

## THE EFFECTS OF AGE AND POLITICAL EXPOSURE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTY IDENTIFICATION AMONG ASIAN AMERICAN AND LATINO IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

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This article seeks to understand the development of partisanship among the largest of contemporary immigrant groups, Asian Americans and Latinos. Identifying the processes that underlie the acquisition of partisanship is often complicated because the associated concepts are not easily isolated from one another. In particular, among those born in the U.S., distinguishing between the separate effects of age and political exposure on partisan development is especially difficult since age usually serves as an exact measure of exposure to the political system and vice versa. Because immigrants' length of residence does not correspond directly to their age, tracking the acquisition of party identification represents one way to untangle the effects of age and exposure on partisanship. A strong relationship between the number of years an immigrant has lived in the U.S. and the acquisition of partisanship is found. Further analysis shows that naturalization, gains in English language skills, and media use also contribute to immigrants' acquisition of partisanship. This study reveals that a process of reinforcement through exposure to the political system underlies the development of political attitudes across diverse immigrant groups.

**Key words:** immigrants; party identification; Asian Americans; Latinos.

### INTRODUCTION

The wave of immigration that the United States is experiencing today parallels the mass migration that occurred in the early twentieth century (Portes and Rumbaut, 1996). Immigration to the United States peaked from 1900 to 1910,

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then decreased after the 1920s as a result of U.S. immigration policies and a declining economy. Following the liberalization of restrictive and discriminatory immigration laws in the 1960s, immigration totals in the United States increased again. While only 3.3 million immigrants arrived in the United States in the 1960s, nearly 5 million immigrants had entered the country between 1990 and 1995 (Shinagawa, 1996). By the late 1990s, there were approximately 25.8 million immigrants residing in the United States, nearly 10 percent of the total population (Schmidley and Alvarado, 1998). Although the number of immigrants arriving in recent decades is often compared with earlier waves, in contrast to the 1900s, the majority of immigrants today come from Asian and Latin American countries, rather than from Europe (Hing, 1996). Because contemporary Asian American and Latino immigrants represent a growing number of people in the United States, attention to their incorporation into the U.S. political system is critical to understanding future developments in American politics.

One way that immigrants are likely to be incorporated into the U.S. political system is through the acquisition of partisanship. Researchers have identified partisanship as an important predictor of political participation among the general U.S. population (Conway, 1991; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993), as well as among ethnic groups made up of a large number of immigrants (Lien, 1994; Uhlaner, 1996; Kam and Ortiz, 1998). Hence, research on the development of partisanship among contemporary immigrants is a first, but crucial, step toward understanding patterns of political participation that are exhibited among a growing number of people who live in the United States. During past waves of migration, urban machines and political parties played an important role in incorporating some immigrant groups into the U.S. political system (Dahl, 1961; Cornwell, 1960, 1964).<sup>1</sup> However, especially where interparty competition is low, present-day machines may be indifferent or even hostile to immigrant mobilization (Jones-Correa, 1998). In the absence of intense party mobilization, how contemporary immigrants acquire partisan affiliations is not clear. Furthermore, questions remain about whether processes of partisan acquisition are similar or different across distinct immigrant ethnic groups.

Identifying the factors that underlie the development of partisanship is a complex task, especially since the associated concepts are not easily isolated from one another. For example, separating the effects of age and political exposure on partisanship is especially difficult in studies of the native-born population, since age often serves as an exact measure of exposure to the political system and vice versa (Abramson, 1976; Claggett, 1981). However, many of the collinearity problems encountered by those who use traditional cohort data can be avoided by focusing on immigrants, individuals whose exposure to the political system does not directly correspond to their age.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, the present study focuses on foreign-born samples of the U.S. population.

Building on past research, this article seeks to understand the separate effects of political exposure and age on partisan development by examining both length of residence and age on the acquisition of partisanship among the largest of contemporary immigrant groups, Asian Americans and Latinos. The analysis explores possible variations among the ethnic groups that exist within these two broad categories, as well. A strong relationship between the number of years an immigrant has lived in the United States and the acquisition of partisanship is found. Further analysis shows that naturalization, gains in English language skills, and media use also contribute to immigrants' acquisition of partisanship. This study reveals that a process of reinforcement through exposure to the political system underlies the development of political attitudes across diverse immigrant groups.

### THE EFFECTS OF AGE AND POLITICAL EXPOSURE

Among the U.S.-born population, the development of partisanship is often associated with either age or experience with the political system. Converse's (1969, 1976) model of partisan development proposes that party identification intensifies over the lifespan as a result of experiences with the party system, such as voting. Claggett (1981) subsequently found that exposure to the political system helps to explain the acquisition of partisanship. According to proponents of the political exposure model, age effects on the development of partisanship are best interpreted as a proxy for experience effects or the psychological reinforcement of party ties through exposure to the party system (see also Shively, 1979; Jennings and Niemi, 1984; Cassel, 1993).

In contrast to the exposure model, some scholars suggest that age itself determines the development of partisanship (Carlsson and Karlsson, 1970; Nie, Verba, and Kim, 1974; Niemi, Powell, Stanley, and Evans, 1985; Black, Niemi, and Powell, 1987). Niemi et al. (1985) propose that because of their position in the life cycle, middle-aged adults are more likely than young people to be psychologically involved with the party system (p. 318). Age-related theories contend that political orientations adjust to new social roles, triggered by such events as leaving the parental home or becoming a parent. For instance, because they are more likely to have children in school, middle-aged people may be more interested than recent college graduates in school board politics. According to this view, "age-related forces," rather than accumulated exposure to the political system, contribute to partisan development (Niemi et al., 1985, p. 301).

Traditional theories of partisan development, such as those described above, suggest that age and political exposure are variables that are likely to contribute to immigrants' partisan acquisition in the United States. However, as mentioned earlier, because age often serves as a proxy for exposure to the political system in studies of the general population, it is difficult to identify the separate effects of each. Tracking the acquisition of partisanship among immigrants represents

one way to untangle exposure and age effects on partisanship (Uhlener and Garcia, 1998).<sup>3</sup>

### POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION AMONG IMMIGRANTS

Because learning about politics in the United States takes place over time, it is conventional to use length of residence among immigrants to approximate exposure to the political system (Uhlener and Garcia, 1998, p. 7; see also Cain, Kiewiet, and Uhlener, 1991, p. 413). In general, length of residence is associated with greater involvement among immigrants in the political system. For example, Cain, Kiewiet, and Uhlener, in their work on Latinos and Asian Americans in California, found that Latino immigrants were more likely to be Democrats and identify strongly with a party as their time in the United States increased. In another study, Ong and Nakanishi (1996) claim that "length of residence is the single most important factor in determining naturalization rates" among Asian Americans (p. 278). They present similar findings for voter registration rates, indicating that exposure to the political system may be an important predictor of both political attitudes and more active types of political behavior among immigrants.

