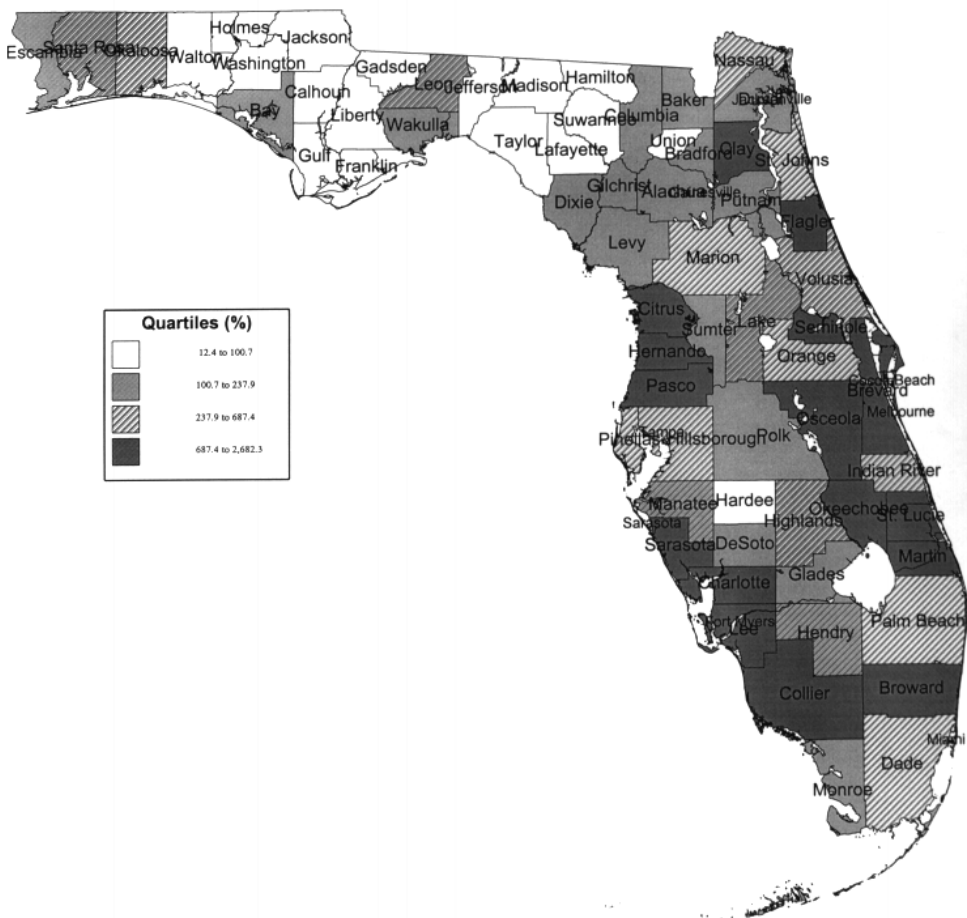


Florida: Segregated Heterogeneity

In 1949, V. O. Key observed of Florida with characteristic understatement that there is “plausibly a relation between a diverse, recently transplanted population and mutable politics” (86). One could hardly expect politics in a state whose population has quadrupled in forty years to be unaffected by such amazing growth. Because of its highly mobile population, Florida never had the consistent anchorage to old-fashioned Democratic politics that other southern states had (Key 1949; Dauer 1972). The sources of growth include both immigration and internal migration. A major port of entry for immigrants since the 1960s, and a haven for elderly retirees and warm weather seekers, the flood of new residents has radically reshaped the state’s electoral foundations. Not one of the state’s sixty-seven counties lost population from 1950 to 1992, and several South Florida counties are now twenty times the size they were in the early 1950s. Map 6.1 shows that the state’s most rapid growth has occurred in South Florida, including Broward, Collier, Lee, Charlotte, and Sarasota Counties. Central Florida counties have also experienced high growth, including several along the Gulf Coast and Brevard County on the Atlantic. The slowest growing areas are in northern Florida and the panhandle. These counties contain high proportions of native Floridians and most resemble the Old South.

By 1990, 13 percent of the state’s population was comprised of immigrants and 71 percent of those had entered the country since 1965. The composition of the state’s immigrant population shows a heavy Latin American–Caribbean influence (fig. 6.1). Fully 43 percent of the immigrant population is from the Caribbean, with two-thirds coming from Cuba and another 12 percent from Haiti. Seventeen percent of the immigrant population is from South or Central America, and this proportion is growing. European and Canadian immigrants, many of whom are retirees, are another significant group, amounting to 22 percent of the total. Asians



Map 6.1. Population growth in Florida counties, 1950–92. (Mean = 480.2, Moran's I = .35)

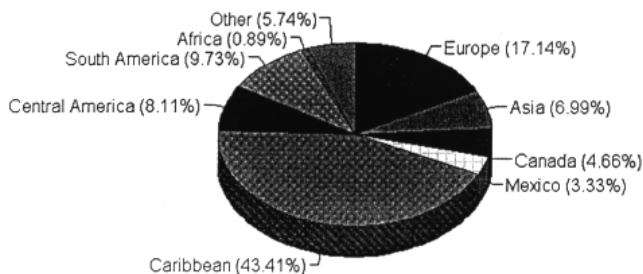


Fig. 6.1. Composition of the foreign-born population in Florida, 1990

are a growing presence (7 percent in 1990), with especially large populations of Indians, Filipinos, and Vietnamese (Bouvier, Leonard, and Martin 1994). Contrary to settlement patterns in other states, immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries and the Caribbean are far more likely to reside in Florida's central cities than those from Asia or other world regions. As elsewhere, Mexicans are the most rural immigrant population from Latin America. In 1990, just 1 percent of Florida's Cuban population lived in rural areas, compared to 27 percent for Mexicans. The geographical pattern of Mexican settlement reflects the agricultural origins of that population (Aguirre, Schwirian, and LaGreca 1980, 52).

South Florida's population growth on both sides of the peninsula is a function of both internal migration and immigration. Immigrants predominantly settle in the Atlantic Coast counties, particularly in Dade and Broward (Miami and Fort Lauderdale). Internal migrants constitute a larger share of the population on the Gulf Coast than on the eastern side, and a majority of them come from midwestern and southern states (Winsberg 1993).

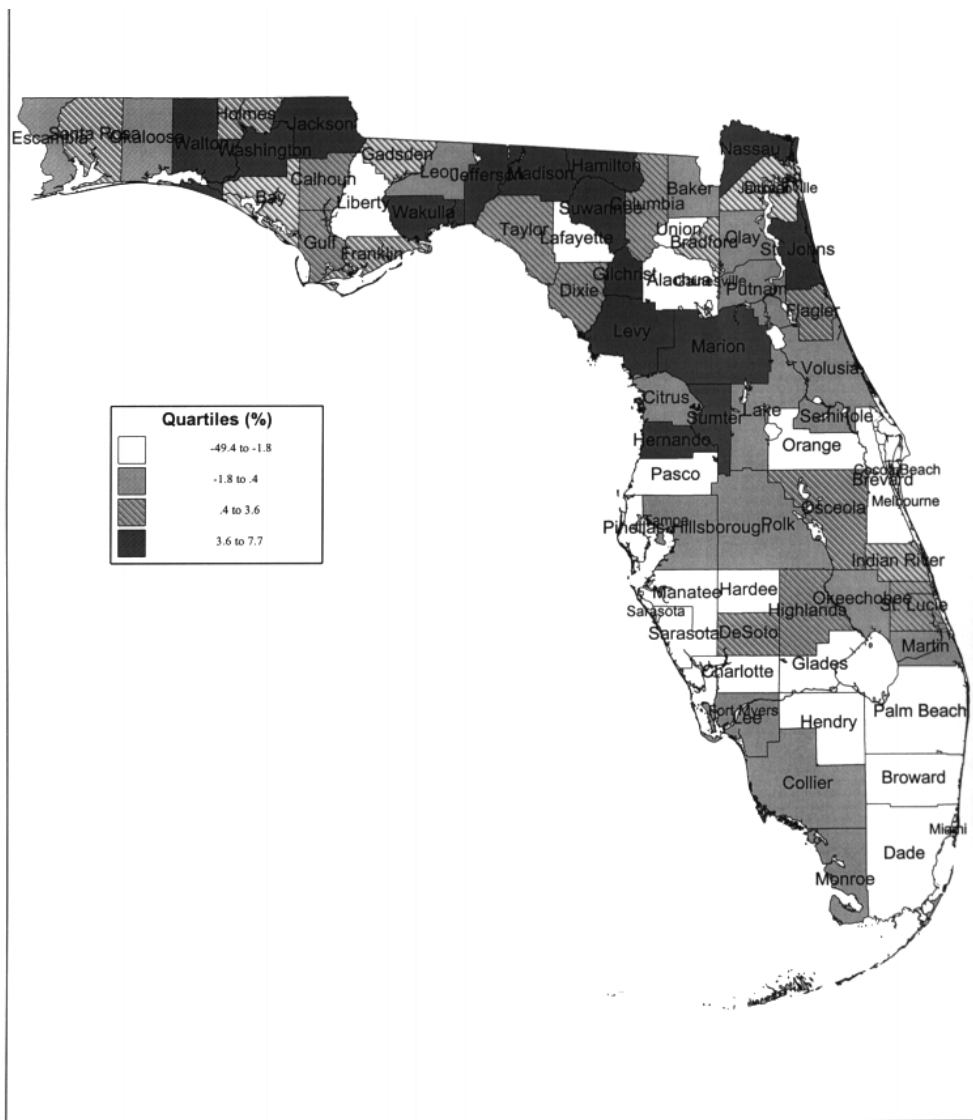
The bulk of the foreign-born arrivals are Cubans, who fled the Castro regime in two massive waves, the first in 1959, the second with the Mariel boatlift in 1980. Cubans originally settled in South Florida mostly because it was close to Cuba, other Cubans had already settled there, and many hoped to one day return (Portes and Mozo 1985; Garcia 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 1990, 114–15). Naturalization rates among the initial wave of Cubans exiles was very low, but vastly increased over time as the likelihood of an overthrow of the Castro regime diminished. Among second-generation Cubans, most of whom have never seen Cuba, the desire to return is not nearly as strong, and many among the first genera-

tion are so well established in the United States that they have lost interest in returning.

