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''Racial Threat'', Partisan Climate, and Direct Democracy: Contextual Effects in Three California Initiatives

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Abstract Does context—racial, economic, fiscal, and political—affect whites' votes on racially-related ballot propositions? We examine non-Hispanic whites' voting behavior on three California ballot initiatives: Propositions 187, 209, and 227. Unlike previous analyses that lacked individual-level data and were therefore limited to ecological inference, we combine individual-level data from exit polls with county-level contextual variables in a hierarchical linear model. Racial/ethnic context affected whites' votes only on Proposition 187, economic context had no influence on vote choice, and the effect of fiscal context was limited to Proposition 227. However, across the propositions, whites' decisions were shaped by their political context. Thus, we do not find support for the ''racial threat'' hypothesis across all racially-charged issues.

Keywords Context effects · Racial threat · Direct democracy · Multi-level modeling · California politics

Introduction

Key's *Southern Politics* (1949) continues to spawn research about the influence of residential environment on political behavior. The general argument is that where and with whom individuals live combine with their personal characteristics to influence their

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vote choices. Key, for example, identified the size of the black population in a county as a significant cause of white attitudes and actions; the more blacks in a jurisdiction, the more racial hostility among white voters. The presumed motivation for this was group interest in a context of ethnic competition, such that whites perceived a large black population as a threat to their political, economic, and cultural hegemony. Much of the subsequent research on contextual effects has focused on testing the robustness and generality of Key's finding about the impact of the racial environment on white attitudes and conduct (Blalock, 1967; Glaser, 1994; Sigelman & Welch, 1993; Taylor, 1998).

While indebted to Key's seminal work, the present study advances the understanding of contextual effects in three distinct ways. First, we follow other recent research in investigating the ''racial threat'' hypothesis beyond the paradigmatic case of black–white relations in the American South (see, for example, Hood & Morris, 2000; Oliver & Wong, 2003; Quillian, 1995; Tolbert & Hero, 1996). Specifically, we study the voting behavior of non-Hispanic whites in California, where large-scale immigration from Latin America and Asia has created a more complex pattern of ethnic diversity. This enables testing whether the trigger for white reaction is the size of a particular minority group (e.g. blacks or Hispanics) in a community or the number of minorities in general. The use of direct democracy has been on the rise in the last few decades (Gerber, 1999; Magleby, 1984), and during the 1990s, three statewide ballot initiatives in California targeted well-established policies intended to benefit minority groups. Proposition 187 restricted public services for illegal immigrants in 1994, Proposition 209 ended affirmative action programs in 1996, and Proposition 227 dismantled bilingual education programs in 1998. Because the main ethnic constituencies for these policies varied, we can test for the influence of ''racial threat'' across issues and campaign conditions as well as across ethnic environments.

Second, the availability of new data allows us to adopt a more appropriate statistical methodology for identifying contextual effects. Many of the previous examinations of voting behavior on Propositions 187, 209, and 227 (Cain, MacDonald, & McCue, 1996; Tolbert & Grummel, 2003; Tolbert & Hero, 1996, 2001) lacked individual-level data and therefore were limited to ecological regression techniques; these analyses could not rule out the possibility that factors the authors attributed to context were actually influences from individual characteristics. Using individual-level data from election-day exit polls and locating each respondent in a county with known contextual characteristics, we employ multi-level modeling, which takes into account both individual- and aggregate-level factors simultaneously without bias. Hence, we are able to examine whether voters' environments influenced their vote choices on all three of these ballot initiatives, controlling for their individual demographic and political characteristics.

Third, we define context by reference not only to racial diversity, but also to other factors that might affect voting behavior, including the macroeconomic, fiscal, and partisan environments. This conceptualization broadens the set of potential mechanisms underlying contextual effects to include economic anxiety and conformity to county norms as well as racial hostility.

The chief findings of our analyses of white Californians are that racial/ethnic context influenced only vote choice on Proposition 187, while the partisan context influenced behavior on all three propositions. These results show both that racially-related initiatives do not necessarily trigger an automatic environmental race effect for voters and that individuals' partisan environments can affect their voting behavior, even for initiatives that are not politicized at the elite level.

The Effect of Context on Political Behavior

The primary focus of the contextual field has been the effect of racial environment on individual preferences and political behavior. While the line of research inspired by Key's early work has been long and fruitful, two important questions deserve further inquiry. First, how applicable are the racial context findings to other ethnic contexts? Second, what other contextual characteristics besides racial environment influence attitudes and behavior?