Studies of communities that contain a large number of immigrants have also examined the role of age in shaping immigrants' political attitudes and behavior (Lien, 1994; Cho, 1999). For instance, Lien finds that being older is positively related to voting participation among Asian Americans and Latinos. However, she did not control for length of residence among immigrants and thus was unable to compare the separate effects of age and length of residency. Cho, in her study of political participation among Latinos and Asian Americans, finds that among Asian Americans and Latinos who were born in the United States, turnout increases monotonically with age, then drops off among the very oldest. However, Cho also finds that age is associated with a decrease in voter turnout among foreign-born members of each community. Cho did not control for length of residence in her study.

One important limitation of the studies reviewed above is that they did not examine the effects of *both* age and length of residence, so one cannot compare the separate effects of each on immigrants' political involvement. Arvizu and Garcia (1996) present one of the few studies that examines the effects of both age and length of residence; their findings indicate that both variables explain turnout among Latinos, as an aggregated group, in the 1988 elections. In their research on political involvement among Canadian immigrants, Black, Niemi, and Powell (1987) also control for both age and length of residence. They report that age is positively related to interest in politics and contacting an elected official. The effects of age on partisan strength are mixed but tend to be positive. Unfortunately, none of the individuals in their sample had lived in Canada for more than five years, and the authors did not report their

findings on the relationship between length of Canadian residency and political involvement. In addition, Uhlaner and Garcia (1998), in their study of Latino party identification, find that among Mexican immigrants in the United States, both length of residence and age contribute to Democratic party affiliation (versus nonpartisanship). Among Puerto Ricans and Cubans, age affects whether immigrants identify with a “dominant” party (Democrats for Puerto Ricans, Republicans for Cubans), but the effects of length of residence, while positive, are nonsignificant. Although Uhlaner and Garcia conducted an analysis that is closely related to the research presented here, they do not focus on Asian American immigrants, a group that is central to the current study.

There is a growing body of literature that examines the political attitudes and behavior of Latinos and Asian Americans (Uhlaner, Cain, and Kiewiet, 1989; Uhlaner, 1991; Cain et al., 1991; de la Garza, DeSipio, Garcia, Garcia, and Falcon, 1992; Tam, 1995; Arvizu and Garcia, 1996; Wrinkle, Stewart, Polinard, Meirer, and Arvizu, 1996; Ong and Nakanishi, 1996; Hero and Campbell, 1996; DeSipio, 1996, 1997; Lien, 1994, 1998; Cho, 1999; Lee, 1999; Junn, 1999), especially those who are immigrants. However, key questions remain. For instance, to what degree do age and length of residence contribute to the development of partisanship among Asian American and Latino immigrants? That is, does either maturity or exposure to the political system determine the acquisition of partisanship among Asian American and Latino immigrants? Which specific types of exposure processes matter? Also, does political attitude development, including the acquisition of partisanship, vary across different ethnic immigrant groups? These questions are addressed in the analysis that follows.

## SURVEY DATA AND VARIABLE DESCRIPTION

Data for this study came from the *Los Angeles Survey of Urban Inequality* (LASUI; see Johnson, Oliver, and Bobo, 1994; Bobo, Oliver, Johnson, and Valenzuela, 2000) and the *Latino National Political Survey* (LNPS; see de la Garza et al., 1992). These surveys overcome many of the limitations of past research on immigrant politics because face-to-face interviews were conducted in the respondents’ preferred language and because respondents from racial/ethnic minority groups were oversampled. Cross-survey comparison also allows for a more rigorous test of the relationships of interest than reliance on a single survey provides.<sup>4</sup> Descriptive profiles of the samples are shown in Appendix A.<sup>5</sup>

### LASUI Variables

The LASUI contained large samples of Latinos and Asian Americans.<sup>6</sup> Only those respondents who indicated that they were immigrants were included in the analysis. Following previous studies, length of residence was included as

a rough measure of exposure to the political system (Cain et al., 1991, p. 413; see also Uhlaner et al., 1989; Ong and Nakanishi, 1996). Age was also included as a key variable in the model. Education and income were included as controls for socioeconomic status.<sup>7</sup>

The LASUI data contained a standard question asking respondents about partisanship (“Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or something else?”). From this question, the key dependent variable in the analysis, the acquisition of partisanship, was constructed. Respondents who thought of themselves as either Republicans or Democrats were coded as “1,” indicating identification with one of the two major U.S. parties. Responses of “no preference” (n = 1,032) and “don’t know” (n = 30) were coded “0,” indicating the absence of identification with a major political party.<sup>8</sup>

### LNPS Variables

Selection and coding of variables from the LNPS proceeded in much the same way as above. Respondents were assigned to a national origin group category (“Mexican origin,” “Puerto Rican origin,” or “Cuban origin”).<sup>9</sup> Again, only immigrants were included in the analysis. In addition, independent variables included length of residence and age. Measures of educational attainment and income were also included, although they differed slightly in wording and response categories from the LASUI (the scale of the LNPS socioeconomic status variables reflects these differences).<sup>10</sup>

A partisanship acquisition variable was constructed such that responses indicating that those interviewed considered themselves either a Democrat or Republican were assigned a value of “1,” and those who answered “None of them” or “Don’t know” were assigned a value of “0.” All other responses were coded as missing.<sup>11</sup> The response categories are similar, but not identical, to the LASUI partisanship question responses.

### MODEL SPECIFICATION

The model below tests the effect of age and length of residence on the acquisition of identification with a major U.S. political party.

#### Logistic Regression of Partisan Identification on Length of Residence and Age

$$\text{Logit (PP)} = a + b_1(\text{Age}) + b_2(\text{Length}) + b_3 (\text{Educ}) + b_4 (\text{Income})$$

where

PP = Respondent Identifies with Major U.S. Political Party, Democrat or Republican (0–1)

Age = Age of Respondents<sup>12</sup>

Length = Length of Residence in the United States

Educ = Level of Education

Income = Family or Household Income

I tested the same model with each data set. Because the racial/ethnic groups of interest in this study exhibited distinct demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds (see Appendix A), they were analyzed separately.

#### **ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF LENGTH OF RESIDENCE AND AGE ON THE ACQUISITION OF PARTISAN IDENTIFICATION AMONG IMMIGRANTS**

How do aging and political exposure contribute to the development of partisanship among immigrants? The first set of findings in this study is contained in Table 1, where the results of the logistic regression of partisan identification on length of residence and age are displayed. The left-hand column of numbers in each table are the regression coefficients that result when age, length of residence, and controls for socioeconomic status are included as independent variables. Controlling for both age and length of residence in the same equation allows us to examine the separate effects of each variable on identification with either of the major U.S. parties.