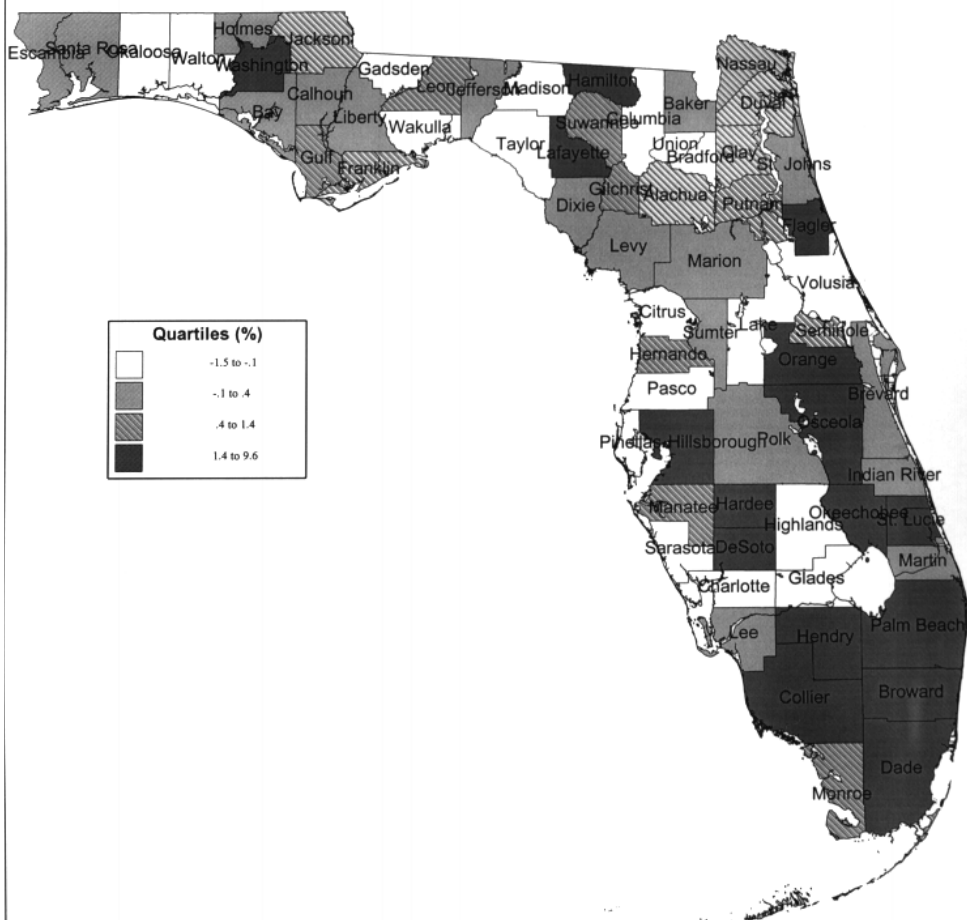
By 1990, 45 percent of the Dade County population was foreign born and 87 percent of those had entered the country since 1965—less than half of the Dade County population was born in the state. In recent years, mass migrations from Haiti, Nicaragua, Columbia, Venezuela, and other parts of South and Central America have added to Miami's international flavor and correspondingly reduced the influence of natives in the politics of the community (Mohl 1988; Dunn 1997). The mix of cultures is at once rich and volatile. Miami's explosive ethnic milieu is best described by anthropologists Alex Stepick and Guillermo Grenier—"the only U.S. city to have had four black riots in the 1980s and to receive 125,000 new immigrants at the beginning of that decade, many reputed to be criminals, homosexuals and mental patients" (1992, 1; see also Stepick, Grenier, Morris, and Draznin 1994).

Even though the population of South Florida is growing more ethnically diverse, it is not necessarily growing more *racially* diverse. Most Cubans are white, and many refuse to be identified with Hispanic groups of color. Still, the immigrant population is concentrated in the peninsula, as map 6.3 illustrates. Racially these counties are relatively homogeneous since most Cubans are white. But in ethnic terms, the counties of South Florida are the most diverse in the state.

Elsewhere in South Florida, immigrants are a smaller proportion of the population, and the new arrivals consist largely of internal migrants. Broward County is noteworthy for having a large population of Jewish migrants from New York and New Jersey, so large, in fact, that they succeeded in electing one of their own, Peter Deutsch, a Democrat, to Congress in 1992. Sarasota and Lee Counties on the Gulf Coast are also good examples of areas inundated by interstate migrants. By 1990, nearly three out of four people in these two counties had moved in from elsewhere in the United States. Between 1980 and 1990, internal migrants became a less influential presence in several South Florida counties because their growth was outstripped by that of the immigrant population. In Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties, internal migrants are a smaller percentage of the population in the 1990s than they were in the past (see map 6.2) not because internal migration slowed but because immigrants constituted a much faster inflow (see map 6.3). Internal migrants became a significantly larger proportion of the population only in central and northern Florida and along the Gulf Coast, where immigrants have less of a presence. South



Map 6.2. Change in the proportion of internal migrants in Florida counties, 1980-90. (Mean = -.22, Moran's I = .12)



Map 6.3. Change in the proportion of immigrants in Florida counties, 1980-90.
(Mean = .97, Moran's I = .12)

Florida's increasing population density has made central Florida a more attractive destination for internal migrants (see map 6.2).

Central Florida was described in the 1970s as a "giant suburbia" and a "big franchise mall," jammed with tourists, with new subdivisions and municipalities sprawling across the countryside (Dauer 1972). By the early 1990s, central Florida was suburbia on an even grander scale. Agriculture maintained an important and profitable presence, however, as large tracts of land were still occupied by citrus and vegetable growers. Most of the state's population of Mexican immigrants (55,000 in 1990) reside in central Florida near the farms. The Cuban and Asian populations are growing, but not nearly as fast as in South Florida. Central Florida has been the wealthiest and most Republican area of the state for thirty years (Dauer 1972; Bass and DeVries 1976). This region has voted presidentially Republican at least since 1948.

The northern and panhandle counties have been least transformed by the state's growth. These counties are most like the Old South; rural, uneducated, poor, and Democratic (Button 1989, 27). Several northern counties are home to large black populations, including Leon (Tallahassee), Madison, and Jefferson Counties on the Georgia border. These counties are highly residentially segregated by race, and school desegregation has been a prolonged and continuing battle (Button 1989). The economic growth in the Florida panhandle has occurred along the Gulf Coast, leaving the interior towns poor and isolated. Race- and class-based voting is particularly pronounced in northern Florida. The white population, like elsewhere in the South, is culturally conservative and prone to dual partisanship. Republicans do well in the Florida panhandle in presidential contests but less well in congressional and state elections.

Politically, the balkanization of the counties by party affiliation is far less extreme in Florida than in Kentucky (chap. 5). In Kentucky, political balkanization was a function of many one-sided Republican and Democratic counties. But in Florida more places are politically competitive, containing nearly equal numbers of GOP and Democratic registrants. By the 1990s, a comparatively low 18 percent of the Republicans (or Democrats) in the state would be required to move if partisans were to be evenly distributed across counties, compared to twice that proportion in Kentucky.

Simply because Florida's localities are more politically balanced than those in other states does not mean that the migrant, immigrant, and native populations are mixing well. The 1990 PUMS data reveal an \$1,800 difference in average income between internal migrants and immigrants

who are over the age of eighteen (see appendix A, table A6.1). As in California, many of the internal migrants residing in Florida are retirees. The median income figures, however, suggest that internal migrants lag behind both native Floridians and immigrants—indicating that many of the retirees are living on modest fixed incomes and that the mean income figures reflect the influence of a few super wealthy interstate migrants. Moreover, the average age of internal migrants (those over age eighteen) is fifty-one, compared to forty-eight for immigrants and a much younger thirty-nine for those born in the state. Consistent with the findings of studies cited in chapter 1, immigrants are less well educated than either internal migrants or natives, and only 28.4 percent are non-Hispanic white, compared to 89 percent of internal migrants and 68 percent of natives. Based on these racial and economic differences (table A6.1), one is led to ask how likely it is that migrants, natives, and immigrants are settling in the same locations and neighborhoods. Based on mountains of previous research on the mobility and settlement patterns of distinct ethnic and economic groups, the prospect for finding well-integrated communities in Florida are not very bright.

Settlement Patterns of Migrants and Immigrants in Florida

Evaluating whether immigrants and internal migrants are becoming a larger proportion of the population in the areas where they settle is one way of determining the degree to which these groups are dispersing or clustering and, more importantly, of determining whether each group is becoming a more noticeable presence than in the past. Because the inflow of immigrants to Florida has been of such incredible volume, we should not be surprised to find many of these arrivals finding one another and settling down in the same neighborhoods. As in previous chapters, we should expect some groups to be drawn to preexisting populations of coethnics while others are not. Immigrants who are poorer, of color, and with limited English would be most likely to cluster in expanding ethnic enclaves. Maps 6.2 and 6.3 show the geographic distribution of growth in the internal and immigrant populations between 1980 and 1990. Table 6.1 presents the results of a spatial effects regression analysis predicting where various immigrant groups are becoming a larger or smaller proportion of the population. In Florida, as in other high-immigration states, Asians and Latin Americans cluster in ever more noticeable pockets in the areas where they

TABLE 6.1. Influences on Population Concentration in Florida Counties, 1980–90

Variable	U.S. Migrants	African Immigrants	Asian Immigrants	European Immigrants	Canadian Immigrants	Mexican Immigrants	Central American Immigrants	South American Immigrants
% 1980 group population	−.32** (.13)	−.62** (.11)	.19* (.10)	−.28** (.02)	−.21** (.03)	.65** (.27)	.36** (.02)	1.00** (.07)
% unemployment, 1980	5.46** (1.43)	−.02** (.004)	−.02 (.02)	.02 (.03)	.01 (.01)	−.05 (.05)	−.17 (.13)	−.05 (.04)
Change in real median family income, 1980–90	.008** (.001)	−.0008 (.002)	.02* (.01)	.10** (.02)	.009 (.007)	−.02 (.02)	−.10 (.08)	.05 (.03)
% net population change	−.01 (.06)	.0001 (.0002)	.0008 (.001)	.001 (.001)	.0001 (.001)	−.0007 (.002)	−.002 (.005)	−.0009 (.002)
Population density	−.003** (.002)	.000001 (.000007)	.0001** (.00004)	−.00004 (.00005)	.000004 (.00002)	−.00007 (.00008)	−.00008 (.0002)	.00004 (.00006)
% college students	−1.13** (.39)	.009** (.002)	.01* (.009)	−.0008 (.009)	−.005 (.004)	−.01 (.02)	.03 (.03)	−.03** (.01)
Spatial lag	.43 (.44)	.38** (.12)	.38** (.13)	−.12 (.08)	−.10 (.11)	.17* (.10)	.56** (.15)	.48** (.16)
Constant	−46.55	.11	−.15	−.47	−.07	.62	.93	.18
<i>N</i>	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67
<i>R</i> ² _a	.74	.45	.46	.84	.38	.21	.94	.91

Note: Multiple linear regression, WLS estimation; income coefficients expressed in thousands of 1992 dollars; dependent variable = change in population group as a percentage of total population. See appendix A for a full description of variables.

