990	18.8	26.8	54.4
	1992	49.3	14.3	36.4
	1995	55.6	11.2	33.2
Black	1990	30.2	22.3	47.5
	1992	67.8	13.6	18.6
	1995	76.5	11.8	11.8
Hispanic	1990	24.3	41.3	34.5
	1992	65.7	0.0	34.1
	1995			

TABLE 5.5. Party Identification by Race/Ethnicity in Kentucky Elections,1990–92

Source: Voter Research and Surveys, General Election Exit Polls, 1990–92; University of Kentucky Survey Research Center 1995 Poll.

Note: Figures for Asians are not included since so few were polled. The 1995 poll includes only those respondents who reported voting in the 1995 election.

table 5.5 highly tentative, but the pattern is similar to that of blacks. In highly salient elections, the Hispanic vote is solidly Democratic.

As for party regularity, the aggregate results in table 5.3 indicated a relationship between urbanization and a propensity to vote according to one's party identification. In the 1992 U.S. Senate race, the VRS exit polls reveal that voters were more likely to cast ballots contrary to their party identification in rural eastern and western Kentucky than in either the Lexington or Louisville areas. This confirms the results in the aggregate data showing that densely populated areas are more regular in their political behavior than the rural ones (see table 5.3). This pattern occurs not simply because the cities and suburbs are more evenly divided in their party registration than the one-party-oriented rural counties. The causes of party irregularity in rural areas are mostly a function of the ideological leaning of rural Kentucky Democrats. Conservative Democrats are often attracted to Republican candidates, particularly in national elections (Miller and Jewell 1990). By contrast, urban Democrats, like those elsewhere in the country, are more likely to be liberal and less inclined to vote for Republicans.

Other findings from the 1995 survey suggest that voters with a shorter duration of residence in the state are less likely to vote Democratic or identify with the Democratic Party (controlling, of course, for the age of the respondent). This would correspond to the findings of Petrocik (1987) and Wolfinger and Arsenau (1978), who have pointed out that the Republican realignment in the South can be attributed to the arrival of new voters as well as the conversion of natives. While the questions on the University of Kentucky survey do not permit detailed proof of generalizations made at the aggregate level, these results do support the idea that as Kentucky's out-of-state population increases Republican prospects will improve.

At the aggregate level, there is an ongoing sorting process in Kentucky that will segment the state into pockets of interest and behavior even as it slowly betters GOP prospects for winning office. Areas of population growth in central Kentucky are showing signs of Republican strength, regardless of the precise microlevel interactions that are generating the growth. High-income areas with well-educated populations in central Kentucky show higher turnout rates than poor areas in the rural east and west. This means that the politically competitive and highly populated areas of central Kentucky will continue to dominate in state and national elections.

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Political Change and the Internal Composition of Kentucky Counties

The argument I have been making about populations and politics has tried to clear a place for discussions of economic and ethnic stratification across space as a factor to consider in evaluating an area's political development. Given the prominence of race in the history of southern and border states, Kentucky presents a particularly good case for understanding the role that residential segregation may play in influencing patterns of participation and electoral change. Kentucky has only two racial groups of any political consequence: whites and African Americans. So Kentucky provides a good setting for evaluating communities that have not been touched by noticeable waves of immigrants but have varying proportions of blacks.

Given the high salience of race in American politics, I have hypothesized that areas in which there is considerable spatial isolation of white from minority voters will see lower levels of political activism. The results in table 5.2, predicting turnout levels across the state, are only weakly consistent with this idea. Residential isolation of whites from minorities has a generally negative impact on countywide participation rates, although it is not statistically significant here. It is education, more than race or residential segregation, that stratifies the state by its propensity to participate. Segregation does not appear to matter because participation in Kentucky is so uniformly low. Even many white voters with deep roots in the state fail to turn out. This fact strongly suggests that Kentucky is politically stratified by socioeconomic status more than race. The Hispanic and Asian populations are sufficiently small that measures of residential segregation for these populations are not likely to affect overall turnout rates. Even so, the activism of minority groups in Kentucky benefits the Democratic rather than the Republican Party in general elections, so the segregation of white from black voters should benefit the GOP after controlling for the size of the black population. By contrast, in areas where the black and white populations are more integrated, the contact hypothesis predicts that the level of political activism among both populations will be much higher.