The most important result of the analysis is that there is a consistent positive, and in almost all cases statistically significant, relationship between length of residence and the likelihood of immigrants identifying with a major U.S. party, controlling for age, income, and education effects. In contrast, the effect of age on identification with a major party among most immigrants is nonsignificant and minimal compared with length of residence. This result is consistent across the ethnic groups included in this study, with the exception of immigrants from Cuba.

Among Asian Americans, for example, there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between length of residence and identification with a major political party. However, the relationship between age and the acquisition of partisanship is negative and not statistically significant. In fact, similar relationships between length of residence, age, and the likelihood of indicating a partisan identification are found when respondents of Chinese and Korean origin are analyzed separately (for the sake of brevity, these findings are not included in the tables).

**TABLE 1. Logistic Regression of Partisan Acquisition on Length of Residence and Age Among Immigrants, by Group**

Independent Variables	B	Standard Error
<i>Asian (LASUI) n = 539</i>		
Age	-.007	.008
Years Lived in U.S.	.064*	.014
Education	.454*	.090
Income	.042**	.023
Constant	-2.583*	.453
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 659.019		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 567.369		
<i>Latino (LASUI) n = 611</i>		
Age	-.007	.011
Years Lived in U.S.	.045*	.013
Education	.463*	.106
Income	.060**	.032
Constant	-1.606*	.344
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 778.281		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 718.244		
<i>Mexican (LNPS) n = 655</i>		
Age	.010	.011
Years Lived in U.S.	.023*	.011
Education	.135*	.026
Income	.025	.025
Constant	-.892*	.444
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 779.772		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 736.034		
<i>Puerto Rican (LNPS) n = 381</i>		
Age	.020	.017
Years Lived in U.S.	.050*	.018
Education	.050	.057
Income	.011	.058
Constant	-.040	.981
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 238.354		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 221.242		
<i>Cuban (LNPS) n = 540</i>		
Age	.045*	.013
Years Lived in U.S.	.030	.020
Education	.226*	.053
Income	.160*	.058
Constant	-3.270*	.922
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 309.783		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 259.407		

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republicans or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference;  
 \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .10$ .



In general, Latino immigrants, including those of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban origin, demonstrate a positive relationship between length of residence and the likelihood of identifying with a major party. The relationship is also statistically significant among Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants. While age is positively related to partisan acquisition among all three Latino ethnic groups in the LNPS study, the relationship is not statistically significant for Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants. Furthermore, in terms of magnitude, length of residence appears to have a greater effect than age on partisan acquisition among Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants. While Cuban immigrants exhibit a positive relationship between length of residence and the acquisition of partisanship, the relationship is not statistically significant. In addition, only among immigrants of Cuban origin is age a positive and statistically significant predictor of partisan acquisition. Partisan acquisition among the Cuban sample is explored in a later section of this article.

It is clear from the findings presented in Table 1 that socioeconomic status, especially education, is often a strong predictor of the acquisition of partisanship among Asian American and Latino immigrants. However, the results in Table 1 also confirm that even when socioeconomic status is taken in to account, length of residence, not maturity, is almost always key to the development of partisanship in the United States among Asian or Latino immigrants.

#### EXTENDING THE MODEL

Ong and Nakanishi (1996) suggest that time-dependent participation is the result of “acculturation,” the process by which immigrants adopt the dominant language patterns, values, and norms of the United States (p. 280). Arvizu and Garcia (1996), who focus on participation among Mexican, Cuban, and Puerto Rican immigrants in the United States, posit that length of residence is a proxy for “life cycle” effects or the development of a sense of “having a vested interest in the politics of the community, consequently promoting an efficacious behavior” (p. 121). Researchers have also made the general claim that “for those born abroad, longer residence in the U.S. corresponds to greater opportunities for inexpensive acquisition of political information” (Uhlener et al., 1989, p. 203; see also Uhlener, 1996).

Though researchers have proposed very general theories about the effects of length of residence on immigrants’ exposure to the U.S. political system, such as those outlined above, questions about *why* length of residence matters in terms of immigrants’ involvement have not been addressed systematically. In the next section, the relationship between length of residence and immigrants’ attitudinal involvement in the political system is explored by examining processes that are likely to underlie the effects of length of residence on political involvement. In particular, the effects of variables that are likely to be related

to exposure to American political life on attitudinal and active involvement in the political system are investigated. These variables include citizenship, the development of English language skills, and media exposure. Correlation coefficients are reported in Appendix B.

### Citizenship

Many previous studies that focus on minority groups that encompass a large number of immigrants have investigated the role of citizenship in determining political behavior (Uhlener et al., 1989; de la Garza et al., 1992; Pachon, 1991; Kwoh and Hui, 1993; Uhlener, 1996; DeSipio, 1996, 1997). Uhlener (1996) reports that, in general, noncitizens are less politically active than citizens (p. 44). However, she and her colleagues also contend that “non-citizens do participate, especially in activities in which they directly present their views or work on some issue” (Uhlener et al., p. 212). Citizenship is certainly important to consider when examining the effects of length of residence on political involvement. The two variables are intimately related, since immigrants must fulfill a length of residence requirement in order to become U.S. citizens. Because naturalization requires that citizenship applicants demonstrate that they are familiar with U.S. history and government, one might expect that going through the naturalization process would expose immigrants to some aspects of the American political system.<sup>13</sup>

Both the LASUI and the LNPS contained questions asking respondents about whether they were naturalized citizens. Table 2A lists coefficients from logistic regression equations that regress the acquisition of partisanship on the same set of variables as contained in Table 1, plus a variable indicating the respondents' citizenship status.<sup>14</sup> The cell entries in Table 2A are the coefficients for the citizenship variable. We see that across groups, citizenship is a strong, positive predictor of the acquisition of partisanship. In each case, the coefficient is statistically significant as well. The full regression equations, including all independent variables, are contained in Appendix C.

**TABLE 2A. The Effects of Citizenship on the Acquisition of Partisanship Among Immigrant Groups**

Ethnic Group	Citizenship Coefficient
Asian Americans (LASUI)	.873*
Latinos (LASUI)	1.195*
Mexicans (LNPS)	.467*
Cubans (LNPS)	.909*

*Notes:* Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. \* $p < .05$ .

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republicans or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference.