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

have settled previously. A one-point increase in the percentage of South Americans living in a county in 1980 is associated with a corresponding 1 percent increase in the proportion of that population by 1990 (see Table 6.1).

U.S. migrants, Africans, Europeans, and Canadians, on the other hand, are becoming a smaller proportion of the population in the areas where they had a strong presence in the early 1980s (table 6.1). Even where their numbers may have increased, their share of a place's total population has decreased. Since U.S. migrants, Canadians, and Europeans are not inclined to settle in enclaves, their decreasing proportions in areas of previous settlement are also an indicator of their geographical dispersion.

Economics plays a familiar role for many groups but apparently not for the bulk of U.S. internal migrants, who cluster in areas that began the decade with high unemployment. This finding can only be the result of the specific character of internal migration to Florida. Elderly retirees do not move there to find work, so the selection process behind migration is slightly different in Florida than for other states. In spite of this important difference, though, interstate migrants did become more of a presence in areas that had rising incomes across the decade. The growth in the proportion of Asians and Europeans across counties is also associated with rising income. Africans, Mexicans, and South Americans have avoided increased concentration in areas where economic opportunities were limited in the early 1980s, but their increasing presence is not associated with rising income.

Finally, population density is linked to the growing proportion of Asian immigrants but not for any of the other groups. Asians are drawn to cities—only 6 percent lived in Florida's rural areas in 1990—often to areas where there are other Asians. Internal migrants become a more noticeable population in the less densely populated suburban and rural counties. This settlement pattern reflects the growth of retirement communities throughout central Florida and along the Gulf Coast.

These results lead to one conclusion. The primary mechanism for ethnic balkanization in Florida is Latin American immigration coupled with the internal migration of elderly native-born whites. These two populations have not mixed well. When both populations pour into an area, their settlement patterns become "lumpy" or "clustered" rather than "smooth." In many areas of the state, Hispanics are more highly segregated from the white population than either blacks or Asians, and the results in table 6.1 show the reasons why. Hispanics are drawn to areas of

prior Hispanic settlement to a much greater extent than other groups. Hispanics go where their coethnics are located. Political balkanization by partisanship would undoubtedly create many one-sided Democratic jurisdictions if so many of Florida's Hispanics were not Republican. Because of the Republican leanings of the Cuban population, Florida is one state where ethnic balkanization has created safe Republican seats in areas of Hispanic concentration.

Ethnic Balkanization and Naturalization in Florida

Internal to counties, ethnic segregation is the product of both the size of the immigrant population in an area and the lifestyle choices of internal migrants from outside of Florida. Internal migrants make predictable locational decisions much as immigrants do. Elderly migrants desire to live in homogeneous communities such as Sarasota, where minorities are excluded by the high property values and scarcity of multifamily housing near upscale seashore developments. Segregation, whether it is deliberately exclusive or simply an artifact of groups' residential choices, is of concern because it has long been considered an obstacle to the assimilation of immigrant and minority groups (Liang 1994; Portes and Curtis 1987; Lieberman 1961, 1963).

Naturalization is one indicator of assimilation, albeit not the only one. Most naturalized immigrants have no interest in returning permanently to their countries of origin once they have taken the steps necessary to acquire citizenship. More importantly, naturalization is also the pathway to political participation. The biggest obstacle to the political empowerment of immigrants is their noncitizen status. Obstacles to naturalization, then, are also barriers to political empowerment.

In previous chapters, we have observed that naturalization rates are lowest in places of foreign-born concentration. Table A6.2 shows that this is also true in Florida for both 1980 and 1990, although less so in the latter year. For 1980, for example, a 10 point increase in the percentage of immigrants across counties is associated with a 6.9 point drop in the naturalization rate compared with a 4.1 point drop in 1990. For 1980, places where Asians are highly segregated from whites have lower naturalization rates than areas where Asians and whites are residentially integrated. Hispanic-white segregation has no obvious connection to naturalization rates, perhaps because many of the Hispanics in Florida are themselves Caucasian. The magnitude of the effect varies from state to state, but a consis-

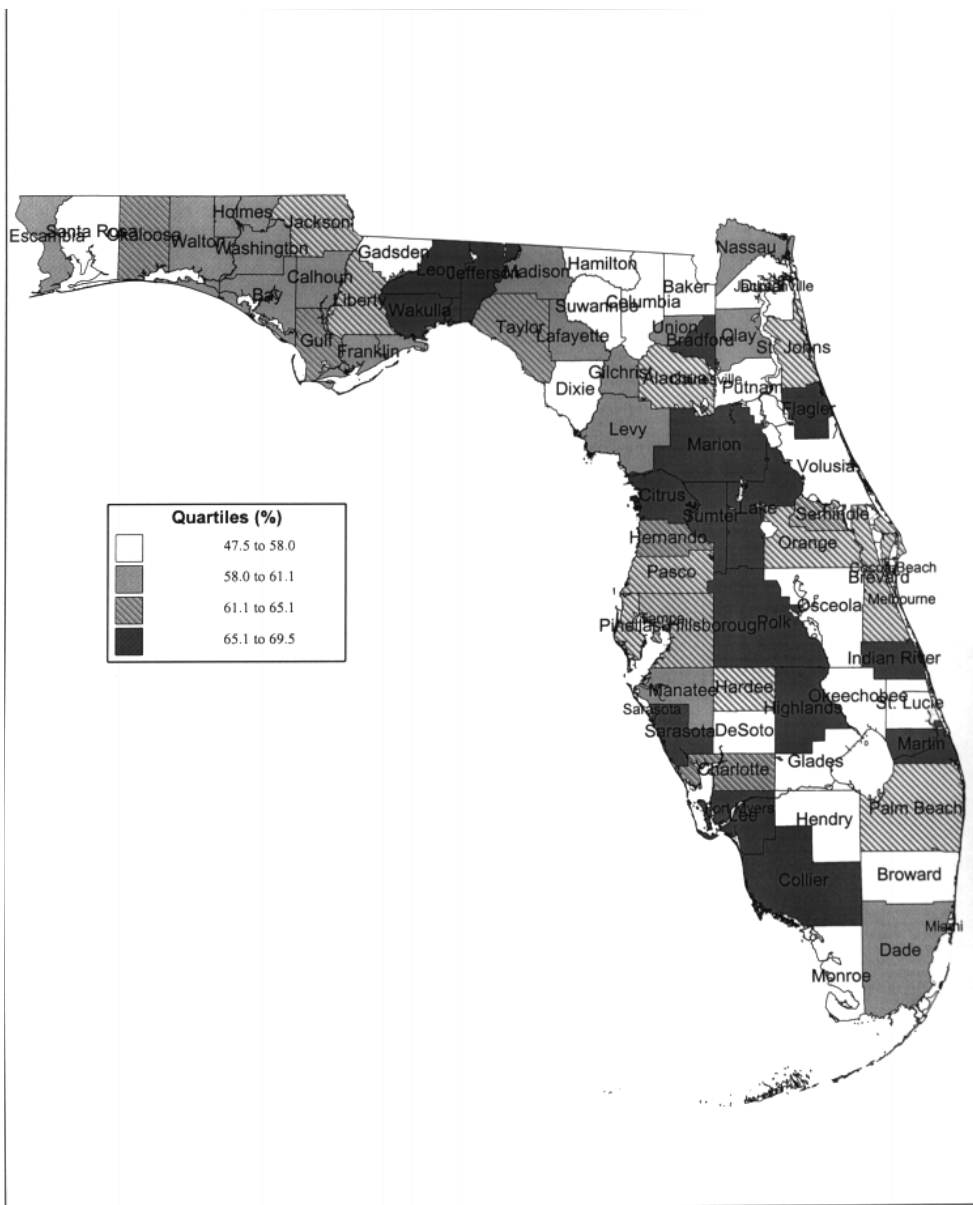
tent finding throughout this book is that the concentration of the immigrant population is not conducive to high naturalization rates.

Migrants, Immigrants, and Voter Turnout in Florida

With the tidal wave of immigrants and migrants continually washing over Florida, one would expect to see lower turnout rates than in states where the population is more stable. The path to conventional participation in politics is beset with obstacles and costs voters must overcome (Squire, Wolfinger, and Glass 1987; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). I have pointed out in previous chapters that substate regions can frequently be divided into those with high turnout and those with low turnout. High participation areas, especially in nonpresidential election years, are typically settled by persons native to the state or at least by long-term residents. These places may also be characterized by some combination of high income and education. Low turnout areas, on the other hand, are found where the population is highly mobile or there are high numbers of poor and uneducated citizens. These aggregate-level generalizations are understandable given the individual-level relationships that have been found to hold between education, income, mobility, and participation (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

For Florida, patterns of turnout averaged across two gubernatorial elections in the early 1990s are shown on map 6.4. Somewhat surprising is the darkly shaded patch of central and Gulf Coast counties, which apparently have the highest turnout rates in nonpresidential elections in spite of their large and growing migrant populations. Also of note is the low participation rate in Broward County (Fort Lauderdale), home to some of the wealthiest migrants on the Atlantic Coast. To explain the geographic variation in turnout depicted on map 6.4, I estimated the same regression model corrected for spatial dependency that I used in previous chapters to evaluate turnout percentages for Florida counties in five recent elections (see table 6.2). There is very little consistency in turnout rates across the five elections. The signs on the variables change direction from year to year, making it difficult to generalize. Looking at the pooled model for the 1990s reveals that education and recent immigration are related to higher turnout, whereas the proportion of a county's population comprised of African Americans is associated with depressed turnout. Participation is also lower in the state's most densely populated urban areas.