I investigated several areas in Kentucky and calculated a dissimilarity index for the racial concentration of population groups for each area's census tracts. For comparison purposes, the dissimilarity coefficient was also calculated for the entire state (table 5.6). The most urban county in the state is included, Jefferson (Louisville), along with the Cincinnati suburbs (Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties), a four-county rural area in

Variable	Kei	Cincinnati Kentucky Suburbs			Jefferson		Christian		Southeast Kentucky	
	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990
Asians	.50	.50	.34	.33	.34	.35	.56	.44	.38	.50
Blacks	.64	.64	.76	.67	.76	.71	.45	.42	.54	.58
Hispanics	.38	.27	.25	.24	.24	.23	.54	.54	.18	.27
N	995	995	77	77	178	178	15	15	31	31

TABLE 5.6.Index of Dissimilarity for the Black, Asian, and Hispanic Populations Relative to Whites in Kentucky Counties,1980 and 1990, by Census Tract

Source: U.S. Census 1990, and author's calculations.

Note: Figures represent the percentage of each group that would have to move in order for the group to be evenly distributed across all census tracts.

Appalachia comprised of Leslie, Harlan, Perry, and Letcher Counties, and finally Christian County on the Tennessee border in the west (See map 5.1).

Together these places cover a variety of demographic settings and conditions. The eastern Kentucky counties have experienced notable population losses over the last thirty years and net out-migration. In three of the four counties, Republican prospects have faded with the population loss. Only in Leslie County, the strongest Republican county in the area, have Republicans enlarged their share of the electorate in the face of economic decline. Further north, directly across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, lie three prosperous counties where Republicans have expanded their share of the electorate substantially, corresponding to a growing suburban population. In central Kentucky, Jefferson County is home to the state's largest city, Louisville. Jefferson has seen very little Republican growth. Finally, in western Kentucky, Christian County (Hopkinsville), with a large black population, enjoyed modest Republican growth throughout the decade.

Can the internal composition of these counties help explain patterns of electoral competition, participation, and political change? The dissimilarity index (table 5.6) shows that, as in other parts of the nation, the black population is the most highly segregated from white voters in three of the four areas. Segregation is especially pronounced in Louisville and the Cincinnati suburbs and slightly less so in the rural counties. Indeed, the small Hispanic and Asian populations are more segregated than blacks in Christian County, one of the few areas in the country where that is the case. Hispanics in Kentucky are also less segregated than Asians. More noticeable populations are easier targets for discrimination, and by 1990 Hispanics had not yet relocated to Kentucky in sufficient numbers to produce a widespread political reaction.

Northern Kentucky

The three Cincinnati suburban counties are not clearly a part of the state. Cincinnati media dominate the airwaves. People read Cincinnati-based papers, the *Kentucky Post* and the *Enquirer*. Because the Kentucky suburbs provide better access to the downtown business district than the Ohio suburbs, many Ohioans have chosen to relocate there. Historically immigrants to the other parts of Kentucky were primarily Protestants from southern states, but northern Kentucky's settlers were like those in Cincinnati, Catholics of Irish and German ancestry. The only Kentucky governor to be elected from this part of the state was assassinated in 1900 on the day of his inauguration, and his German ancestry may have contributed to his becoming a target (Reis 1994).

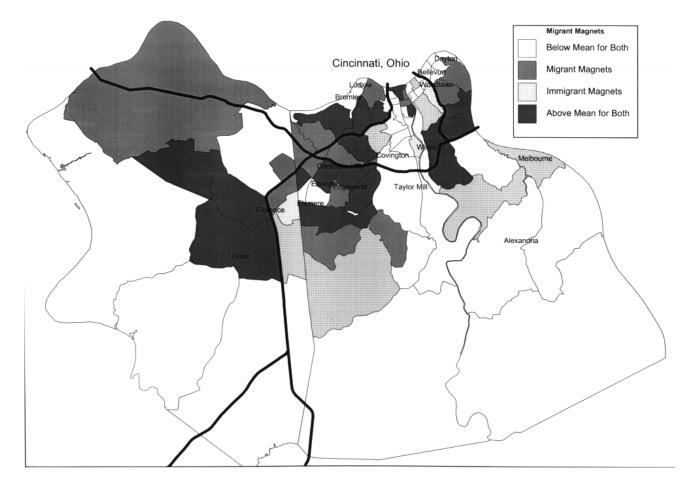
Since the Civil War, northern Kentucky has always been more Democratic than southwest Ohio. When President Franklin Roosevelt provided funds to build the Cincinnati airport, he sent the project to Boone County rather than Ohio since the Kentucky delegation in Congress was solidly Democratic, while the Ohio side was Republican. What Roosevelt did not know at the time was that the airport would fuel the economic development that would change the political character of Cincinnati's Kentucky suburbs. In the 1980s, the area was transformed by industrial parks and corporate relocations. The airport became a major hub for Delta Airlines. Other corporations, such as the Heinz food company and Fidelity Investments relocated their headquarters to northern Kentucky. By the mid-1990s, these counties had been inundated with upwardly mobile, white collar workers who had moved in from elsewhere: Atlanta, Dallas, the West Coast, and other parts of Kentucky. The population influx caused by the expansion of white collar employment has eroded the hold of the Democratic Party on the electorate and elected office. Republican registration has soared in all three counties. Whereas Republican Party identification was once stigmatized, Republicans are now highly competitive. In 1986, major league baseball player Jim Bunning won the area's congressional seat running as a Republican, and his subsequent election to the U.S. Senate was based on the loyal support of northern Kentuckians.