Contextual effects have been explored most extensively in the area of race. Although contact theory predicts that interaction between groups will promote harmony if certain conditions are met (Allport, 1954; Amir, 1969; Pettigrew, 1998), conflict is much more common, as predicted by both the group conflict and social identity theories. Group conflict theory asserts that intergroup hostility will result from competition for scarce resources (Levine & Campbell, 1972), while social identity theory predicts that an influx of minority group members into an area will enhance feelings of ingroup pride and outgroup hostility among both the new and the old groups (Brown, 1986). In both cases, racial environment appears to manifest itself through perceptions of threat. The majority group feels its position of superiority is threatened by the subordinate group. Real or imagined, threat leads to increased prejudice and social conflict (Blumer, 1958; Bobo & Hutchings, 1996; Key, 1949). Feelings of threat may be grounded in conditions of real competition; much research shows that contact with racial outgroups leads to greater hostility where inequality and competition exist (Fossett & Kiecolt, 1989; Giles & Evans, 1985; Glaser, 1994; Kinder & Mendelberg, 1995; Sherif & Sherif, 1953; Wright, 1977). Furthermore, the size of a threatening minority group may matter. Blalock's power threat hypothesis (1967) states that the larger the ''threatening'' minority group, the greater the likelihood of both competition over scarce resources and political mobilization. Furthermore, the threat of a growing subordinate group can also be manifested both economically and politically (Green, Strolovitch, & Wong, 1998; Quillian, 1995).

While the presence of black populations has been shown to affect white behavior and attitudes, less is known about the transportability of these effects to other ethnic contexts. Can any racial/ethnic group be threatening, as posited by Sidanius's social dominance model (see, for example, Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), or are blacks exceptional, as Sears has asserted (see, for example, Sears, Citrin, Cheleden, & van Laar, 1999)? California provides an excellent testing ground, with the dramatic changes in the state's racial/ethnic composition resulting from the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965. While earlier immigration to the U.S. originated in Europe, with New York as the primary destination, after 1965, Mexico, Latin America, and Asia provided the most immigrants, and California became the number one destination. Between 1970 and 1990, Anglos slipped from 77% of the state's population to 57%, while Hispanics grew from 12 to 26% and Asians from 4 to 10%. The African-American share remained unchanged at 7% (Citrin & Campbell, 1997, p. 277). By 2000 California was majority non-Anglo, although this ethnic diversity is not distributed evenly across the state. Furthermore, California was estimated by the INS to be home to the plurality of the illegal immigrants in the United States,[1] and the state school system has the highest percentage of pupils in the U.S. with limited English proficiency.[2]

[1] http://uscis.gov/graphics/publicaffairs/newsrels/illegal.htm.

[2] http://www.cde.ca.gov/news/releases2001/rel42.asp.

Thus California is an ideal location for assessing whether the effects found for black racial context extend to other groups.

Contextual Hypotheses

In this increasingly multi-ethnic state, we might expect white voters living in areas that are heavily non-white to be more likely to vote for the racial/ethnic-oriented propositions because they feel that their established position of superiority is threatened by ethnic minorities (Maharidge, 1996). As in Key's Black Belt, the majority group responds with defensive attitudes and actions, such as the termination of public policies benefiting minority groups (Jackman, 1994; Quillian, 1995; Tolbert & Hero, 1996). Thus, in this study, the *racial threat* hypothesis asserts that whites' vote choice on the propositions is conditioned by the ethnic composition of respondents' communities (we use the term ''racial'' as shorthand for ''racial/ethnic'' threat).

Beyond racial threat, the literature points to other contextual hypotheses. Economic conditions may influence whites' preferences and behavior on racial/ethnic matters. In areas where economic conditions are worse, we might expect more negative attitudes and actions toward both minorities and immigrants. Quillian (1996) found, for example, that average per capita income predicts racial attitudes. Better economic conditions are also associated with less discrimination and prejudice (Higham, 1955), and the economic threat hypothesis has been supported in research on immigrants and labor market competition (Bonacich, 1972; Espenshade & Calhoun, 1993; Hoskin & Mishler, 1983)[3]. At least two mechanisms are possible. When economic conditions are poor, whites might view immigrants or minorities as competition for scarce jobs. Alternatively, they may simply view them as targets for scapegoating in reaction to economic frustrations. Here again California is a good test case, as concerns about the state's demographic profile were exacerbated by economic woes, particularly the recession of the early 1990s. The state unemployment rate was higher than the national average throughout the 1990s, and the state continued to lose jobs for more than two years after the official end of the national recession in March 1991. Beginning in 1993, however, the state experienced an economic expansion, and the unemployment rate dropped from 9.4% in 1993 to 5.9% in 1998 (State of California, 1999). Conditions within the state varied as well, so therefore we can assess the influence of county economic conditions on white vote choice during both good times and bad.