The tendency for the presence of internal migrants to reduce partici-



Map 6.4. Average turnout in Florida gubernatorial elections, 1990–94. (Mean = 60.9, Moran's $I = -.04$)

TABLE 6.2. Impact of Population Mobility on Voter Turnout in Florida Counties, 1980–94

Variable	1980	1982	1990	1992	1994	Pooled 1990s
% college educated	.08 (.20)	-.23 (.21)	.19 (.12)	.35** (.11)	.12 (.09)	.23** (.08)
Isolation of minorities from whites (within counties)	.08** (.02)	.02 (.03)	.005 (.04)	.02 (.03)	.03 (.03)	.008 (.03)
% post-1970 immigrants	-.65** (.17)	.10 (.12)	-.42** (.17)	.39** (.12)	-.03 ^a (.03)	.13** (.06)
% born out of state	-.07 (.07)	.20** (.07)	-.09 ^a (.07)	.11 ^a (.07)	.05 ^a (.06)	-.02 (.05)
% black	-.03 (.09)	.05 (.10)	-.36** (.13)	.24** (.12)	-.18 (.10)	-.17* (.09)
Population density	-.002** (.001)	-.0009 (.001)	-.00009 (.001)	.000002 (.001)	-.0002 (.001)	-.0003 (.001)
Spatial lag	-.06 (.15)	.59** (.09)	-.29 (.18)	-.17 (.11)	.42** (.16)	.19** (.08)
Presidential race	—	—	—	—	—	4.37** (.79)
Constant	73.33	8.60	82.24	53.99	84.77	47.99
<i>N</i>	67	67	67	67	67	201
<i>R</i> ² _a	.42	.74	.19	.48	.27	.17

Note: Spatial autoregressive model, weighted for population; dependent variable = percentage turnout by county. See appendix A for a full description of variables.

^aVariables with low tolerances and high standard errors due to multicollinearity.

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

pation is not uniform, as it is in other states, and internal migrants are associated with significantly higher turnout in 1982, 1992, and 1994. In these instances, the difference between Florida and other states is to be found in the high volume of migration nearly everywhere on the peninsula contrasted with the extreme inactivity of the electorate in the impoverished rural counties of the Florida panhandle. Unlike northern Kentucky, Florida's in-migration is not an especially recent flow, and migrants have settled in almost all of the counties in the peninsula, with a very high concentration in central Florida. In contrast to areas with more recent migration flows, many of Florida's migrants in the early 1980s were not new arrivals and were therefore well established in their communities. "The more South you go, the more North you get," is a popular saying among long-term Floridians. Many are elderly residents who have settled permanently and have the leisure time to get involved in politics (Rosenbaum and Button 1989). This has led some observers to comment that in Florida "age, not youth, is in charge" (Edmundson 1987).

A second reason for the higher turnout in migrant areas during the 1980s and 1990s is that the places with the highest proportions of native-born Floridians are in the rural, poor, and uneducated parts of the panhandle. Here turnout suffers for some of the same reasons one finds in eastern Kentucky. Voters are simply not aware that participation is important or that politics is of any concern to them. Turnout rates generally run three to five points lower in the twenty-five counties in the panhandle than in the rest of the state. The counties in central Florida have the highest participation rates, and the large, politically informed, elderly population has much to do with this (Rosenbaum and Button 1989; Weaver 1976). The relative size of the elderly population is positively associated with turnout in all but the 1992 presidential election.

Florida's foreign-born population has no consistent impact on countywide turnout across the five elections. In the pooled model, the proportion of recent immigrants in a place is associated with *higher* turnout. But in two of the three *gubernatorial* elections one finds lower turnout in the areas of immigrant concentration. These results may indicate that the newer immigrant population is more active in presidential contests than in state-level races. That the foreign-born population would be more associated with presidential than state-level participation comes as no great surprise. Cuban exiles take exceptional interest in foreign policy concerns and have developed sophisticated political organizations to navigate the waters of official Washington (Garcia 1996). Other politically active exile

groups joined Cubans in South Florida in the 1980s, including Nicaraguans, Haitians, and Salvadorans. State politics is dominated by the political participation of nonimmigrant populations in central and northern Florida, whereas presidential politics is much stronger in South Florida. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s in off-year elections, the twelve southernmost counties typically turned out 44 to 45 percent of the Florida electorate, with Dade County itself accounting for about one-fourth of the state's total turnout. This participation drops, however, in off-year races by 3 to 4 percent (perhaps as many as fifty to sixty thousand votes), and central Florida and the panhandle counties therefore gain more influence.

Migrants, Immigrants, and Party Regularity in Florida

If patterns of turnout in Florida are unique, so must be the patterns of party regularity. At the county or precinct level of analysis, party irregularity can be a function of two things: (1) low turnout, which causes patterns of voting to be different from the balance of party registrants; and (2) split-ticket voting or dual partisanship, where voters are unfaithful to their party when they go to the polls. In many states, high turnout reduces the differences between party registration and actual voting. This explains why, in Florida at least, the larger proportion of out-of-state residents, the greater the party regularity. Because migrants vote at higher rates than many natives, party registration figures predict voting for major offices with considerable accuracy—far more so than in Kentucky, where migrants were responsible for departures from the predictions one could make from party registration figures. For instance, in the 1994 Florida gubernatorial race, a ten-point increase in the percentage of migrants from other states dropped the difference between registration and voting by six points (table 6.3). The difference between regular and irregular counties is captured in the contrast between places where partisanship has been transformed through long-term growth and those counties in northern Florida where partisanship is still heavily Democratic. Like rural western Kentucky, the upstate counties are often one-party Democratic but vote Republican in many elections. The counties in the peninsula, on the other hand, are more regular precisely because their electorates are more evenly divided between the parties and they consistently show up at the polls.

There are a couple of other consistent indicators of party regularity in table 6.3. Counties with high proportions of black voters are also associated with voting consistent with party registration. In the Florida case, this

TABLE 6.3. Similarity of Party Registration to Party Voting in Florida Counties, 1980–94

Variable	1980	1982	1990	1992	1994	Pooled 1990s
% college educated	-.79** (.29)	-.38** (.18)	-.12 (.24)	-.31** (.14)	-.20* (.12)	-.30** (.11)
% born out of state	-.35** (.08)	-.25** (.06)	-.21 ^a (.16)	-.14* (.08)	-.62** (.08)	-.29** (.07)
% post-1970 immigrants	.29* (.18)	-.09 (.09)	-.57 ^a (.37)	-.32** (.17)	-1.26** (.16)	-.09 (.07)
% black	-.21 (.14)	-.17** (.08)	-.48* (.27)	.03 (.14)	-.18 (.14)	-.14 (.12)
Population density	-.004** (.001)	.002** (.001)	.004 (.003)	.002* (.001)	-.0009 (.001)	.002** (.001)
% Turnout	-.11 (.17)	.08 (.09)	-.80** (.25)	-.19 ^a (.15)	-.41** (.17)	-.24** (.10)
Spatial lag	.22** (.09)	.34** (.08)	.69** (.19)	.36** (.12)	.03 (.07)	.37** (.08)
Presidential race	—	—	—	—	—	.46 (1.13)
Constant	62.70	19.50	70.25	31.05	86.44	45.55
<i>N</i>	67	67	67	67	67	67
<i>R</i> ² _a	.71	.62	.45	.43	.76	.44

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.

^aVariables with low tolerances and high standard errors due to multicollinearity.

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

may be due to the very high proportions of blacks in some northern counties and the influence they can therefore exercise on local electoral margins. In eight northern Florida counties, blacks constitute at least one-fourth of the population, including Duval County (Jacksonville). The black vote is such a strong Democratic influence in these counties that they are often surprisingly regular in their behavior—in spite of the white inclination toward dual partisanship described in chapter 5. In Kentucky, the black population is as predictably Democratic as it is in Florida, but it is not a sizable enough population to exercise much influence on overall countywide balloting.

Migration and immigration have had some impact on both turnout and party voting in areas across Florida. Interstate migration is associated with party regularity because the out-of-state population is older and more established in Florida than it is in other states. By the early 1990s, the counties receiving the largest inundation of new residents were being filled with people who were far more inclined to participate than many of the long-term Florida natives. Hence, we also see that turnout is instrumental in reducing party irregularity in the pooled model (see table 6.3). Unlike other states, the areas of highest turnout also had the highest proportions of interstate migrants. This distinguishes Florida from, say, Kansas (chap. 4), where areas settled by internal migrants had lower rates of participation than those with stable and declining populations.

Judging from the ecological data, the effects of demographic change have not been politically neutral in Florida. While the out-of-state population in the state has not always been associated with low turnout and higher party irregularity, as it has in other states, it is safe to infer that when those cross-state migrants are newly arrived and younger, as opposed to long established and older, the usual pattern of political stratification will emerge: high migrant counties will fail to turn out while low migrant counties will participate in high percentages. In this sense, the Florida case demonstrates that there is some variation across states in the type of internal migrants a state receives. Places of high mobility in Florida are exceptional because they appear to be overrepresented in elections relative to areas of population stability. At the same time, areas of high mobility are also more predictable in their patterns of party support than areas where natives are the predominant population—partly because the turnout of new voters is so high but also because elderly migrants are not as likely as younger migrants to change their party affiliation upon relocation.