The prosperity of the Cincinnati suburbs has left the established black population isolated in the older towns of Covington and Newport. These contain the lowest income neighborhoods in the region, and they were originally segregated by law. With desegregation, established black neighborhoods remained black but grew poorer as black professional workers moved elsewhere. In Covington, home to the largest black neighborhoods, there have been frequent ethnic tensions, hostility toward the police, and racist incidents, including vandalism of black-owned property and intimidation of black residents. Blacks are politically active but in an irregular manner, often depending on whether there is a black candidate running. They have occasionally elected city council and school board members in Covington, but the population is still small and easy to ignore in countywide politics. There are wide income disparities between the older and newer suburbs in northern Kentucky. New internal migrants drawn by white collar employment move to the newer developments further from Covington to live in neighborhoods with low crime, low poverty rates, and predominantly white schools. Immigrants have fared well in northern Kentucky compared to native blacks. While blacks remain clustered in older neighborhoods near Cincinnati, immigrants have shown some propensity to migrate to outlying tracts in wealthier areas (map 5.7). The internal migrants have imported Republican Party identification and attitudes, but reportedly they have been slow to develop a stake in their communities. In Edgewood, the city administration converted the fire department from a volunteer to a paid force mainly because newcomers refused to volunteer. Typically the new residents oppose further development, including the construction of multifamily housing (DeVroomen 1995).

The gravitational pull of Cincinnati has given this area a distinctive culture, which has separated it from the rest of the state and gradually watered down Democratic influence. Although black political weakness and growing GOP strength in this area is more a function of the small size of the black population than its segregation from whites, it is fair to say that segregation has played a role in denying this population the opportunity to influence elections outside the rather small area that has been conceded by whites as black territory. Segregation also denies blacks the opportunity to take advantage of economic opportunities that stimulate upward mobility, leading to greater civic and political involvement.

Louisville and Jefferson County

In contrast to rapidly changing northern Kentucky, Jefferson County's population has been stagnant since the 1970s and Democrats have maintained a solid registration edge and an iron grip on local offices. Unlike northern Kentucky, Louisville has not attracted white collar employment. The city is less industrial now than it was at midcentury, but the transition to a service economy has mostly generated lower paying and/or part-time jobs. United Parcel Service, for example, employed nearly 13,000 people in the mid-1990s at its major air transit hub, but many were part timers, including students and local residents who worked more than one job. The relative population stability has meant that Kentucky's Democratic tradition has not been eroded here, and Republican operatives confess to simply trying to minimize their losses. Louisville's Democrats are far more reluctant than elsewhere in the state to abandon their fundamental party cues. Labor union sympathies are stronger in Louisville than in other parts of the state, and much of Kentucky's black population is concentrated here. Democrats in Louisville act very much like Democrats in liberal northern cities.



