

Comparative Politics Newsletter

The Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association

Editors: Matt Golder (mgo1der@psu.edu), Sona N. Golder (sgo1der@psu.edu)

Editorial Assistant: Charles Crabtree, Jinhyuk Jang

Editorial Board: Molly Ariotti, Xun Cao, Elizabeth C. Carlson, Yaoyao Dai, Kostasca Dhima, Amanda Fidalgo, Vineeta Yadav, Joseph Wright

Contents

Letter from the Editors by Matt Golder and Sona N. Golder	2
I. Symposium: Race and Ethnic Politics in Comparative Perspective	
Cognitive Biases in Ethnic Politics by Claire L. Adida and Gwyneth McClendon	4
Diversity and Economic Outcomes: Evidence from Poland by Volha Charnysh	11
Immigration and Ethnic Politics in Europe: Fertile Ground for Interdisciplinary Research and Theory Building by Rafaela Dancygier .	17
Misfit Politics: Identity Construction and Vote Choice by Adam Harris	22
Bringing Together Studies of Ethnic Prejudice and Ethnic Conflict in China by Yue Hou	28
Preserving White America: White Racial Identity and Support for Nationalist Policies by Ashley Jardina	31
From Racial Democracy to Racial-ized Democracy in Latin America by Marcus A. Johnson, Jr.	37
Electoral Institutions and Ethnic Clientelism by Kristen Kao	44
Studying Minorities in the Middle East: The Kurdish Case by Ekrem Karakoç	50
China's Local Ethnic Exclusion: Cross-region and Within-region Patterns in Tibet and Xinjiang by Chuyu Liu	55
Ethnicity, Parties, and Electoral Violence in Developing Democracies by Aditi Malik	61
Europe's Urban-Rural Divide on Immigration by Rahsaan Maxwell	67
South Asian Americans in the post-9/11 United States: Panethnicity and Religion by Sangay Mishra	71
Race, Ethnicity, and the Participation Gap: Comparing Australia with Canada and the United States by Juliet Pietsch	76
Ethnic Visibility by Amanda L. Robinson	79
Revisiting the Relationship between Ethnic Diversity and Public Goods Provision by Prerna Singh and Matthias vom Hau	89
Identity and Political Attitudes: What Insights Can an Alternative Measurement Strategy Provide? by Amber D. Spry	96
II. Dataset	
Democratic Electoral Systems around the World, 1946-2016 by Nils-Christian Bormann, Adina Pintilie, and Jack N. Smith	100
III. Other	
Call for Bids: New Editorial Team for the Comparative Politics Newsletter	104
Contributors	106

Identity and Political Attitudes: What Insights Can an Alternative Measurement Strategy Provide?

by Amber D. Spry
Columbia University

I. Race and Identity in American Democracy

Current United States politics are as ripe with examples of policy appeals by identity groups as they have ever been. The Black Lives Matter and Brown Lives Matter movements are not only conduits for social activism among black and Hispanic/Latino Americans, they have harnessed the ability of new media to provide timely and relevant information about policies important to their respective causes, and opportunities for allies to hold representatives accountable to those policies. The town of Charlottesville, Virginia made global headlines as a Unite the Right rally gathered self-proclaimed alt-right and white supremacist demonstrators to protest the removal of a Confederate memorial while counter-demonstrations drew even larger crowds of people from diverse racial, religious, and class backgrounds. From January to September 2017 there have been as many as thirteen organized marches on Washington, D.C., including the Native People's March on Washington (led by primarily indigenous people demonstrating opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline and the U.S. Government's relationship with native nations), airport rallies and a march in protest of the Trump administration's Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements executive order, the May Day Action March (supporting immigrants and workers), and the Women's March on Washington (to address women's rights and the related issues of immigration reform, LGBT rights, racial equality, labor issues, and the environment). The magnitude of social demonstration from groups mobilized under banners of identity and interest signal the vitality of identity politics in the United States.

But on what basis should observers form empirical inferences about group members and their identity-related appeals? Are the appeals of those who strongly identify with a particular racial group indicative of the preferences of group members as a whole? People who are merely ascriptively categorized in a racial or ethnic group may not share the same ideas, or express the same intensity of preference, as people who have an identity attachment to the group. This may be especially true for people who believe themselves to be part of many

group categories, and who understand the relationships between self and group to be fluid and malleable.

I argue that a full appreciation for the political relevance of racial identity requires us to also understand how racial identities intersect other politically salient identities. When we further interrogate how attitudes and behavior respond to self-categorization, we may develop a more refined picture of identity and intersectional politics. In other words, empirical strategies that account for the complexity and subjectivity of identity will improve social scientific inferences about the relationship between groups and political attitudes in the context of an increasingly pluralistic society like the United States, where the dividing lines of politics are increasingly drawn along lines of identity.