Changes in Party Registration in Florida

Unlike other states, where Republicans did poorly in the 1970s, in Florida the GOP made amazing gains in the three final decades of the twentieth century. Republican registration averaged 4 percent growth in the 1970s and nearly 10 percent from 1980 to 1990. The spatial patterns of GOP growth in the latter decade are displayed on map 6.5. Republicans made registration gains on Democrats and third parties in every county in the state. Those counties in the highest growth quartile include Dade and Monroe in South Florida and Hillsborough (Tampa) in central Florida. In the lowest growth quartile (shown in white) are the rural panhandle counties and Broward and Palm Beach in South Florida.

In the opening chapter and subsequent ones, I have argued that changes in party registration are traceable to migration and immigration. The results in table 6.4 lend support to the argument. In this table, changes in party registration from 1970 to 1980 and from 1980 and 1990 have been regressed on relevant indicators of demographic change for the same periods. The dependent variable, then, is the rate of Republican registration growth. Interstate migration from 1970 to 1980 is strongly associated with high Republican registration growth. Surprisingly, once other variables are included in the model we see that the foreign-born population has not had a dramatic impact on party registration. One would think that the growth in the Hispanic population would have had a pronounced impact on Republican registration rates given that newly naturalized Cubans in Miami were registering as Republicans by a ratio of nine to one in the mid-1980s (Mohl 1988). But the regression model in table 6.4 shows that GOP registration growth across counties is inversely related to the proportion of immigrants in a location at the beginning of each decade. Counties where natives were the predominant population in the beginning, then, proved to be the fastest growing Republican pockets ten years later.

Places that begin each decade with high proportions of Republican registrants wind up with lower GOP growth rates than counties that are one-party Democratic strongholds. The most Democratic counties, in other words, appear to be changing the most rapidly as a function of both conversion and new arrivals. Some of these counties are also very rural, so the addition of a few new residents can have a more dramatic impact on the balance of registration than would be the case in a more populated county. As areas reach an increasingly competitive balance between Republicans and Democrats, the rate of Republican growth slows. The

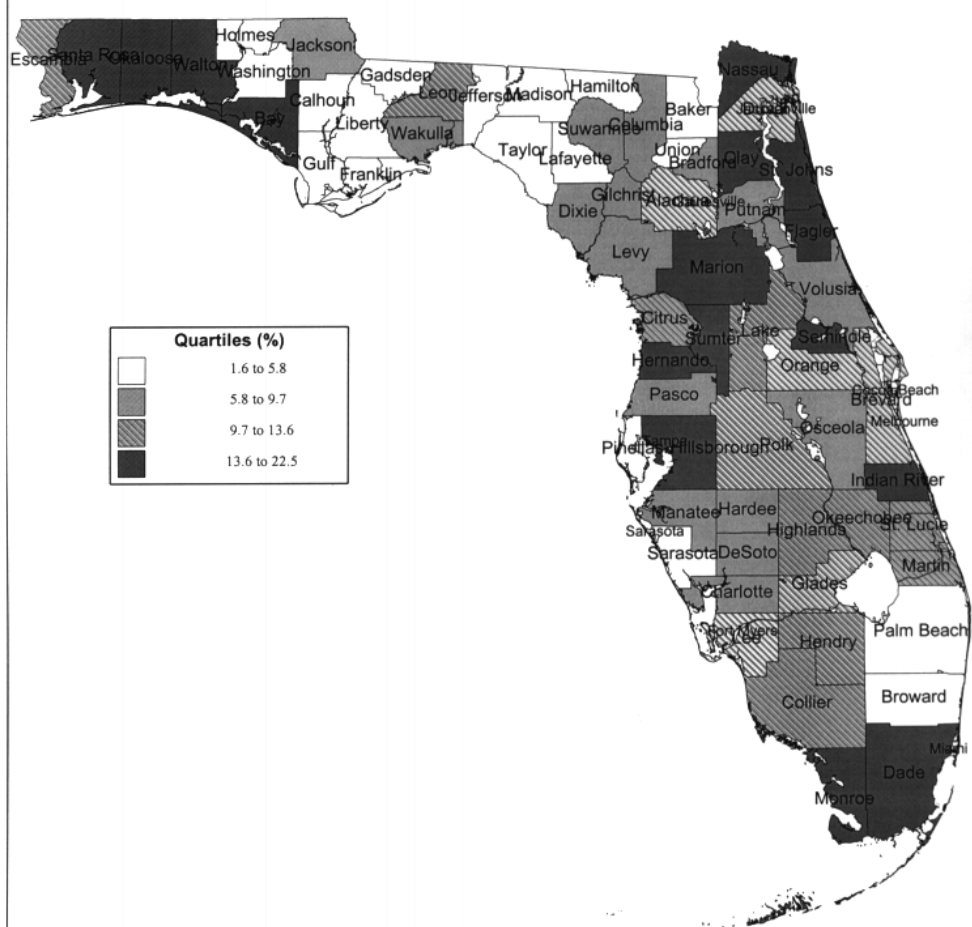


TABLE 6.4. Impact of Population Mobility on Changes in Republican Party Registration in Florida Counties, 1970–80, 1980–90

Variable	1970–80	1980–90
% born out of state, 1970 (1980)	.25** (.09)	–.07 ^a (.09)
Change in % born out of state	.66** (.19)	–.07 ^a (.24)
% foreign born, 1970 (1980)	–.19 ^a (.23)	–.12 ^a (.38)
Change in % foreign born	.08 ^a (.69)	.09 (.37)
% Republican registrants, 1970 (1980)	–.44** (.09)	–.02 (.09)
Population density	–.0006 (.001)	–.002** (.001)
Spatial lag	.53** (.14)	.47** (.11)
Constant	–4.63	12.44
<i>N</i>	67	67
<i>R</i> ² _a	.61	.47

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

^aVariables with low tolerances and high standard errors due to multicollinearity.

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

Democrats have not gained any ground relative to other parties, although there has been some growth in the share of independent identifiers. Finally, there is considerable evidence that party registration change has a strong regional dimension that is not explained by the other variables. In both models in table 6.4, the spatially lagged dependent variables have statistically significant coefficients (.53 and .47, respectively). GOP growth is occurring in distinct substate regions across county boundaries, particularly in central and South Florida.

While immigration has undoubtedly been influential in reshaping the politics of South Florida, internal migration has had a more direct impact on the balance of party registrants across the entire state. While many native Floridians have changed their party identification (Beck 1982), not all of the Republican growth can be accounted for by conversion alone (Parker 1988; Wolfinger and Arsenau 1978). Suzanne Parker (1988, 27)

has shown that Republicans outnumbered Democrats among new residents (those migrating to the state between 1960 and 1980) by nearly two to one. In Dade County, the realignment in favor of the GOP has been greatly aided by the arrival, naturalization, and Republican inclination of Hispanic, mostly Cuban, immigrants.

Population growth and change have occurred so uniformly across the peninsula that the only area left behind by the political changes wrought by these population trends are the counties in the northern panhandle (see map 6.5). In 1994, Republican registration in twenty-five counties in Florida's panhandle averaged just 16 percent compared to 43 percent in central Florida and 28 percent in the southernmost counties. Outside of the panhandle, Florida appears to be one of the least politically balkanized states judging by the distribution of party registrants, which is nearly even in most counties. The relative absence of one-party, noncompetitive geographic areas is astounding given the state's ethnic diversity. The inability of the Democratic Party to make much headway in Dade County's Cuban neighborhoods has prevented political balkanization from following on the heels of ethnic segregation.

Ethnicity and Political Behavior at the Individual Level

The aggregate data on immigration patterns suggest that Florida's population is mainly segregated between Hispanic and non-Hispanic areas, with Hispanics, mostly Cubans, becoming larger proportions of the population in the counties where they settle. Similarly, the turnout figures show differences between immigrant and nonimmigrant areas depending on the election year. In presidential years like 1992, the counties with large immigrant populations register higher turnout than those with few immigrants. In off-year elections, however, the reverse is true. The nonimmigrant areas have higher turnout (see table 6.2). As for party regularity, the regression models show that areas with high percentages of migrants from out of state are more regular in their behavior than those with few migrants. I have suggested that this is due to the lower turnout of native populations in northern Florida and also the tendency toward dual partisanship in the panhandle. We also observed in table 6.4 that both the populations of internal migrants and Hispanics are associated with robust Republican registration growth.

Determining whether these ecological patterns reflect real differences at the individual level requires survey data. Fortunately, several Florida

polls with the questions that permit such study are available. The breakdown of party identification by race appears in table 6.5 for 1990, 1992, and 1994 from exit polls. There is no question that the Hispanic population is far more Republican in Florida than in most states—certainly far more so than in California (table 2.5). In the 1994 off-year elections, for example, 59 percent of the Hispanic population in Florida claimed to be Republican identifiers, compared to only 18 percent in California and 11 percent in Colorado (see table 3.5). The black population, though, is about as Democratic as it is everywhere else. The small number of Asians polled makes the figures reported for this group of questionable value, but Asians voting in the 1994 elections appeared to be far more Republican than Democratic (table 6.5).

Breaking down the survey results by region does verify that central Florida has the largest Republican bloc and the northern counties provide the most lopsided Democratic vote. There is also some evidence suggesting that, while black voters are overwhelmingly Democratic, Florida's rural blacks, most of whom are located in the northern counties, are slightly more Democratic than either suburban or urban blacks. Hispanics, on the other hand, are more Republican in the large cities and suburbs and Democratic in rural areas and small towns. Again, this pattern is the opposite of what one would find in California. It reflects the difference in the ancestry of the Hispanic population, with the Cubans in Dade County

TABLE 6.5. Party Identification by Race in Recent Florida Elections, 1990–94

Race/Ethnic Group	Year	Democrat	Independent	Republican
White	1990	34.2	23.2	42.6
	1992	37.7	39.1	23.2
	1994	32.7	23.4	43.9
Black	1990	80.9	8.6	10.6
	1992	81.5	8.9	9.6
	1994	86.2	11.1	2.6
Hispanic	1990	30.9	13.9	55.2
	1992	32.3	42.5	25.2
	1994	27.0	14.5	58.5
Asian	1990	81.9	0.0	18.1
	1992	19.2	52.3	28.5
	1994	37.7	10.4	51.8

Source: Voter Research and Surveys, General Election Exit Polls, 1990–94 (weighted data).

being strong GOP supporters, while more rural Hispanic groups, including Mexicans, are drawn to the Democratic Party.