Map 5.7. Internal migrant and immigrant magnets in northern Kentucky, 1990 (Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties)

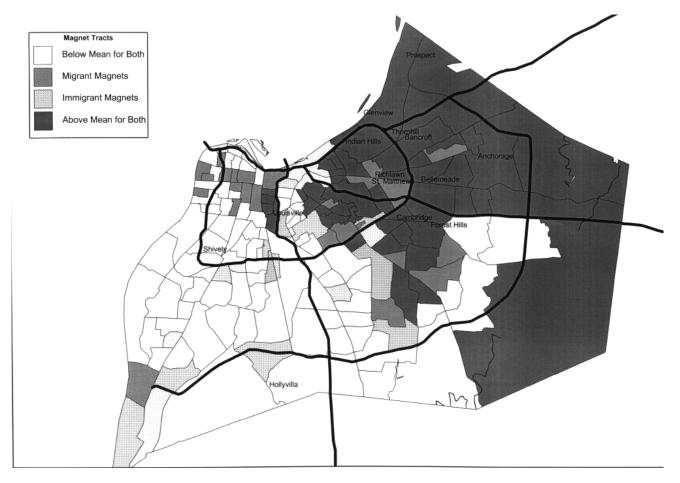
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Louisville's population dynamics have followed a familiar northern pattern. Blacks are a larger proportion of the population since whites have fled. Immigrants have only a small presence here, but they show a capacity to penetrate the suburbs that blacks do not. The darkly shaded areas in map 5.8 show tracts where the population of both internal migrants and immigrants is above the local mean. The most dramatic pattern of balkanization on the map is not the separation between migrant and immigrant tracts but the separation of both migrant and immigrant tracts from tracts where native Kentuckians predominate (the tracts shaded in white). There is a pronounced east versus west split in the pattern of growth from population mobility. Once middle-class white neighborhoods on the west side of the city became black enclaves in the 1950s and 1960s. While there are many white natives in the southern part of the city and county, white newcomers from outside the state flooded eastward toward the dark gray areas on map 5.8.

White flight could have been far worse than it was. An important development in the history of the city was the local response to court ordered busing in 1975. Upon receiving the order to integrate, the city merged its school system with that of Jefferson County. The entire county was then forced to integrate its schools, and that left many white residents with fewer places (outside of private or parochial schools) to flee. The effect is that Louisville's white population was more likely to stay put than in cities like St. Louis, where integration led to the desertion of the city by white residents (Teaford 1997). The spatial concentration of blacks in certain areas of Louisville has led to the election of black officeholders but no mayor. By the mid-1990s, four of the twelve aldermanic seats were held by blacks, and all twelve of the seats were Democratic.

The rise of black influence in statewide politics has been a relatively recent development. For many years, the state's one-party tradition meant that the Democratic Party did not need to mobilize the black vote to win elections. As Republicans have become more competitive, the predictably Democratic black vote has become more valuable to party leaders and candidates. In the 1995 gubernatorial contest, Washington-based interest groups poured money into mobilizing the black vote in Louisville to ensure a Democratic victory in a hard fought race. The lopsided Democratic inclination of black voters in Louisville was widely credited for electing the governor by a slight 22,000 vote margin.

Compared to white precincts, voter turnout in the black community is still low (Wright 1995), and the high value of the black community in most



Map 5.8. Internal migrant and immigrant magnets in Jefferson County, Kentucky, 1990

elections comes with its predictability more than its actual turnout. In local elections, turnout by black voters isn't important at all since the county is monolithically one party. There is no need to sift a black neighborhood for loyal partisans in the way most white neighborhoods must be sifted. As we have learned, in many areas of Kentucky Democratic registrants are not truly Democratic in their behavior. This irregularity raises the cost of party mobilization efforts and complicates the task of turning out favorable voters. Democratic strategists face no such difficulties when they look at Louisville's black wards.

Table 5.6 shows that blacks are more segregated in Jefferson County than in any of the other Kentucky counties evaluated. As elsewhere, it is the geographic isolation of African American from white areas that has contributed to the economic disadvantage of the black community as well as its political cohesion. The density of the population mitigates spatial segregation to some degree, but the concentration of blacks in just a few areas ensures that the value of their votes is only realized in statewide contests where their predictability may be of some value to the Democrats in a closely contested race. Locally, however, general elections have been far less competitive and there is little need for black input at the polls. In local primaries, black Democrats have run racially oriented campaigns seeking to represent black interests (Wright 1995). This has inhibited construction of the kind of cross-racial coalitions that have successfully elected black and Hispanic mayors in other cities. Residential segregation has thus contributed to both low levels of turnout and a special interest politics that alienates white voters.