Economic conditions could plausibly have influenced white vote choice on each of the three ballot initiatives, although the mechanisms might vary. For Proposition 187, the scapegoating aspect of economic threat seems more likely than the job threat aspect, since many illegal immigrants have much lower education and skill levels than the native white population, and they often take jobs that native-born Americans do not even want. In the case of Proposition 209, difficult economic conditions might decrease support for affirmative action, because such programs may be seen as limiting whites' opportunities in a tight job market. The potential for an economic threat caused by bilingual education is quite indirect, so the mechanism connecting context and the vote for Proposition 227 is probably a result of the projection of economic anxieties onto visible outgroups, i.e. scapegoating. The immigrants who are perceived to threaten the jobs of native-born

[3] However, Citrin, Green, Muste & Wong (1997)—looking at individual attitudes and not context explicitly—found that although assessments of the *national* economy affected attitudes toward immigration, *personal* economic circumstances did not.

Californians, after all, are also some of the parents of bilingual education students. Thus, the *economic threat* hypothesis asserts that white voters in counties that were relatively more economically depressed would be more likely to support the propositions than whites in areas that were better able to weather the economic downturns.

A third contextual hypothesis concerns political environment. The fear of minority political mobilization is evident in Key's work on the southern Black Belt (1949), where blacks lived in the greatest numbers and where whites were the most prejudiced. Key asserted that the threat of black mobilization is latent and that white reactions can be inflamed or mitigated by political elites. Despite this early recognition of political mobilization as an important environmental factor, subsequent researchers have tended to overlook the effects of political context independent of racial context. Studies of social networks, however, have shown the strong impact that one's neighbors and surrounding community can have on one's political knowledge and attitudes (Huckfeldt, Beck, Dalton, & Levine, 1995; Huckfeldt, Plutzer, & Sprague, 1993).

Once again California is an ideal place in which to study the contextual effect of partisanship. Proposition 187 was heavily politicized. Republican Governor Pete Wilson made the so-called ''Save Our State'' initiative the centerpiece of his reelection campaign, and it was approved by voters in the November 1994 election by a 59–41 margin.[4] In our analyses, we are able to examine whether Wilson's partisan message resonated in some parts of the state more than others. Two years later, Proposition 209, the so-called ''California Civil Rights Initiative'' (CCRI), was placed on the ballot by some of the same forces behind the passage of Proposition 187.[5] Wilson was again a leading supporter. Indeed, according to the journalist Peter Schrag, the authors of the initiative ''didn't have the funds or political skills to get CCRI on the ballot, and it would have gone nowhere if Wilson and California Republicans had not seen it as a wedge issue'' (Schrag, 1998, p. 235). After Wilson withdrew from the GOP presidential race and Bob Dole emerged as his party's presidential candidate, the Republican Party and Dole tried to use affirmative action and the vote on 209 in California to win the election.[6] Again, we expect that the persuasive power of these endorsements varied across the state. The third racially-related ballot initiative, Proposition 227 in 1998, was less politicized than the previous two. While Proposition 227's main backer (Ron Unz) had run in the Republican gubernatorial primary in 1994, he was not active in party politics, and most elected officials avoided taking a public stance on the initiative—including the four major candidates for governor in 1998.[7] When they finally did take a stand, the three Democrats and one Republican all came out against the proposition (Decker, 1998). This pattern of avoidance and consensus would

[4] Proposition 187 would have denied state health, education and public assistance benefits to anyone in California who is not a citizen, legal permanent resident, or legal temporary visitor and required local officials to report undocumented persons to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). The constitutionality of Proposition 187 was successfully challenged in federal court, and its major provisions have not been implemented. However, while its direct policy effects have been minimal, the passage of Proposition 187 did send a message that voters in California are concerned about illegal immigration.

[5] The two propositions were often perceived as connected issues by politicians and in the popular media, with 209 called the ''Son of 187'' (Schrag, 1995) and 227 ''a Prop 187 in disguise'' (Navarrette, 1997).