Results from the 1990 poll decisively demonstrate that voters moving into Florida from out of state are far more Republican than the natives. Among Florida natives, 53 percent were Democrats and only 30 percent were Republicans, with the balance claiming to be independents. Among nonnatives of short tenure (less than ten years), 34 percent were Democrats and 42 percent were Republicans. Among nonnatives of longer tenure, the figures were nearly the same: 43 percent Republican and 35 percent Democrat. Such figures confirm the results from an estimation of King's (1997) ecological inference model for the Republican registration of the out-of-state population based on county level observations. These estimates revealed that about 55 percent of the population born outside Florida were registered with the GOP in 1990, 56 percent in 1992, and 62 percent in 1994, compared with between 15 and 20 percent of the combined population of natives and immigrants. Taken together, this evidence explodes the myth that all, or even most of the partisan change in Florida, is the result of the conversion of Florida natives. Migrants were more likely than natives to vote Republican for governor in 1990, too. Retired voters, however, were slightly more Democratic than Republican, even among those who migrated to Florida to spend their final years. This suggests that it may be the migration of younger voters that is so strongly benefiting the Republican Party. Exit polls reveal that the most Republican age cohort in the early 1990s was the eighteen to thirty-five group. Finally, migration theory predicts that those who have moved to Florida would have higher incomes than those who are native to the state. Once one controls for the large number of elderly pensioners on fixed incomes, this finding holds in the polling data.

The individual-level results mostly conform to the patterns of the county-level data. Hispanics and new migrants to the state really are more likely to be Republican than Democratic identifiers. The Republican Party in Florida is far more ethnically heterogeneous than it is in most states. We can infer from the polling data that the inflow of new U.S. internal migrants to Florida has bolstered Republican prospects but that these new Republicans are not necessarily the elderly, who are more Democratic than Republican. The northern counties, which have been least affected by migration and immigration, are far more Democratic in party identification and voting than the rest of the state, especially central Florida. Because of the high volume of migration, Florida is an especially

good case for testing whether and to what extent in-migration contributes to political change.

Political Change and the Internal Composition of Florida Counties

The dynamics of party change in Florida are traceable to the internal composition of the state's counties and the extent to which their populations have changed due to immigration and internal migration. Patterns of ethnic segregation within counties are also politically relevant. A large body of theoretical and empirical work suggests that concentrated and spatially isolated ethnic populations are less likely to get involved in politics than those that are more integrated. This finding was borne out for Florida in the naturalization data (appendix A, table A6.2).

The spatial isolation of white and minority groups did not have an adverse impact on county-level turnout in Florida in table 6.2 once related variables were held constant. Even in bivariate plots, there was certainly no straightforward linear relationship between turnout and the internal segregation of counties. Apparently much of the politically relevant segregation in Florida occurs across counties rather than within them. Counties with large proportions of blacks and newly arrived immigrants do show lower turnout rates in gubernatorial elections than those populated mainly with white Anglos (see table 6.2). But residential settlement patterns internal to counties have no clear impact on countywide turnout.

Several aspects of population growth contribute to the spatial isolation of minority groups within and across counties. In some cases, like northern Kentucky and northeastern Kansas, the mechanism for the entrapment of blacks in older cities and suburbs is the in-migration of whites and the subsequent inflation of housing prices in areas outside the older core. In this respect, racial segregation is enhanced by economic factors that permit or inhibit mobility. In previous chapters, we have seen that the isolation of Hispanic and black populations from white populations serves to undermine the participation and political influence of the minority groups, often strengthening Republican prospects.

In Florida, blacks remain the group most residentially segregated from whites judging from the dissimilarity index calculated in table 6.6 for Florida census tracts in 1980 and 1990. Hispanics are highly segregated in the state as a whole, and especially concentrated in South Florida, but within certain counties Hispanic and white neighborhoods are relatively

TABLE 6.6. Index of Dissimilarity for the Black, Asian, and Hispanic Populations Relative to Whites in Four Florida Counties, 1980 and 1990, by Census Tract

Variable	Florida		Dade		Brevard		Sarasota		North-Central Florida	
	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990
Asians	.36	.35	.29	.34	.27	.22	.23	.21	.25	.28
Blacks	.73	.65	.78	.71	.71	.52	.84	.74	.32	.41
Hispanics	.59	.55	.32	.21	.18	.20	.32	.31	.16	.25
<i>N</i>	2,447	2,447	267	267	89	89	42	42	15	15

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 census tracts in the county.

well integrated. In Dade County, for example, the dissimilarity index for whites and Hispanics in 1990 is .21, down from .32 in 1980. Of the counties reported in table 6.6, Sarasota has the most highly segregated Hispanic population in 1990 and also the most segregated black population.

The counties evaluated in table 6.6 are racially and politically very different. Dade County, the most populous and ethnically diverse in the state, has the strange distinction of being one of the fastest growing hotbeds of Republican strength in urban America. Republicans gained a full sixteen points on Democrats and third parties during the 1980s. If Dade County were in any other state, it would almost certainly be a Democratic fortress. Sarasota County, on the Gulf Coast just south of Tampa, has experienced rapid population growth but is typified by population homogeneity; an elderly, mostly white population; and high incomes. In most states, the population composition of Sarasota County would predict healthy Republican gains. Yet Republicans gained only five points from 1980 to 1990, considerably less than the state average of ten points for the decade. Brevard County, on the Atlantic Coast in central Florida, is one of the fastest growing areas in the state (see map 6.1). Republicans have done exceptionally well there, increasing their share of party registrants a full twelve points during the 1980s. With an elderly population below the state average and few minorities, Brevard appears to be a more typical "suburban" county than other areas of Florida, and a high percentage of its population, nearly three out of four people, are from out of state. Finally, the four-county region in northern Florida described by the dissimilarity index in table 6.6 is comprised of Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison, and Suwannee Counties (see map 6.1) located directly south of Valdosta, Georgia, and northwest of Gainesville. These counties are typical of northern Florida for having large black populations, few Hispanics, few elderly residents, a high proportion of native Floridians, and low to moderate population growth. Republican gains in these counties have been well below average, especially in Lafayette and Hamilton, suggesting that the Old South is dying a prolonged death in northern Florida.

Miami and Dade County

Miami's domination by Cuban Americans is resented and envied by both blacks and non-Cuban Hispanics in South Florida. The Cubans are resented both for their economic success and their political cohesion. They are described as an industrious people who in the early 1990s managed to displace Anglos as the most potent force in local politics (Dunn 1997,

320–21). The sizable black community, about 20 percent of the population in 1990, is considerably less powerful and much poorer than the Hispanic population. As the dissimilarity index shows (table 6.6), the black population is also spatially segregated, but these figures tell only part of the story. This segregation, coupled with the relative dispersion of these black neighborhoods around the Dade County metropolitan area (Rose 1964), has made it especially difficult to mobilize voters (Stack and Warren 1992). Political demands by racial minority groups do not smoothly translate into the political sphere when there is a high degree of neighborhood isolation. When politicians represent homogeneous, ethnically pure communities, their politics takes on the tone of special interest centeredness that alienates other populations. They have difficulty claiming that they speak for the entire community. Their attempts to pursue a nonracial politics in order to reach that broader community are often halfhearted and usually held in contempt by their core supporters.

The black community in Miami has less political power than it does in other major cities mostly because of its smaller numbers relative to rival groups. But it is also powerless because the spatial segregation of the black community produces black politicians who have difficulty communicating a vision for the entire city instead of the singular constituencies from which they come. Finally, black progress has been slowed because this constituency is drawn to a different party than the one that generally runs Miami. While the mayoralty is officially nonpartisan, recent Cuban mayors have had strong Republican inclinations (Xavier Suarez was a registered independent, but his politics were Republican). In the politics of most major cities, blacks can at least claim a role in the election of the mayor and often are able to gain influence by throwing their support to one Democratic primary contender over another. In Miami, blacks are almost never on the winning side. As the most frustrated group in Miami politics, black protest has often erupted in violence. Four riots were precipitated in the 1980s mostly as the result of incidents involving police and black citizens (Dunn 1997; Dunn and Stepick 1992; Porter and Dunn 1984). The most serious of these, the riot of 1980, left eighteen people dead.

Black leaders argue that Miami's economic growth has bypassed their community and that political leaders in the Cuban American community are exclusive in their governing philosophy. Since much of Miami's business is conducted in Spanish and blacks in the city are least likely to be bilingual, the black population is disadvantaged by both skin color and language. Bilingual requirements for employment are concentrated in

entry-level positions in the local labor market (Castro 1992). Thus, many of Miami's African American citizens are trapped in an area where their job prospects are especially poor. Even black Cubans are the victims of discrimination, partly because older Cuban exiles perceive blacks in Cuba as having been supportive of the Castro regime (Aguirre 1976; Aguirre, Schwirian, and LaGreca 1980). Cuban firms employing mostly Cuban workers often compete successfully for construction work because they are not unionized whereas the older firms that employ black and Anglo workers are forced to pay higher union wages. (Grenier et al. 1992).

If Cubans are exclusive in their hiring practices, they are even more so in their governing style. Of course, given the spatial clustering of Cubans in Miami, it is rarely necessary for their politicians to pursue a politics of inclusion. Election districts generally encompass distinct constituencies, and the disadvantage of blacks is exacerbated by the fact that Cubans gravitate toward a different party than the one that is home to most blacks. Traditional Cuban politics consists mostly of anti-Castro demagoguery. Local observers talk about the key litmus test for even trivial local public offices as being the candidate's willingness to denounce Castro. This fierce anti-communism led most Cubans to enroll as Republicans, particularly in the 1980s in response to the cold war rhetoric of Ronald Reagan (Perez 1992, 102). Republican positions on foreign policy can be viewed as an extension of the community's broader concern with its homeland.