Christian County and Western Kentucky

Christian County is home to Fort Campbell, the home of the U.S. Army's elite 101st Airborne Division and some of the best trained and well-educated soldiers in the military. Fort Campbell and the local economy have been joined at the hip since the base opened in 1941. Soldiers live off the base in Hopkinsville and other towns, and many return at the end of their careers to retire there. Politically the military population is as conservative as the native white population, and the area votes strongly Republican in presidential contests. The state legislators from this area, though, are all Democrats, giving rise to the contention that voters in southwest Kentucky are dual partisans—Republicans at the presidential level but Democrats locally (Miller and Jewell 1990, 297, 309–10).

In contrast to this large population of migrants is the native black

population, about 25 percent of the total in 1990, which is clustered in the highly segregated city of Hopkinsville. The segregation of the black population dates to the antebellum period when the local populace was divided between southern planters and slaveholders in the south end of the county and nonslaveholding Union sympathizers north of Hopkinsville. Officially the state remained neutral during the Civil War, but Kentuckians from Christian County fought on both sides. In the postbellum period, the county gradually went Democratic, and the New Deal created a one-party county as Republican blacks switched parties and the Roosevelt administration established several major public works projects in the region.

Harry Truman's vice president, Alben Barkley, was a native of western Kentucky, and the older generation can still remember his powerful presence. In 1980, only 11 percent of the population was registered as Republican. Since that time, population growth from outside Kentucky, the generational replacement of older voters with younger ones, and the slow conversion of natives has contributed to improved Republican prospects. By the fall of 1995, Republican registration stood at 17 percent of the electorate. As the model for party change suggests (table 5.4), outsiders have contributed to Republican growth. Mitsubishi Motors has located a plant there, bringing in white professionals with GOP sympathies. But migration is not the only factor changing the county's political complexion. Older Democrats have died. The younger voters do not remember the issues that made this region the Democratic stronghold that it was during the 1940s and 1950s. Considerable Democratic support was won through the New Deal's provision of federal public works projects in counties nearby. Old-fashioned Democratic pork-barreling disappeared with the federal budgetary crises of the 1980s and 1990s.

Here, as elsewhere in the state, the high level of segregation (table 5.6) between the black and white communities is a symptom of the quiet racism that persists. White attitudes have led to an equally high level of political stratification, as the black areas of the county are far less likely to abandon their Democratic partisanship than the white areas are. In 1992, George Bush did some thirty-two points better than strict Republican Party registration would have predicted, but this was mainly because conservative whites turned out in force while many blacks stayed home. As in Louisville, residential segregation has also devalued black votes except in the very closest races where their turnout can make a difference for the Democrats. Mostly, though, black turnout levels are very low. The population is poor, not well informed, and often divided in the Democratic pri-

mary. Black churches are the focus of political mobilization, but these churches are often rivals for position and influence rather than unified in coordinated political efforts.