Does citizenship explain why immigrants are likely to identify with a major political party over time? Table 2B compares the effects of length of residence on the acquisition of partisanship among immigrants, before and after controlling for citizenship. It appears that citizenship does account for some of the effects of length of residence on partisan acquisition. Among Asian American and Latino immigrants who took part in the LASUI, controlling for citizenship diminishes the effects of length of residence, although length of residence effects remain positive and statistically significant. Among Mexican immigrants who participated in the LNPS, controlling for citizenship fully explains why those respondents are more likely to identify with a major U.S. party as their length of residence increases. That is, with the addition of citizenship status as an independent variable, the effects of length of residence virtually disappear. Among the Cuban LNPS sample, controlling for citizenship status changes the sign of the coefficient from positive to negative. We can conclude from the results presented in Table 2B that the naturalization process is an important factor underlying the acquisition of partisanship among immigrants over time.

It is also informative to focus on the analysis of those of Puerto Rican origin when considering the effects of citizenship on identification with a major U.S. party. Because all migrants from Puerto Rico enter the country as U.S. citizens, their inclusion in this study allows for a natural experiment to test the effects of formal citizenship status on the development of partisanship. The results of the analysis show that even though they are all citizens of the United States when they migrate, immigrants from Puerto Rico demonstrate much the same process of partisan development as do other groups. For example, if we turn our attention to the Puerto Rican immigrant sample in Table 1, we see that length of residence appears to be an important influence on the acquisition of partisanship among the Puerto Rican immigrants. In other words, although it probably has some intermediate effect, perhaps speeding up the process of partisan acquisition, citizenship per se does not appear to be driving the development of partisanship among Puerto Rican immigrants.<sup>15</sup>

**TABLE 2B. The Effects of Length of Residence on the Acquisition of Partisanship Among Immigrants Before and After Controlling for Citizenship**

Ethnic Group	Before	After
Asian Americans (LASUI)	.064*	.037*
Latinos (LASUI)	.045*	.034*
Mexicans (LNPS)	.023*	.007
Cubans (LNPS)	.030	-.020

*Notes:* Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. \* $p < .05$ .

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republicans or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference.

### English Proficiency or Dominance

The development of English language proficiency among immigrants is also likely to be related to political involvement over time. For instance, as the length of residence that immigrants spend in the United States increases, immigrants are also likely to develop stronger English language skills (Cho, 1999). Because most information about U.S. politics is available in English, immigrants who understand English are likely to find political information more accessible.<sup>16</sup> Thus, strong English skills are likely to lower the information costs associated with political participation, leading to increased involvement in the U.S. political system. In fact, several studies have found a strong relationship between English skills and voting participation among Latinos and Asian Americans (cf. Cho, 1999; DeSipio, 1996).

The acquisition of partisanship was regressed on age, length of residence, socioeconomic status, and either English proficiency or English dominance.<sup>17</sup> The results contained in Table 3A, showing the coefficients associated with the language-related variables in the regression equations, suggest that English *proficiency* is a positive and statistically significant predictor of identification with a major U.S. party among the Asian American and Latino LASUI samples. In contrast, the relationship between English *dominance* (usual language of respondent is English) and the development of party identification is not statistically significant, although it is positive among Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants in the LNPS sample. The relationship between English dominance and the acquisition of partisanship among the Cuban sample is negative, in fact. These findings highlight the importance of distinguishing between English skills and English use in studies of immigrants.<sup>18</sup>

Similar to the analysis of citizenship above, we can compare the effects of length of residence on the acquisition of partisanship before and after control-

**TABLE 3A. The Effects of English Proficiency/Dominance on the Acquisition of Partisanship Among Immigrant Groups**

Ethnic Group	English Proficiency
Asian Americans (LASUI)	.686*
Latinos (LASUI)	.958*
Ethnic Group	English Dominance
Mexicans (LNPS)	.135
Puerto Ricans (LNPS)	.197
Cubans (LNPS)	-.349

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients \* $p < .05$ .

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republicans or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference.

ling for English proficiency or dominance. Table 3B shows the coefficients for the effects of length of residence on partisan acquisition, before and after controlling for English proficiency or dominance. As with citizenship, having English skills seems to account partially for the effects of length of residence among the Asian American and Latino respondents in the LASUI. For these two groups, the magnitude of the coefficient for length of residence is diminished with the inclusion of English proficiency as an independent variable. Using English as a dominant language does not reduce the magnitude of the length of residence coefficient among the Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cubans who participated in the LNPS. The cell entries in the right-hand column in Table 3B show that even if we control for English language skills or dominance, the size and statistical significance of the coefficients for length of residence are unaffected.

### Media Exposure

Media use is likely to contribute to immigrants' exposure to American political life (Chaffee, Nass, and Yang, 1990).<sup>19</sup> Studies that focus on immigrant populations have found a positive correlation between media use and political learning (Martinelli and Chaffee, 1995; Chaffee et al., 1990). For instance, using a 1988 survey of immigrant citizens, Martinelli and Chaffee found that attention to newspapers was a strong predictor of knowledge of candidate issue positions.

The LNPS contains a variable that allows us to test the effects of media exposure on immigrants' likelihood of adopting partisanship. Respondents were asked "How many days during the past week did you read about politics and public affairs in a daily newspaper?" Media exposure was added to the list of independent variables included in the regression equations seen in Table 1

**TABLE 3B. The Effects of Length of Residence on the Acquisition of Partisanship Among Immigrants Before and After Controlling for English Proficiency/Dominance**

Ethnic Group	Before	After
<i>English Proficiency</i>		
Asian Americans (LASUI)	.064*	.048*
Latinos (LASUI)	.045*	.026**
<i>English Dominance</i>		
Mexicans (LNPS)	.023*	.021**
Puerto Ricans (LNPS)	.050*	.046*
Cubans (LNPS)	.030	.034

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .10$ .

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republican or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference.

**TABLE 4A. The Effects of Media-Exposure (Newspaper Reading) on the Acquisition of Partisanship Among Immigrant Groups**

Ethnic Group	Media-Exposure Coefficient
Mexican (LNPS)	.120*
Puerto Rican (LNPS)	.339*
Cuban (LNPS)	.061

Notes: Cell entries are logistic regression coefficients. \* $p < .05$ .

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republican or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference.

(age, length of residence, education, and income).<sup>20</sup> Table 4A shows the coefficients for the effects of exposure to the daily news on the acquisition of partisanship. The full equations showing the effects of all independent variables are contained in Appendix E. We see that for Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants, more exposure to newspapers leads to a greater likelihood of identifying with a major U.S. party. The coefficients for the effects of media exposure on the acquisition of partisanship among Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants are positive and statistically significant. For Cuban immigrants, the coefficient for media exposure is positive, but not statistically significant. Unfortunately, the LASUI did not contain a media use variable.