II. Understanding the Relationship between Identity and Political Attitudes

Before discussing what the empirical literature has told us about group political attitudes in the United States, we should first clarify the terms used throughout the social science literature to discuss individuals and their relationships to groups. While *group membership* refers to a person's ascriptive categorization in a particular group, *group identity* refers to a person's awareness of belonging to that group coupled with a sense of psychological attachment due to a sense of shared beliefs, interests, feelings, or ideas with fellow group members (McClain et al., 2009). Distinct from group identity, *group consciousness* is in-group identification politicized by a set of ideological beliefs about the status of the group within the broader society, as well as a view that collective action is the best way for the group to improve its status and realize its shared interests (Dawson, 1994, 2003; McClain et al., 2009). The empirical goal of my work is to understand whether the policy attitudes we observe for individuals are different when we are looking from the perspective of group membership (observing relationships in data based on ascriptive categorization alone) versus group identity (observing relationships in data by asking a person which group identities matter to her).

Discussions of social identities in the United States tend to center around race, class, gender, and religion. Early observations in the social science literature by Tocqueville and others point out that race is not only a significant part of American politics but also that

race will continue to drive social and political cleavages in the U.S. (Tocqueville, 1945; Brown, 1931). Since Brown's work, *The Nature of Race Consciousness* (1931), scholars have sought to understand not only how identities become politicized, but also what effect group consciousness has on political outcomes for individuals and groups. Scholars who focus on race have highlighted the effects of racial identity and racial group consciousness on voting and political participation and behavior (McClain and Stewart Jr., 1995; Cho and Cain, 2001; Harris-Lacewell and Junn, 2007; Lien, 2010; Sanchez, 2006; Segura, 2012; Lien, 1994; Kim and Lee, 2001), candidate choice (Cho and Cain, 2001; Segura, 2012; Stokes, 2003; Chong and Rogers, 2005; Wong, 2008; Schildkraut, 2012), and preference for policies that purportedly benefit minorities (Griffin, 2014; Lee, 2008; Sanchez and Masuoka, 2010). Many observational studies treat race as a fixed categorical variable in which survey respondents indicate the racial or ethnic group to which they belong by checking a box, and are subsequently asked a battery of outcome measures whose relationships to racial identity are determined using regression analysis. To the extent that such studies contrast the political differences between groups, the majority of studies focus on differences between white and black Americans, although scholars have increasingly studied the effects of group consciousness among Hispanics and Latinos (Stokes, 2003; Sanchez, 2006; Manzano and Sanchez, 2010; Sanchez and Masuoka, 2010; Schildkraut, 2012; Gay, Hochschild and White, 2016), women and individuals who identify as LGBT (Simien, 2005; Moore, 2010), and religious communities (Harris, 1994; Harris-Lacewell and Junn, 2007; Granqvist and Kirkpatrick, 2008; Gay, Hochschild and White, 2016). Studies focusing on class and socioeconomic difference in the U.S. face the challenge of creating an empirical distinction between the influence of class and race, which are not only highly correlated but also often empirically endogenous. Still, scholars such as Gay (2004, 2006) have argued for the direct effects of class-consciousness on policy preferences and attitudes toward other groups. Again, such studies argue for the effect of class consciousness on political outcomes using self-reported observational data. Across literatures, to a large extent, studies related to group identity study categories of identity in isolation from one another.

III. Adapting Measurement Strategies

We might think measurement strategies matter not

only because of the responsibility social scientists have to accurately reflect populations through research, but also because political scientists and policy analysts use social science research to describe important relationships between social groups and their relationships to power, policy, and preferences that have meaningful consequences in the political world. And if we take identity to be fluid and malleable, providing for identity with more than one racial category is an important first step.

In several instances the United States Census has adapted the racial and ethnic categories used to describe the population to reflect both changes in the demographic composition of the country, and the names that groups of people prefer to call themselves. Most recently, the Census has adapted the way individuals are allowed to report their race.

[A]ttitudes across policy areas differ according to the primary identity offered by respondents, and differ for some groups from what we might observe using the conventional 'checked box' measure of group identity.

In the United States Census 2000 and Census 2010, respondents were given the opportunity to check more than one racial category for the first time. In 2010, 9.0 million people reported multiple races, a 2.4 percent point increase from the 6.8 million people who reported multiple races in 2000 (Jones and Bullock, 2013). The growth of the population reporting more than one race on the census is probably attributed to a combination of factors. One explanation is outright population growth, the other is a shift in the thinking of people who were already multiracial but are now more inclined to report themselves as being so on censuses and other surveys. While the percentage of individuals who report belonging to two or more races may seem small, the two or more races population is often reported in a single-race category, especially in subnational surveys. If these individuals were removed from the single-race category and placed in the two or more races category, "the numbers might begin to affect policy decisions and resource allocation" (Renn, 2009). In education policy, for example, racial data are used to determine funding for programs designed to promote equal opportunity,

planning for schools serving Native American communities, and monitoring of school segregation and possible racial discrimination in the areas of ability grouping, discipline, financial aid, and programs designed to serve special populations (Renn, 2009).