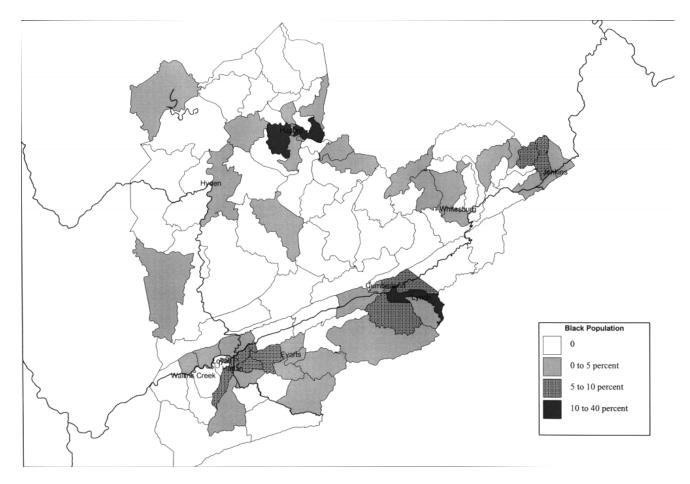
Appalachian Kentucky

Eastern Kentucky is a world away from the rest of the state. The counties in this region are typically one-party strongholds of either Republican or Democratic inclination. There are few black voters, no towns of substantial size, and the rural population is evenly dispersed across thirty-six counties that abut and straddle the Appalachian mountains. Rural, poor, and uneducated, with extended kinship networks, politics has very little substance and old traditions die hard. The Democratic counties were originally tied to coal mining, and the United Mine Workers Union is still a powerful influence in the more mountainous counties. Republican Party affiliation dominates where there is no labor union tradition and the families are predominantly Baptist. Family traditions are important, and parents pass their partisanship down to their children. Stories are told of Democratic fathers-in-law who make their Republican daughters-in-law convert so that their grandchildren will grow up in a Democratic household. There is an economic caste system that keeps upward mobility to a minimum. Stigmas are inherited and sustained through extensive informal relationships (Schwarzweller, Brown, and Mangalam 1971; Duncan 1992). The son of a banker is likely to become a banker. The son of a bricklayer is likely to become a bricklayer. It is difficult to overcome the disadvantages of a bad family name. "Those from poor families are least likely to have either the reputation or political connections necessary to find steady work in this social structure" (Duncan 1992, 111). This rigid stratification promotes societal stability, as class and party traditions do not fade quickly.

Industry has not been attracted to this area. The terrain prevents development, as plants and factories cannot be located easily in the rugged hill country (Bowman and Haynes 1963). People do leave to find work, and the population has declined across the entire region (see map 5.1). The population loss occurs among the younger generations, which would be most likely to develop alternative political views and traditions. The elderly population stays behind, and this promotes stability in the balance of partisanship. Partisan change due to generational replacement occurs far more slowly than change due to conversion or migration (Green and Schickler 1996).

Patronage politics has not died out in rural Kentucky as it has elsewhere (Miller and Jewell 1990, 31; Duncan 1992). The scarcity of jobs gives public officials with a few patronage slots a degree of power almost unheard of in the 1990s. Voter turnout in Appalachia is a function of "vote hauling"—paying a few locals a small premium to drive voters to the polls. Since people are poor, the cost of hiring vote haulers is modest. Cultivating the support of key families can also pay off on election day. Locals indicate that having the active support of a family member is often enough to win a hundred or more votes. Even so, turnout in these counties is considerably lower than elsewhere in the state. Through the early 1990s, the percentage participating in the thirty-six counties of eastern Kentucky averaged nine to eleven points lower than in the remaining counties.

The four counties of Appalachian Kentucky depicted in Map 5.9 are politically heterogeneous in spite of their uniform poverty and population loss. Leslie County is perhaps the most Republican in the entire state. By 1995, fully 77 percent of its population were registered GOP supporters. The other three counties are nearly as Democratic as Leslie is Republican. Comparisons from the 1980s and 1990s suggest that while there is no significant difference in family income, the Republican counties do have slightly stronger economic bases with more jobs in manufacturing and lower unemployment rates. Map 5.9 shows that there are virtually no blacks in Leslie County, suggesting that its homogeneous white population may be one explanation for its Republican record. In this four-county area, the black population, averaging 1.8 percent across census tracts, is too small to be of much political consequence. In only three block groups does the black population exceed 10 percent. In recent years, race relations have been peaceful, something locals attribute to the shared history of hardscrabble poverty and the trust built between blacks and whites working side by side in the coal mines (Associated Press 1995). Race relations have not always been so placid. Hazard (in Perry County) was home to the state's last public lynching. The black population originally migrated there to work in the mines, where they were often recruited to forestall unionization by white workers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Bailey 1985). By the mid-1980s, the black population had declined to less than 10 percent throughout eastern Kentucky (Turner and Cabbell 1985; Turner 1985). Those who remain are aged, unschooled, and politically lethargic (Turner 1985; Cabbell 1985; Billings 1974). They are also highly segregated, especially in Harlan County, although not as much so as in more densely populated areas where their proportion of the popula-



Map 5.9. Black population concentration in southeast Kentucky, 1990 (Harlan, Leslie, Letcher, and Perry Counties)

tion is much higher (Marshall and Jiobu 1975; see table 5.6). Their isolation and small numbers have served to keep the black population even poorer and more inactive than the white population.

It is difficult to detect any equilibration process occurring in the counties of eastern Kentucky that would eventually restore two-party competitive politics. The population is growing older, which may lead to some eventual change. But generational replacement has not contributed to much partisan change because younger voters who might stand a chance of developing political attitudes and beliefs independent of those of their parents leave the area. Population loss leaves behind the elderly and the poor-groups that are highly averse to risk taking and new patterns of life and thought. This area provides an interesting contrast to the faster growing parts of the country. What happens to the politics of places afflicted with out-migration? Eastern Kentucky shows us that their population ages and the politics becomes even more resistant to change. Places like Harlan County remain isolated from the social and economic changes that have occurred elsewhere in the country. With no infusion of business capital on the horizon, the population is as dependent on government aid as it has been since the mid-1960s. For years, the government has been subsidizing people to remain in areas that, were it not for the government's intervention, many of them would probably leave. Locals insist that people remain in eastern Kentucky because they choose to stay. "They like the familiarity and safety of their small towns. They are afraid of big-city life, the traffic, the noise, the pace, the crime," said one local observer. The population there will continue to age and shrink, and with the help of its ubiquitous extended family ties its politics is likely to remain in the same New Deal mold.