Although there appears to be a relationship between media exposure and the acquisition of partisanship, at least among the Mexican and Puerto Rican samples, these effects do not appear to explain why length of residence matters among the two groups. Table 4B shows that the effects of length of residence remain strong and statistically significant after controlling for media exposure effects. Even after taking the effects of media exposure into account, Mexican and Puerto Rican immigrants are more likely to identify with a major U.S. party as their length of residence increases. Therefore, although media exposure appears to have an independent influence on Mexican and Puerto Rican immi-

**TABLE 4B. The Effects of Length of Residence on the Acquisition of Partisanship Among Immigrants Before and After Controlling for Media Exposure (Newspaper Reading)**

Ethnic Group	Before	After
Mexicans (LNPS)	.023*	.025*
Puerto Ricans (LNPS)	.050*	.042*
Cubans (LNPS)	.030	.040**

Notes: Cell Entries are logistic regression coefficients \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .10$ .

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republican or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference.

grants' likelihood of acquiring partisanship, it does not seem to explain the effects of length of residence.

## DISCUSSION

This analysis has established that length of residence, rather than age, is the basis for the development of partisanship among most ethnic immigrant groups included in the study. This finding suggests that, in most cases, it is exposure to the political system, not maturity, that accounts for attitudinal involvement with the two major U.S. parties over time. We cannot dismiss the age hypothesis entirely, however, since this study shows that age is a positive and statistically significant predictor of partisan acquisition among Cubans.

Which specific processes seem to underlie the effects of length of residence on partisan acquisition? Citizenship has the most consistent influence on the likelihood of acquiring partisanship. Among all of the groups included in this analysis, citizenship was a powerful and statistically significant predictor of identification with a major U.S. party. Furthermore, after controlling for citizenship, the effects of length of residence on the likelihood that immigrants would adopt partisanship were diminished or disappeared altogether. Thus, while citizenship does not fully account for the effects of length of residence on the likelihood of acquiring partisanship, it does explain much of the relationship between time spent in the United States and identification with a major U.S. party. Similarly, although having strong English skills does not explain all of the effects of length of residence on partisan acquisition, English proficiency appears to underlie at least some of the effects of time spent living in the United States. On the other hand, there appears to be little relationship between English dominance and the development of partisanship among immigrants.

Although media exposure is a predictor of partisan acquisition among most groups included in this analysis, it does not appear to account for the effects of length of residence on immigrants' identification with a major U.S. party. For the most part, immigrants are just as likely to identify with a party as their length of residence increases both before and after controlling for media exposure.<sup>21</sup>

Interestingly, among Cuban immigrants, the most powerful predictors of partisan acquisition are age, education, income, and citizenship. Among the Cuban sample, the key predictors of partisan acquisition seem to be associated with age, citizenship, and economic resources, rather than length of residence, English dominance, or media use. Perhaps this result is the consequence of the particular settlement pattern and political history of Cuban immigrants in the United States. Moreno (1997) contends that "the relative prosperity of the Cuban community and their large numbers in cohesive and contiguous neighborhoods" distinguish Cubans in the United States from other Latino

immigrant groups (p. 214). Furthermore, Cubans in the United States have achieved a fair amount of local and national political representation in areas like Dade County, where new immigrants from Cuba are most likely to settle (Moreno, 1997). Thus, Cuban immigrants tend to migrate to areas where there is likely to be mobilization and voter education by Cuban elected officials, who often speak Spanish. For Cuban immigrants, traditional barriers to learning about the political system, such as not having strong English skills, may be mitigated by mobilization by elected officials with strong connections to the Cuban immigrant community. This might help explain why English dominance or media exposure appears to be slightly less important for the acquisition of partisanship among Cuban immigrants compared to other groups.

## CONCLUSION

The United States is experiencing a wave of immigration that is often compared to the peak levels of migration that characterized the early 1900s. In contrast to the past, however, mobilization of immigrant communities by strong party organizations is less prevalent (Jones-Correa, 1998). How, then, are immigrants likely to become incorporated into the American political system? This study indicates that time may be one of the most important factors. Because the results of this study show a strong relationship between the number of years an immigrant has lived in the United States and the acquisition of partisanship, it is very likely that, consistent with the political exposure model (Converse, 1969, 1976; Claggett, 1981), a process of reinforcement through exposure underlies the development of political attitudes. On the other hand, the present study found that only among the Cuban sample is partisan development linked to age or “age-related forces” (Niemi et al., 1985; Black et al., 1987). Indeed, because variables that are likely to help immigrants learn about the U.S. political system (citizenship status, English proficiency, and newspaper reading) are usually positive and statistically significant predictors of partisan acquisition, we can be fairly confident that exposure to the political system is a strong determinant of the development of partisanship.

This study indicates some important similarities between groups, particularly in terms of the effects of length of residence, age, and citizenship on partisan development. This is not to say that there are no important differences between different racial and ethnic groups in terms of specific socialization processes and environments (Uhlener et al., 1989; Cho, 1999). Cho’s insightful research on electoral participation among Latinos and Asian Americans suggests that distinct immigrant groups are “socialized through different channels” (p. 3) in different social contexts (p. 7).

What are the implications of this analysis for our understanding of partisan development more generally? The results of this study provide some suggestion



that it is exposure to the political system, rather than age per se, that has a greater influence on the development of partisanship among the native born. However, caution needs to be employed when applying relationships associated with an immigrant population directly to the native born, and vice versa (Cho, 1999). Perhaps the dampened impact of age among immigrants is actually due to differences between immigrants and the native born in the social roles associated with aging processes.

Because they are members of a growing population, contemporary immigrants and their descendants may emerge as a significant political power in the coming decades. Yet, as Nakanishi (1991), Cain (1988), and others have emphasized, several factors may serve to complicate their political empowerment even as their numbers increase. Kwoh and Hui (1993), for example, claim that structural barriers, such as redistricting procedures that divide minority populations and the lack of availability of bilingual ballots, may impede electoral participation among Asian Americans. Jones-Correa (1998) identifies local party organizations' lack of commitment to incorporating immigrant communities as an important barrier to Latino political empowerment.

In fact, recent studies have remarked upon the low rates of electoral participation among groups that consist of a large number of immigrants—particularly Latinos and Asian Americans—compared to the native born (Cain, 1988; Gurwitt, 1990; Pachon, 1991; Kwoh and Hui, 1993; Arvizu and Garcia, 1996; Hero and Campbell, 1996; Portes and Rumbaut, 1996; Jones-Correa, 1998). Consistent with Ong and Nakanishi's (1996) work on Asian American's naturalization and registration rates, however, the present study suggests that as Latino and Asian American immigrants accumulate experience with the U.S. political system, they are more likely to become attitudinally involved in the U.S. political arena. In fact, additional analysis of the data indicates that length of residence and exposure to the political system are not only key to the development of partisan acquisition, but should be considered critical determinants of more active types of political participation, electoral and nonelectoral, among immigrants.<sup>22</sup> Thus, exposure to the political system appears to affect both attitudinal and active involvement in U.S. politics among immigrants. This study also shows that while the current academic emphasis on the "new second-generation" (Portes, 1996) is likely to yield critical information about the incorporation of post-1965 immigrant groups into American political life, important changes in individual political participation patterns occur within the lifetime of first-generation immigrants as well.