Work by Taeku Lee (2009) measures identity by giving respondents a fixed number of identity points to allocate at their discretion across a set of racial and ethnic categories. Analogous to Lani Guinier's 'cumulative voting' design (1994), which allows citizens to vote for multiple candidates and weight their votes according to preference intensity within the set of candidates, Lee's identity point allocation system allows survey respondents to identify with multiple group identities and to weight the strength of their association across groups, indicated by the number of points a respondent allocates to each group.

IV. A Multidimensional Approach

My dissertation research uses original survey data that extends the identity point allocation design to include class, religion, and gender alongside race as categories to which respondents allocate points in a single task (Spry, 2017). Conducted in 2015, the Identity Measurement Study (IMS) was distributed to a national online sample as part of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Political Experiments Research Lab 2015 Omnibus Survey and compares the identities individuals report using the point allocation task to the identities individuals report using a conventional 'checked box' measure of identity.

Comparison between different measurement designs allows us to understand how different approaches to measurement may reveal different outcomes on important identity-related questions while also allowing us to compare policy attitudes among people who are given the opportunity to select a primary identity from a comprehensive list of socially relevant categories. We are also able to explore whether the attitudes observed when individuals select a primary identity are different from the attitudes we observe when using conventional correlations between attitudinal outcomes and ascriptive measures of group membership where respondents 'check' a box for each category to which they belong. Allowing respondents to tell us what identities matter to them may provide a more robust scope of information about the subjects of social science research and the

policy preferences of their subjective groups.

The IMS first collected respondents' demographic information, asking subjects to self-report their race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and religion, among other questions in a multiple choice format. Next, respondents were given a point allocation task where they could allocate points indicating their magnitude of identity with gender (male or female), religion (Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Eastern or Greek Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Atheist, Agnostic, or None), class (lower class, working class, middle class, or upper class), and racial categories (White / Caucasian, Black / African American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian / Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander). The choices in each category were populated with each respondent's previous responses, and only appeared if selected by respondents during the demographic portion of the survey. Primary identity is defined as the group given the most points for each respondent. I compare primary identities to ascriptive categories, or the 'checked boxes' selected in the demographic portion of the survey.

Respondents were also asked a number of questions related to their attitudes on undocumented immigrants, foreigners with work visas, government jobs, welfare, aid to the poor, education, defense, and climate change. Because policy attitudes are widely regarded as political expressions of group identities, the relationships between group identities and policy attitudes are analyzed along two dimensions: (i) the difference in mean attitudes between groups themselves, and (ii) the difference in mean attitudes observed under ascriptive categorization versus primary group membership.

The findings of the IMS complement the findings of theoretical and qualitative work showing that individual perceptions of identity are more subjective than researchers have assumed using conventional strategies for the measurement of identity (Spry, 2017). Specifically, I find that attitudes across policy areas differ according to the primary identity offered by respondents, and differ for some groups from what we might observe using the conventional 'checked box' measure of group identity. Individuals who primarily identify as white, male, or Protestant consistently stuck out as having distinctive views from the population average, but also as having stronger views than what we would observe under conventional correlation between ascriptive catego-

rization and attitudinal outcomes, especially on welfare and immigration issues. Protestants, males, and white Americans are not the only categories where primary identification with the group relates to distinctive policy attitudes. Concerning immigration, respondents who offered the Hispanic group as their primary identity reported warmer feelings toward undocumented immigrants than those who were merely ascriptively categorized as Hispanic. To summarize, IMS data suggest that attitudes around policies that politicize a person's primary identity tend to be especially strong. Taken together, these findings underscore the idea that ascriptive group membership reveals a one-dimensional link between identity and political attitudes. Subjective identification with a group, even given the opportunity to identify with other socially relevant categories, reveals how identity across multiple dimensions relates to political attitudes.

V. Advancing Empirical Appreciation for the Complexities of Identity

In an increasingly pluralistic society, social scientists stand to gain important information about the degree of variation displayed in self-identification. In a time when the dividing lines of politics are increasingly drawn along the lines of identity, understanding how identity relates to political choice has clear and immediate implications for both public policy and electoral politics, not only in the United States but also across many regional contexts. Future comparative research should leverage empirical strategies that account for the complexities of identity to better understand the relationships between individuals, their subjective identities, and the empirical correlates of identity such as inequality, intergroup conflict and violence, coalitional politics, and descriptive representation. As research and measurement strategies are further refined, we should see a more detailed portrait of identity and its ties to the policy preferences and political behaviors of groups.