Biracial Balkanization and Isolated One Partyism

Kentucky is a good example of a state that is ethnically and politically balkanized without immigrants. The immigrant population was still so small in the early 1990s that Asians and Hispanics were not a major force even when they were politically active. This is the only state of the seven investigated in this book in which Asians are more spatially segregated than Hispanics. The Hispanic population declined between 1980 and 1990. While Mexican immigrants appear to be an increasingly important source of labor for central Kentucky's tobacco fields and several new poultry plants in western Kentucky, they are still migrants with almost no permanent communities. Kentucky's balkanization is similar to that of many other rural, interior states, which have remained largely unaffected by the many immigrants who have arrived since the late 1960s. The state and its counties are not balkanized between native and immigrant areas, as in California, but in an older, more familiar pattern of segregated black and white communities. While Kentucky had few slaveholders, a majority of Kentuckians had strong southern sympathies. These remain and contribute to the climate of separation.

Of the seven states examined in this study, Kentucky contains the one rural region that has undergone the most out-migration, as the population in the rural eastern counties has declined. The isolation of Appalachia from the rest of the state has reinforced a long-standing class divide between poor, rural, native whites and blacks and their wealthier cousins in the larger cities of central and western Kentucky. This divide has a generational component, as the younger generation leaves the mountain country behind and the older folks remain. These geopolitical aspects of Kentucky's development are not diminishing. In the 1980s and 1990s, population trends highlight rather than obscure the differences between eastern, central, northern, and western Kentucky.

Settlement patterns contribute to the political activity of a group and the nature of the demands it makes. While observers have occasionally pointed out that Kentucky's black population would get further by pursuing a deracialized politics (Wright 1995), the spatial isolation of that population from the majority in the cities has ensured that demands will be voiced in the terms of black interests and concerns. With few other minorities in Kentucky's cities and towns, the opportunity to form interracial coalitions with other minorities is slim to none. But because black communities are so highly homogeneous and spatially clustered, the pressure on a politician to represent only that constituency overwhelms sentiment favoring a broader, nonracial orientation.

Elsewhere, in the rural areas of the state, the segregation of white from black communities closely tracks class differences, with blacks being far poorer and less educated than whites, far less mobile and less interested in political affairs. The plight of blacks in Appalachia is likely to worsen. Their spatial isolation from better labor markets in Kentucky, Ohio, North Carolina, and Tennessee aggravates the problem of their unemployment (Milne 1980). For blacks in Louisville, Covington, and other large towns, the degree of segregation is mitigated somewhat by the density of settlement and the shorter distance between home and job leads. Not coincidentally, it is in the cities that a higher value is placed on political activity.

The political power of Kentucky's black population has also been hindered by its isolation in traditionally one-party Democratic municipalities and counties, in a traditionally one-party state, where its voice only counts in the occasional close election. The 1995 gubernatorial race signaled the end of the state's long tradition of noncompetitive gubernatorial contests, but close elections at the local level are likely to remain rare, as Kentucky's one-party localities seem to generate interest only in primaries. Local Democratic primaries often split the black community among rival candidates, dampening enthusiasm for the eventual nominee, who everyone knows is likely to win by an overwhelming margin anyway. Of course, the political stratification of Kentucky is optimal for its incumbent politicians, each one of which develops a separate, monopolistic sphere of operation (Key 1949, 79-80). Voters, though, wind up cheated, as one-party factionalism is poorly suited to recruiting quality leaders or sustaining a program of action (Key 1949, 304, 308). Fortunately, the one-party system has eroded in presidential and congressional elections, as white voters have abandoned their sworn Democratic affiliations in exchange for dual partisanship. While population growth in northern and central Kentucky is likely to generate partisan change well into the twenty-first century, it is likely to be many years before dual partisanship leads to competitive elections on a routine and widespread basis.