This research focused on a unique segment of the U.S. population, Asian and Latino immigrants, to explore how age, length of residence, and variables related to exposure to the political system affect attitudinal involvement among the foreign born. It is critical to recognize that studies of partisan development and political behavior benefit from considering the political experience of

immigrants, because in contrast to the U.S.-born population, the effects of length of residence in the United States can be distinguished from the effects of age. Finally, because this study reveals a positive relationship between variables that are likely to facilitate immigrants' exposure to the U.S. political system and involvement in U.S. politics, the analysis presented in this article also suggests that the political incorporation of Asian and Latino immigrants is likely to depend on maximizing immigrants' exposure to and access to information about the American political system.

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#### APPENDIX A. Descriptive Statistics

	Los Angeles Survey of Urban Inequality		Latino National Political Survey		
	Latino Immigrants n = 800	Asian American Immigrants n = 924	Mexican Origin Immigrants n = 769	Puerto Rican Origin Immigrants n = 429	Cuban Origin Immigrants n = 612
Citizens	8.8% 88	35.3% 326	13.7% 105	N.A.	38.2% 234
Permanent Residents (Among noncitizens)	48.3% 481	55.2% 510	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Applying for/ Planning to Apply for Citizenship (Among noncitizens)	N.A.	N.A.	57.9% 445	N.A.	41.3% 253
Median Education	Less than High School	Community College/A.A.	6th year	9th year	10th year
Mean Age in Years (std. dev.)	36.3 (12.73)	45.99 (16.00)	36.59 (13.96)	44.22 (15.58)	51.88 (17.04)

**APPENDIX A. (Continued)**

	Los Angeles Survey of Urban Inequality		Latino National Political Survey		
	Latino Immigrants n = 800	Asian American Immigrants n = 924	Mexican Origin Immigrants n = 769	Puerto Rican Origin Immigrants n = 429	Cuban Origin Immigrants n = 612
Mean Years in U.S. Among Immigrants (std. dev.)	13.84 (9.57)	12.10 (8.61)	16.71 (13.52)	24.19 (13.31)	19.75 (10.15)
Median Family or Household Income	\$15–19,999	\$25–29,999	\$17–19,999	\$9–10,000	\$15–16,999

**APPENDIX B. Correlations between Length of Residence, Citizenship Status, Media Exposure, English Proficiency/Dominance Among Immigrants, by Group**

	Length of Residence	Citizenship	English Proficiency/ Dominance
<i>Asian (LASUI)</i>			
Citizenship	<b>.52</b>		
English Proficiency	<b>.22</b>	<b>.34</b>	
<i>Latino (LASUI)</i>			
Citizenship	<b>.36</b>		
English Proficiency	<b>.28</b>	<b>.33</b>	
<i>Mexican (LNPS)</i>			
Citizenship	<b>.28</b>		
English Dominance	.26	.23	
Media Exposure (Newspaper Reading)	<b>.14</b>	<b>.18</b>	<b>.24</b>
<i>Cuban (LNPS)</i>			
Citizenship	<b>.44</b>		
English Dominance	<b>.24</b>	<b>.19</b>	
Media Exposure (Newspaper Reading)	<b>.08</b>	<b>.11</b>	.02
<i>Puerto Rican (LNPS)</i>			
English Dominance	<b>.23</b>	n.a.	
Media Exposure (Newspaper Reading)	<b>.17</b>	n.a.	<b>.19</b>

Notes: Cell entries are Pearson's correlation coefficients; n.a. = not applicable due to lack of question on media or lack of variation in citizenship status.

Bold type indicates  $p < .05$  (two-tailed).

**APPENDIX C. Logistic Regression of Partisan Acquisition on Age, Length  
of Residence, Socioeconomic Status, and Citizenship Among  
Immigrants, by Group**

Independent Variables	B	Standard Error
<i>Asian (LASUI) n = 539</i>		
Age	-.003	.008
Years Lived in U.S.	.037*	.015
Education	.423*	.091
Income	.036	.023
Citizen	.873*	.246
Constant	-2.650*	.459
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 659.019		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 554.835		
<i>Latino (LASUI) n = 610</i>		
Age	-.008	.011
Years Lived in U.S.	.034*	.014
Education	.417*	.108
Income	.049	.033
Citizen	1.195*	.324
Constant	-1.470*	.350
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 777.468		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 703.381		
<i>Mexican (LNPS) n = 587</i>		
Age	.012	.012
Years Lived in U.S.	.007	.012
Education	.121*	.028
Income	.028	.028
Citizen	.467*	.120
Constant	-1.623*	.538
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 685.758		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 635.095		
<i>Cuban (LNPS) n = 513</i>		
Age	.052*	.014
Years Lived in U.S.	-.020	.023
Education	.184*	.062
Income	.136*	.065
Citizen	.909*	.235
Constant	-4.160*	1.086
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 270.917		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 213.252		

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republican or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference;  
\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .10$ .

**APPENDIX D. Logistic Regression of Partisan Acquisition on Age, Length of Residence, Socioeconomic Status, and English Proficiency/Dominance Among Immigrants, by Group**

Independent Variables	B	Standard Error
<i>Asian (LASUI) n = 520</i>		
Age	.000	.008
Years Lived in U.S.	.048*	.015
Education	.360*	.095
Income	.041**	.023
English Proficiency	.686*	.252
Constant	-2.738*	.471
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 626.600		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 542.194		
<i>Latino (LASUI) n = 603</i>		
Age	.008	.011
Years Lived in U.S.	.026**	.014
Education	.367*	.113
Income	.046	.034
English Proficiency	.958*	.251
Constant	-2.007*	.362
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 764.833		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 687.100		
<i>Mexican (LNPS) n = 654</i>		
Age	.010	.011
Years Lived in U.S.	.021**	.012
Education	.131*	.027
Income	.025	.026
English Dominance	.135	.266
Constant	-.896*	.444
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 779.107		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 735.133		
<i>Puerto Rican (LNPS) n = 380</i>		
Age	.021	.017
Years Lived in U.S.	.046*	.020
Education	.045	.058
Income	.009	.059
English Dominance	.197	.465
Constant	-.058	.980
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 238.155		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 220.800		
<i>Cuban (LNPS) n = 539</i>		
Age	.042*	.013
Years Lived in U.S.	.034	.021
Education	.228*	.054
Income	.160*	.058
English Dominance	-.349	.512
Constant	-3.179*	.929
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 309.609		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 258.919		

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republican or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference;  
 \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .10$ .