It is surprising that a community so interested in Cuba would take any interest in local politics given the expressed desire to eventually return to a post-Castro Cuba. But as the community developed its identity and roots in Miami it became less and less interested in returning (Portes and Mozo 1985). This transition in consciousness occurred during the 1970s, a time when the upper and middle class immigrants put their capital and skills to work in new business ventures (Garcia 1996, 108-9). Second generation Cubans are even less interested in Cuba, and most prefer to speak English (Perez 1992; Portes and Schauffler 1996). Miami has become so Cuban that few will ever return even if the opportunity arises. Miami is the new Havana, and locals will privately admit that it is far better than the old one.

Between Anglos and Cubans, conflict has been mitigated by the flight of the former northward into Palm Beach and Broward Counties. The Cuban and Anglo populations are closely integrated in many neighborhoods. The more exclusive Anglo areas include large settlements of migrants in the "condo canyons" of Miami Beach and North Miami Beach. These are mostly elderly retirees from New York, New Jersey, and

Connecticut, more Democrat than Republican, with time to be politically informed and active. Locals speak of the “condo political guys,” South Florida precinct captains, who are responsible for organizing and turning out friendly partisans on election day. Every large retirement home has one of these political operatives, and his or her activity can generate hundreds and sometimes thousands of votes for the Democratic Party. Aside from the city’s black voters, the most significant Democratic population in Dade County is the predominantly Jewish northeasterners, who have developed a political identity specifically opposed to the domination of Cubans (Moreno and Rae 1992). Party labels are being appropriated by rival ethnic groups, with Jews aligning themselves with Democrats and Cubans with Republicans (Moreno and Rae 1992, 201).

Brevard County

The results in table 6.4 predicted that areas receiving out-of-state migrants would become more Republican in the 1970s and 1980s. Brevard is one of the counties that fits the model well, as its population growth has coincided with a twelve-point rise in Republican registration relative to other parties during the 1980s. Brevard is the home of the “Space Coast,” Cape Canaveral, and major Air Force and NASA installations. Republican strength has been built on military employment, engineering and high-tech employment at NASA, and some very large white evangelical churches. Military assignments at Patrick Air Force Base, outside of Melbourne, are considered “cushy,” and many retired military officers have permanently settled there. Grumman Aircraft relocated a plant from Long Island to Brevard County in the mid-1980s, and thousands of New Yorkers were transferred. For a time during the mid-1980s, the Brevard area economy was stagnant as a result of the Challenger disaster, which raised serious questions about the future of the space shuttle program. When the shuttle resumed flying thirty months after the accident, investment in the county began increasing once again. Even so, the local economy has a tentative feel about it. If the space program loses favor in Congress, investment may dry up. The economy cannot survive on the strength of elderly migration alone.

The black population is small (8 percent of the county in 1990) and concentrated in the older town of Cocoa and in the rural northern tip of the county around the small towns of Mims and Scottsmeer. The town of Mims is split down the middle between white neighborhoods on the west side of U.S. Route 1 and black neighborhoods to the east. A well-known civil rights activist was murdered there in the 1950s (Button 1989, 70–71),

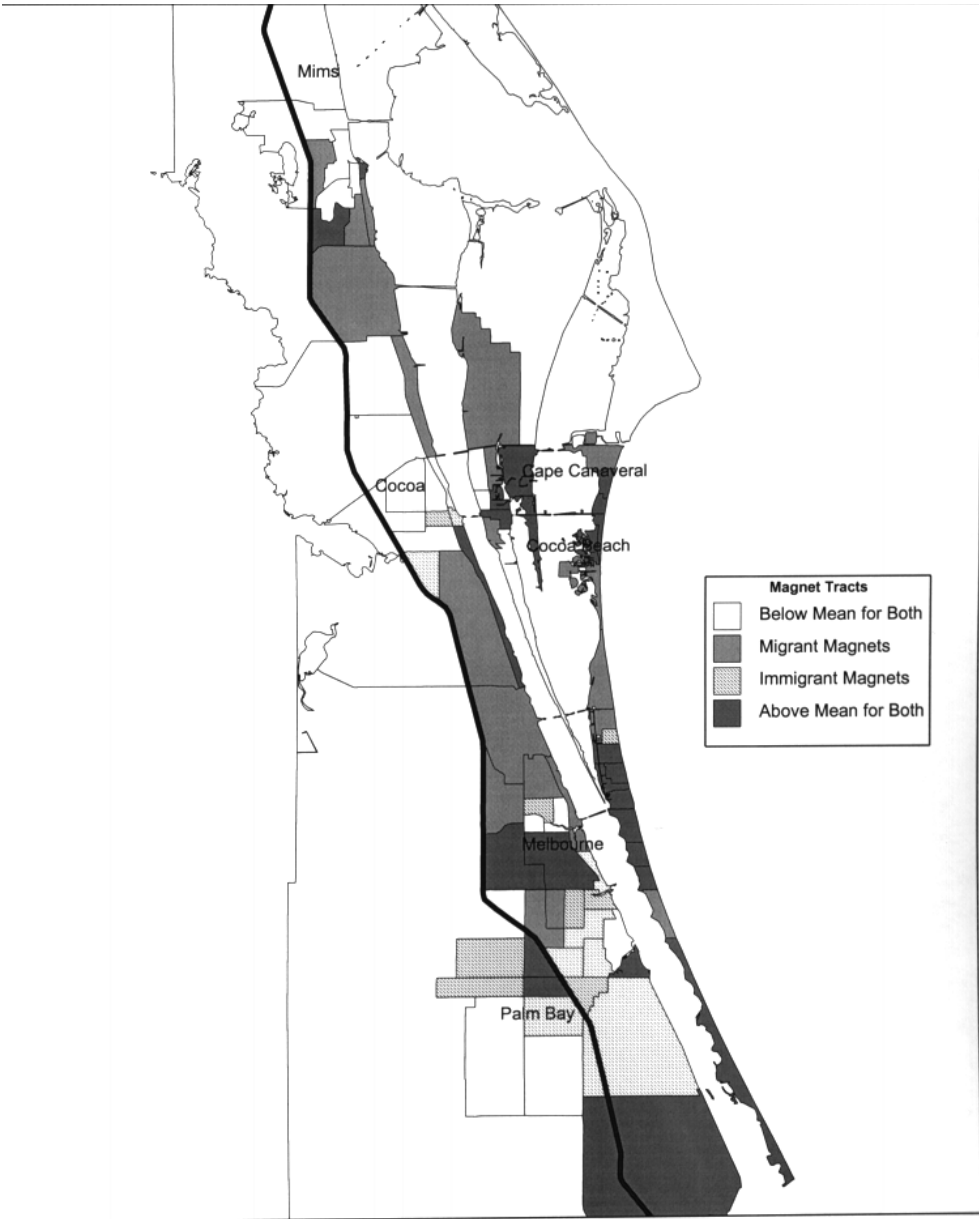
and the perpetrators escaped punishment. The migration of northerners to the Cape eroded the hold of southern white prejudice on the community, but the economic position of blacks has not improved much. The black population remains politically inactive, mostly powerless, and attached to a minority party in a heavily Republican county.

There is a small Mexican community involved in agricultural labor in the orange groves. This settlement is illustrated on map 6.6 at the southernmost end of the county. While not nearly as residentially segregated as blacks, many Hispanics live in Palm Bay, a hastily constructed and sprawling residential development with poor infrastructure built by a corrupt housing corporation in the 1970s. Cheap housing in Palm Bay has attracted Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants but almost no blacks. Cuban residents are not considered “Hispanic” in the same sense that Mexican migrant workers are. Cubans who settled this far north are from the first wave of migrants—mostly in the professions and business, affluent pillars of the community. They are well integrated into the Anglo population and are as active and Republican as Cubans further south.

If the Democrats have one solid constituency in Brevard County it is the elderly northeasterners. Melbourne has some of the largest “Century City” retirement communities in the state, and when President Clinton visited early in his first term touting his health care plan it was as if the Pope had arrived. Thousands of elderly people turned out in ninety degree heat to pay homage to their new Roosevelt. Republican plans in Congress to cut Medicare benefits have polarized the Brevard County population by generation. The elderly will remain a minority interest in the area unless the Space Coast’s economy collapses and the legions of Republican migrants flee for greener pastures.

Sarasota County

The Florida Gulf Coast population is considerably different from the population on the Atlantic. In Sarasota County, in particular, the elderly are more likely to come from the Midwest than the Northeast, with Michigan and Illinois being the leading origin states. Some of Florida’s wealthiest retirees have settled there, preferring it to the east coast for its slower pace, white sand beaches, lower density development, and the perception of lower crime rates. The city of Sarasota is very proud of its reputation as Florida’s center for the arts and is known for its annual French film festival. Strict growth control plans were put in place in the late 1970s to limit development and protect existing investments. A local initiative to place a



Map 6.6. Internal migrant and immigrant magnets in Brevard County, Florida, 1990

three-year moratorium on new development was narrowly defeated in a 1990 referendum. There are no major industries in the county, and most employment is strictly in the service sector.

Sarasota became a Republican county almost overnight in the 1952 presidential election when all of the area's Democrats were swept out of office on the strength of Eisenhower's coattails and the growing population of northern transplants. In the 1990s, the area's strong conservatism was productive of only one Democratic officeholder, a state legislator from the city of Sarasota who was elected on the basis of her personality and her ability to work with Republicans. In recent years, Republican registration growth has been slower than that of other counties because the area's tight growth controls have slowed the population influx. In addition, the Sarasota area attracts mostly elderly people, and some of those are migrating from Florida's Atlantic Coast, bringing Democratic affiliations with them.

The mechanism for racial segregation along Florida's Gulf Coast has been high-end housing development. Sarasota's small black population is more segregated than in almost any other county in Florida and more so than in the state as a whole (see table 6.6). Ordinarily, when minority populations are small, they go unnoticed and are therefore easily integrated. This is not the case in Sarasota County, where the black population is almost entirely located on the near north side of the city of Sarasota. Some recent immigrants have settled there as well (see map 6.7). The city has a ward-based election system, and all of the black votes are concentrated in a single ward. The black population is overwhelmingly Democratic, but, as in Brevard County, the one-party Republican nature of local politics prevents the minority population from having much of a political influence given its partisan orientation. The Hispanic population is located well inland on the east side of the city of Sarasota. These residents are primarily Mexicans and Caribbean islanders who work on fruit and vegetable farms. As a small and isolated population, they have no political influence. Internal migrants and wealthier immigrants prefer living on the coast south of the city of Sarasota, as shown on map 6.7.