References

Brown, William O. 1931. "The nature of race consciousness." *Social Forces* 10(1):90-97.

Cho, Wendy K. T. and Bruce E. Cain. 2001. "Asian Americans as the median voters: An exploration of attitudes and voting patterns on ballot initiatives." In *Asian Americans and Politics: Perspectives, Experiences, Prospects*, ed. Gordon H. Chang. Stanford: Stanford University Press pp. 133-152.

Chong, Dennis and Reuel Rogers. 2005. "Racial solidarity and political participation." *Political Behavior* 27(4):347-374.

Dawson, Michael C. 1994. *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Dawson, Michael C. 2003. *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gay, Claudine. 2004. "Putting race in context: Identifying the environmental determinants of Black racial attitudes." *American Political Science Review* 98(4):547-562.

Gay, Claudine. 2006. "Seeing difference: The effect of economic disparity on Black attitudes toward Latinos." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(4):982-997.

Gay, Claudine, Jennifer Hochschild and Ariel White. 2016. "Americans' belief in linked fate: Does the measure capture the concept?" *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics* 1(1):117-144.

Granqvist, Pehr and Lee A. Kirkpatrick. 2008. "Attachment and religious representations and behavior". In *Handbook of Attachment: Theory, Research, and Clinical Applications*, ed. Phillip R. Shaver and Jude Cassidy. New York: The Guilford Press pp. 906-934.

Griffin, John D. 2014. "When and why minority legislators matter." *Annual Review of Political Science* 17:327-336.

Guinier, Loni. 1994. "[E]racing democracy: The voting rights cases." *Harvard Law Review* 108:109.

Harris, Fredrick C. 1994. "Something within: Religion as a mobilizer of African-American political activism." *Journal of Politics* 56(1):42-68.

Harris-Lacewell, Melissa and Jane Junn. 2007. "Old friends and new alliances: How the 2004 Illinois Senate race complicates the study of race and religion." *Journal of Black Studies* 38(1):30-50.

Jones, Jungmiwha and Nicholas A. Bullock. 2013. The two or more races population: 2010 census brief. Technical report United States Census Bureau.

Kim, Claire J. and Taeku Lee. 2001. "Interracial politics: Asian Americans and other communities of color." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 34(3):631-637.

Lee, Taeku. 2008. "Race, immigration, and the identity-to-politics link." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11:457-478.

Lee, Taeku. 2009. Between social theory and social science practice: Toward a new approach to the survey measurement of 'Race'. In *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, ed. Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrera, Alastair I. Johnston and Rose McDermott. New York: Cambridge University Press pp. 113-144.

Lien, Pei-te. 1994. "Ethnicity and political participation: A comparison between Asian and Mexican Americans." *Political Behavior* 16(2):237-264.

Lien, Pei-te. 2010. *Making of Asian America: Through Politi-*

About the Section

The [Organized Section in Comparative Politics](#) is the largest organized section in the American Political Science Association (APSA) with over 1,300 members. The purpose of the Section is to promote the comparative, especially cross-national, study of politics and to integrate the work of comparativists, area studies specialists, and those interested in American politics. The Section organizes panels for APSA's annual meetings; awards annual prizes for best paper, best article, best book, and best data set; and oversees and helps finance the publication of the Newsletter. For more information, please visit the Section's website.

About the Newsletter

The goal of the Comparative Politics Newsletter is to engender a sense of community among comparative politics scholars around the world. To this end, the Newsletter publishes symposia on various substantive and methodological issues, highlights new data sets of broad appeal, prints short comments from readers in response to materials in the previous issue, and generally informs the community about field-specific developments. Recent symposia have looked at women/gender in comparative politics, data access and research transparency, populism, the politics of space, and sensitive data. It is published twice a year, once during the Spring and once during the Fall. The Newsletter is currently edited by [Matt Golder](#) and [Sona N. Golder](#) at The Pennsylvania State University.

How to Subscribe

Subscription to the APSA-CP Newsletter is a benefit to members of the Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association. To join the section, check the appropriate box when joining APSA or renewing your Association membership. You may join the APSA online at <https://www.apsanet.org/MEMBERSHIP/Membership-Membership-Form>.

Copyright 2017 American Political Science Association.
Address: 1527 New Hampshire Ave, NW Washington, DC 20036-1206
Phone: (202) 483-2512 | Fax: (202) 483-2657 | Email: apsa@apsanet.org