**APPENDIX E. Logistic Regression of Partisan Acquisition on Age, Length of Residence, Socioeconomic Status, and Media Use Among Immigrants, by Group**

Independent Variables	B	Standard Error
<i>Mexican (LNPS) n = 643</i>		
Age	.004	.011
Years Lived in U.S.	.025*	.012
Education	.117*	.028
Income	.017	.026
Media Exposure (Newspaper)	.120*	.048
Constant	-.703	.453
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 764.344		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 714.167		
<i>Puerto Rican (LNPS) n = 375</i>		
Age	.015	.018
Years Lived in U.S.	.042*	.019
Education	-.017	.063
Income	-.023	.061
Media Exposure (Newspaper)	.339*	.107
Constant	.479	1.055
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 223.414		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 195.891		
<i>Cuban (LNPS) n = 531</i>		
Age	.043*	.013
Years Lived in U.S.	.040**	.021
Education	.205*	.055
Income	.181*	.061
Media Exposure (Newspaper)	.061	.070
Constant	-3.329*	.951
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 293.703		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 242.017		

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Republican or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference;  
\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .10$ .

**APPENDIX F. The Effects of Time-Related Exposure Variables the Acquisition of Partisanship Among Immigrants, by Group**

Independent Variables	B	Standard Error
<i>Asian (LASUI) n = 520</i>		
Age	.003	.008
Years Lived in U.S.	.027**	.016
Education	.345*	.096
Income	.037	.024
Citizen	.719*	.254
English Proficiency	.588*	.257
Constant	-2.775*	.474
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 626.596		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 534.234		
<i>Latino (LASUI) n = 602</i>		
Age	.006	.012
Years Lived in U.S.	.018	.015
Education	.341*	.114
Income	.040	.034
Citizen	1.018*	.335
English Proficiency	.857*	.256
Constant	-1.864*	.368
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 764.032		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 676.938		
<i>Mexican (LNPS) n = 575</i>		
Age	.006	.012
Years Lived in U.S.	.010	.013
Education	.105*	.030
Income	.021	.028
Citizen	.438*	.123
English Dominance	.011	.287
Media Exposure (Newspaper)	.101*	.052
Constant	-1.373*	.550
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 670.250		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 616.661		
<i>Puerto Rican (LNPS) n = 374</i>		
Age	.015	.018
Years Lived in U.S.	.041	.022
Education	-.017	.064
Income	-.022	.062
English Dominance	.032	.423
Media Exposure (Newspaper)	.337*	.107
Constant	.468	1.055
Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 223.230		
-2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 195.728		

## APPENDIX F. (Continued)

Independent Variables	B	Standard Error
<i>Cuban (LNPS) n = 503</i>		
Age	.045*	.015
Years Lived in U.S.	-.001	.026
Education	.163*	.064
Income	.158*	.069
Citizen	.859*	.249
English Dominance	-.523	.590
Media Exposure (Newspaper)	.074	.074
Constant	-3.972*	1.130
—Initial -2 Log-Likelihood = 254.073		
—2 Log-Likelihood at Convergence = 197.929		

Dependent Variable: 1 = Identification with Repub. or Democrats, 0 = No Party Preference;  
\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .10$ .

## NOTES

1. Erie (1988) reminds us, however, that the mobilization of immigrants attributed to political machines has been exaggerated.
2. Others have attempted similar analyses of new electorates. Among them, Niemi et al. (1985) studied newly enfranchised groups including female voters in Switzerland, who were enfranchised at the national level in 1971, and blacks in the American South in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Claggett (1980) also attempted to separate the effects of age and political experience in his study that included women who were of voting age prior to 1920. While these studies are quite innovative in their approach, Niemi et al. readily admit that “disenfranchisement is not equivalent to total disengagement from the political system. . . . The disenfranchised may well have picked up information and feelings within their families” (p. 317). That is, their data do not allow them to truly separate the effects of age and experience for comparison.
3. It is important to consider the possible effects of period and generation on the partisan acquisition of immigrants. Cain et al., 1991, claim that assigning contemporary immigrants to a particular generational cohort is difficult since, “nothing to rival the political magnitude of the Great Depression has occurred since then” (p. 399). They do, however, control for generation effects in their model of partisan choice among Latinos and Asians and find no evidence that such effects were present. As far as period effects are concerned, it is difficult to identify any particular historical event that would have a uniform or substantial effect across the distinct ethnic subgroups included in this analysis, especially since the majority of the samples in the two data sets employed arrived during the 1980s and 1990s. Since it is hard to justify the inclusion of variables linked to generation and period effects, length of residence and age will be the primary focus of my analysis.
4. The LASUI is a stratified area probability household survey that generated 4,025 face-to-face interviews with approximately equal numbers of non-Latino whites, blacks, Latinos, and Asians in Los Angeles County. In 1993 and 1994, adults 21 years and older were interviewed in English, Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, or Cantonese. In terms of both ethnic and neighborhood poverty status, comparisons between the LASUI and 1990 Census data suggest that the LASUI



sample is highly representative of the Los Angeles metropolitan population (Johnson, Farrell, and Toji, 1997). The LNPS used a multistage probability sample design based on 1980 census data. The survey targeted members of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban Latinos for face-to-face interviews with bilingual interviewers. Between July 1989 and March 1990, interviews were conducted in English or Spanish with persons over 18 years old. The number of interviews conducted with Latinos was 2,817, including 1,546 with persons of Mexican origin, 589 with persons of Puerto Rican ancestry, and 682 Cuban Americans.