Rural North Florida

The four rural counties in north-central Florida that I have evaluated (Hamilton, Suwannee, Madison, and Lafayette) show a higher degree of residential integration than the more urban counties in table 6.6, but appearances can be deceiving since the census tracts cover much larger

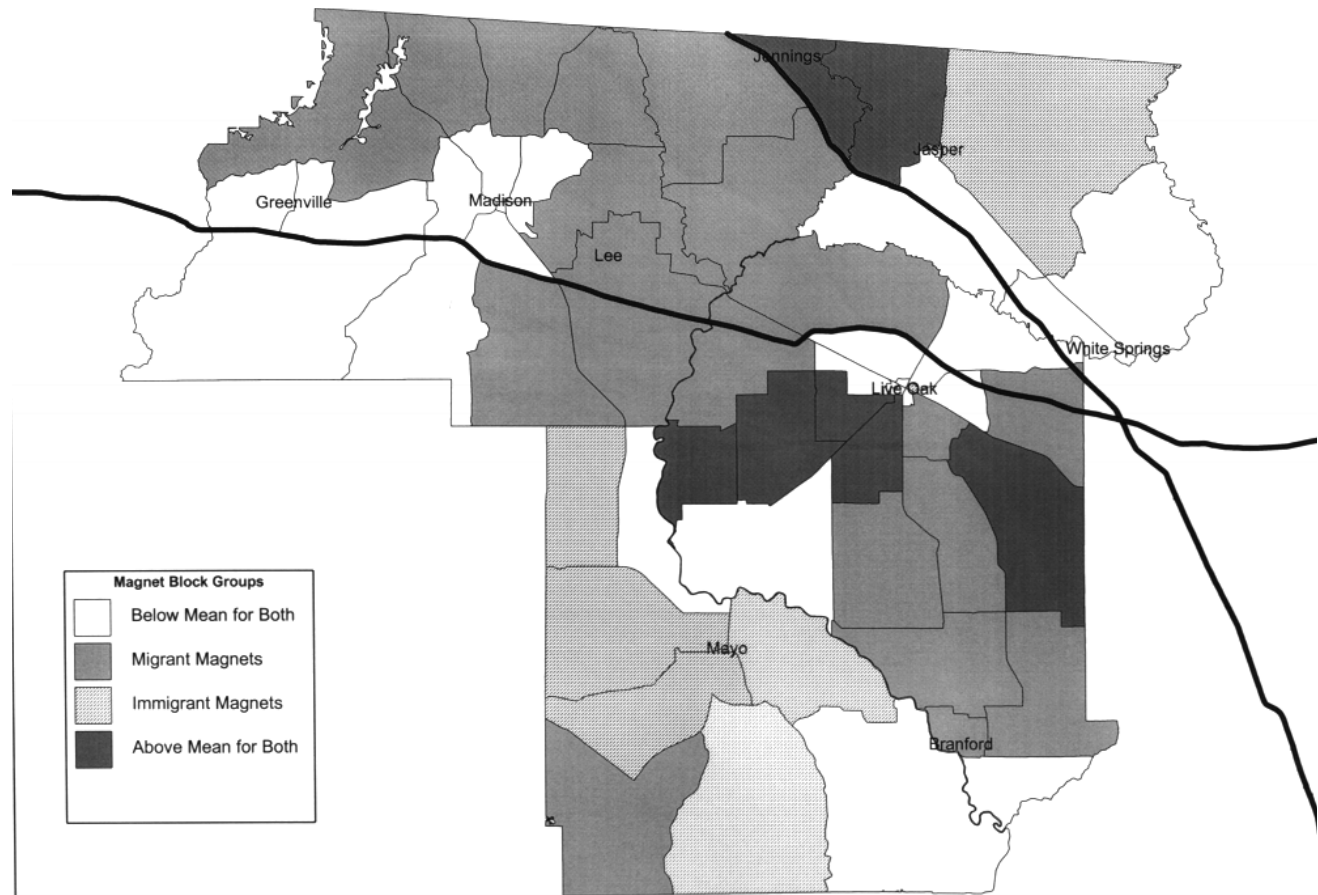


Map 6.7. Internal migrant and immigrant magnets in Sarasota County, Florida, 1990

land areas than in urban Florida. The mechanism for political and social stratification in these areas is not population growth and economic development, as it has been elsewhere, but the Jim Crow system that has been so slow to die in the rural South. The conservative white Democrat is still alive here and sharply distinguishes this region's politics from Democratic strongholds in the state's urban areas. As late as the 1990s, most of the white Democrats from this region were ideologically as conservative as the Republicans. Democratic politicians are not elected on the basis of promises of racial inclusion. School prayer and gun rights legislation were repeatedly introduced in Tallahassee not by Republicans but by North Florida Democrats. In its ideology, North Florida's politics has been more like that of Georgia and Alabama, where political control has remained firmly in the hands of white elites.

Integration of blacks into the economic and political system of North Florida has been hindered by the out-migration of the most able, upwardly mobile blacks. With the collapse of cotton plantations and the mechanization of agriculture (described in Wright 1986), many blacks moved north or migrated to large southern cities nearby. Those who remained behind have been particularly victimized by the low demand of local labor markets. Given that the Democratic Party was supportive of Jim Crow, it is worth asking why rural blacks did not find expression for their views within the Republican Party. The Republicans were not much of an alternative since they could never win a general election. In order to vote in the Democratic primary, nearly everyone, black or white, had to register as a Democrat. The power structure at the local level remained white and Democratic well into the 1990s simply because Democrats could automatically draw upon a larger pool of voters. Even in counties where blacks constitute a majority, or nearly a majority, of the population, most local offices are still in white hands. Today there is increasing evidence of party switching on the part of white Democrats, who have voted Republican in presidential contests since the 1960s. The GOP stigma as the Yankee silk stocking party has steadily eroded. Suwannee County's Republican registration increased by seven points during the 1980s in spite of population growth that lagged well behind the state average.

The few interstate migrants to North Florida are not as wealthy as those who move to the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts. They come to North Florida because land and housing are cheaper and settle mostly near the two interstate highways that run through the area (see map 6.8). Newcomers have been slow to fit into North Florida's small town life and are



Map 6.8. Internal migrant and immigrant magnets in rural North Florida, 1990 (Hamilton, Madison, Lafayette, and Suwannee Counties)

not always welcome. The social conventions of the rural South are alien to these northerners, who are often retiring from industrial jobs in Michigan and Ohio. Natives are suspicious of the new arrivals and worry about how they may alter the racial and political complexion of the region, including Democratic hegemony. White Democratic politicians from North Florida are often dubbed “he-coons,” a southern “cracker” term for male raccoons who protect their turf and eye outsiders with suspicion and hostility. A growing number of Hispanics has settled near the town of Mayo to work in agriculture, but they have not become a political force in state and local politics. Mexicans in north-central Florida have been stigmatized by native whites as involved in marijuana smuggling and drug crime. It is common in this part of Florida for whites to believe that minorities cannot be trusted and are unfit for public office (Button 1989, 229).

Segregated Heterogeneity in Florida

To the extent that Florida is politically balkanized, both migration and ethnicity are responsible. Cuban settlement in South Florida has created a distinct Republican politics in Dade County and the southeast coast. Jewish migration to Broward County and North Miami has given these areas a pronounced Democratic leaning. Sarasota, and the Gulf Coast, has become a one-party Republican stronghold stimulated by the arrival of wealthy, elderly midwesterners. The politics of aged migrants appears to depend mainly upon their states of origin. The elderly are not as politically cohesive as they are often assumed to be (Rosenbaum and Button 1989, 1993). Elderly migration from the Northeast is far more likely to bring Democrats than Republicans to the state’s retirement communities. That northeastern migrants have been more attracted to the Atlantic than the Gulf Coast (Winsberg 1993) explains how regional migration streams have contributed to the state’s political balkanization. The Space Coast of Brevard County has made this area highly dependent upon defense spending and NASA procurement. This has attracted white, well-educated migrants who vote Republican. The much slower population growth of rural North Florida and the attitudes of the entrenched white power holders there have left it the last bastion of the Old South.

While the political parties in Florida counties are more closely competitive than they were forty years ago, Republican gains due to migration have created many new one-party-dominant areas for the GOP. Most of the South Florida Republicans in the U.S. House occupied very safe seats

in the early 1990s, and several consistently ran unopposed in general elections. While Florida's political balkanization is not as great as that of Kentucky, population groups in the Sunshine State are sufficiently segmented and interests of the balkanized groups sufficiently well defined to undermine the practice of pluralist politics and encourage instead the kind of special interest centeredness that is characteristic of so much of contemporary American electioneering. While the redrawing of election boundaries to create more competitive and ethnically heterogeneous districts would counteract the balkanization generated by residential segregation, there is a limit to how extensive the redrawing of boundaries can be. Spatial segregation inevitably affords some politicians the luxury of representing monolithic, single-interest electorates.

The effect of Florida's spatial balkanization has been to exclude blacks and non-Cuban Hispanics from the political process. Blacks remain the minority everywhere except in rural North Florida, where the vestiges of official segregation have excluded them from office. Their monolithic identification with the Democratic Party and the almost equally monolithic identification of the Cuban community with the Republicans have continually frustrated the attempts of blacks to redress grievances in Miami. Spatially segregated populations are consigned to a politics that often awards the spoils to only one or a few dominant groups. Those left out of the process have no other voice but unconventional protest. Rioting and violence have sometimes resulted (Button 1989, 233–37). While violence occasionally wins concessions, these come at a very high cost and are no substitute for meaningful input at the community bargaining table. There is more to representation than electing someone who looks like you, but politics in South Florida has fused the ethnic to the political in such a way that it is increasingly difficult to imagine the separation of the two.