5. Some might question why noncitizens were included in this study. For instance, an argument might be made that since noncitizens cannot vote in the vast majority of elections, they would have little reason to develop a preference for a U.S. political party. Although noncitizens are legally barred from voting, party politics and policies do affect their everyday lives. For example, the parties often differ in their stances toward immigration and provisions of government services toward immigrants. It is plausible that immigrants pay attention to government policies that are likely to affect their experiences in the United States, especially anti-immigrant policies, and that they associate these policies with a particular party. Also, some researchers have compared immigrants to adolescents in terms of political attitude development (Chaffee et al., 1990). Research on political socialization has established that adolescents develop attitudes toward U.S. political parties before they are legally eligible to vote (e.g., Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes, 1960; Key, 1961; Jennings and Langton, 1969; Beck and Jennings, 1991; Niemi and Jennings, 1991). Because they are exposed to the larger political system before they are legally able to take part in the electoral system, immigrants, like adolescents, may well develop partisan attachments before they actually vote. In fact, the data used in this study show that noncitizens do indeed exhibit attitudes toward the parties. For example, 27.6 percent ( $n = 617$ ) of noncitizen Latinos and 16.8 percent of noncitizen Asian Americans ( $n = 519$ ) who took part in the LASUI survey indicated that they had a preference for one of the two major U.S. parties. Previous research has also included noncitizens in studies of partisanship and political participation among immigrant minority groups (Uhlener et al., 1989; Uhlener and Garcia, 1998).
6. Among the Latino immigrant sample, 64 percent were of Mexican origin. The remainder of the sample (36%) consisted of Central American immigrants, primarily from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. The Asian American sample was made up of Chinese immigrants (54%), Korean immigrants (38%), and other Asians (8%).
7. Education was coded in the following manner: 0 = none, 1 = H.S./GED, 2 = Community College/Associate Degree, 3 = Bachelor's degree, 4 = Master's degree, 5 = PhD or Other Professional degree. The income measure was constructed from responses to a question asking about "your family's total income in 1992."
8. Among those included in the LASUI, 94 Asian American immigrants and 92 Latino immigrants indicated that they were Independents when asked about their party identification. Among those immigrants included in the LNPS, 135 respondents of Mexican origin, 32 of Puerto Rican origin, and 52 of Cuban origin identified themselves as Independents. Because those who identify as "Independent" are not usually considered partisans, respondents who identified as such were excluded from the analysis. However, coding those who responded as Independents as positive responses had little impact on the results. Likewise, when Democratic and Republican identifiers were treated separately (for instance, only Republican identifiers coded as "1," those indicating "no preference" or "don't know" coded as "0," and Democratic identifiers excluded from the analysis), results similar to those I present were obtained; however, the standard errors were larger.
9. The majority (73%) of those who were screened into the study as "Puerto Rican Origin" indicated "Puerto Rico" when asked what their country of birth was. Many studies that focus on immigrant populations include Puerto Ricans while at the same time noting differences

- in citizenship status and travel restrictions between Puerto Ricans and most other immigrants (Marshall, 1987; Jennings, 1988; Davis, Haub, and Willett, 1988; Acosta-Belen, 1988; Safa, 1988; de la Garza et al., 1992).
10. Respondents in the LNPS were asked about the highest grade level they had completed. Response categories ranged from 0 ("no formal schooling") to 17 ("seventeenth year"). The income measure was constructed from a question asking respondents about the total yearly income received by the respondent's household in 1988.
  11. Response categories included (1) a Democrat; (2) a Republican; (3) an Independent; (4) or something else; (5) None of them (Nothing); (7) Refused; (8) Don't Know; (9) No answer.
  12. When additional variables were included in the model to account for the possibility that the effect of age on partisan identification might be nonlinear (i.e., as individuals age, the effect of each additional year on partisan identification is positive but diminishes in magnitude with each passing year of age), the "age-squared" variables were never statistically significant.
  13. The causal direction of the relationship between citizenship and the acquisition of partisanship is somewhat unclear. For instance, while it is likely that the naturalization process may result in increased interest in U.S. political parties and politics, it is also likely that interest in the U.S. political system will lead some individuals to naturalize. In the analysis that follows, I assume that citizenship leads to the acquisition of partisanship. In any case, it should be noted that the majority of immigrants in this study indicated that they were either permanent residents, had applied for citizenship, or were planning to become citizens.
  14. Because the LASUI and LNPS did not use the same wording for questions about respondents' citizenship status, they are coded differently in the current analysis as well. LASUI respondents were assigned a value of "1" if they were U.S. citizens and were assigned a value of "0" if they were not citizens. Responses about citizenship status in the LNPS were coded as follows: "1" = not planning to apply, "2" = planning to apply, "3" = currently applying, "4" = U.S. citizen.
  15. Of course "citizenship" is used here only as an indication of formal status. Puerto Rican migrants, or other naturalized immigrants who are members of ethnic or racial minority groups, are likely to continue to face barriers, such as discrimination, that prevent their full political incorporation.
  16. Lack of bilingual voting materials may also pose a challenge for immigrants who have not developed strong English skills (Saito, 1998, p. 102).
  17. English proficiency among those who took part in the LASUI was measured using a question asking "How well can you speak English?" English dominance, a variable in the LNPS, was measured by a responses to the question "Usual language of respondent?"
  18. The full equations are contained in Appendix D.
  19. Researchers have posited a link between media use, especially newspaper reading, and political learning, particularly knowledge about politics, among the majority U.S. population (Chaffee and Tims, 1982; Patterson, 1980; Berkowitz and Pritchard, 1989; Chaffee, Zhao, and Leshner, 1994; Weaver and Drew, 1995; but see Valentino and Sears, 1998). There is also evidence that news media use has a positive effect on political participation (Conway, Wykoff, Feldbaum, and Ahern, 1981; Chaffee and Tims, 1982). The relationship between media use and political learning is likely to be time-related, as well. Chaffee and Kanihan (1997), for example, claim that "media use patterns are habits that can be associated over time with increases in [political] knowledge" (p. 422).
  20. Values for the media use variable ranged from "1," indicating that the respondent reads the newspaper one day per week, to "7," indicating that the respondent reads the newspaper seven days per week.
  21. For readers who are interested, Appendix F shows the regression of partisan acquisition on all of the independent variables tested in this analysis (length of residence, age, income, education, citizenship, English proficiency/dominance, and media exposure).

22. Analysis of the LNPS data shows that just half of the Latino immigrants who had been living in the United States for 5 years or less (and had been registered to vote at some time in the past) reported voting in 1988 compared with about 70 percent of those who had lived in the United States for at least 16 years. The results of a regression of a participation measure on length of residence, age, education, and income confirm that among those immigrants of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban origin, there is a statistically significant, positive relationship between length of residence and participation in political activities such as signing a petition, wearing a campaign button, going to a political meeting or rally, and contributing money to a candidate or political cause (see Wong, 1999). For Mexican immigrants, being a citizen, English dominant, and reading the newspaper contributes to active political participation. The effects of length of residence remain positive and statistically significant among Mexican immigrants, even when controlling for citizenship, English dominance, and media exposure. Among Puerto Rican immigrants, being English dominant leads to a greater likelihood of active political participation. The effects of length of residence among Puerto Ricans disappear once English dominance is controlled for. Among Cuban immigrants, English dominance and media exposure are positive and statistically significant predictors of active political participation, and the inclusion of these variables diminishes the effects of length of residence.

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