[6] This potential wedge issue ended up helping neither the Republican nor the Democratic presidential candidate directly, although Clinton (and other Democratic politicians) benefited indirectly as the minority population was successfully mobilized to vote (Cain, MacDonald, & McCue, 1997; Chavez, 1998; Rice, 1997).

[7] As late as March 1998, none of the major candidates for governor competing in the June 1998 primary had expressed support or opposition (Gunnison, 1998; Lesher, 1998).

seem to lessen the potential impact of political climate on the vote for 227 as compared to the two earlier propositions.[8]

This variation in campaign mobilization gives us some insight into the possible mechanisms by which the political climate hypothesis could operate. Political context could affect behavior mainly through elite mobilization, statewide or in more targeted locales. However, political climate can also operate through more local network paths. In either case, the *political climate* hypothesis states that vote choice on the propositions is tied to contextual politics: people in heavily Republican areas are more likely to vote for the propositions than citizens of more Democratic locales, even controlling for personal party affiliation. Campaign information and issue visibility, communication of opinions among residents of a locale, and the tone of the local media are a few of the reasons why political climate may have an effect, independent of an individual's personal party identification.

Thus the racially-oriented ballot propositions put before California voters in the 1990s provide compelling cases with which to test the applicability of racial threat to non-black groups and to test contextual hypotheses beyond racial environment. Indeed, the California cases suggest one more plausible contextual hypothesis: fiscal environment. For a number of years before Proposition 187, Governor Wilson had argued that California's generous welfare system was a magnet for immigrants and for the poor in general. The framers of Proposition 187 strategically tapped into the anti-tax sentiment among California voters during a recession, arguing that the cost of providing education, health, and welfare benefits to illegal immigrants exceeded the tax contribution of these residents, resulting in a fiscal drain the state could not afford.[9] The *fiscal burden* hypothesis suggests that the higher the public spending on such benefits in a given locality, the greater the white vote for 187. Although fiscal concerns were not explicitly raised in the debate surrounding Proposition 209, it is possible that these expenditures are connected to perceptions of an active or ''big'' government—notions that may be related to attitudes about state-mandated affirmative action policies. Fiscal concerns could also plausibly contribute to the Proposition 227 vote, since bilingual education could be perceived as adding to overall school budgets and as taking resources away from native English speaking students.

Thus the literature points to a number of contextual hypotheses beyond racial threat, which has heretofore received the most attention; in particular, economic, fiscal and political contexts may also play a role in influencing individual voting decisions. California's racially-related ballot propositions provide cases to test these multiple contextual hypotheses across subject areas and across racial/ethnic environments. The research on context and threat does not predict when individuals' environments will or will not affect their vote choice; we find, in fact, that the effects are inconsistent across the initiatives.

Data and Methods

The individual-level data are drawn from three different exit polls.[10] The Proposition 187 data come from a Voter News Service (VNS) exit poll conducted on November 8, 1994 of 1795 respondents drawn from 13 counties in California. The Proposition 209 data come

[8] In May 1998, Governor Wilson announced his support for Proposition 227, but the measure's backers rejected his endorsement, afraid that association with the controversial 187 and 209 efforts would discredit their campaign to end bilingual education (Ingram, 1998).

[9] The veracity of this argument is hotly debated among economists like Borjas (1990) and Simon (1980).

[10] We thank VNS and the *Los Angeles Times* for making county identifiers available to us.

from a VNS poll done on November 5, 1996, with 2528 respondents drawn from 22 counties. The 227 data come from a *Los Angeles Times*/CNN poll on June 2, 1998, with 5143 respondents drawn from 30 counties. Our final analyses of contextual and individual effects on the votes focus on whites;[11] for Propositions 187, 209 and 227, there are 1343, 1855 and 3162 white respondents, respectively.[12]

For an analysis of contextual effects, any of a number of contextual units are theoretically possible, and many have been employed by other researchers—precincts (Carsey, 1995), Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2000; Taylor, 1998), even entire countries (Quillian, 1995). We use counties because they are ''a reasonable approximation of an individual's ‚mid-range' social environment'' (Campbell, 2002, p. 52), particularly in California where they are highly salient and relevant political, fiscal, and economic units. The county party organizations are strong, property taxes are collected by counties, and many services are allocated at that level. Furthermore, only for county do we have measures of both voter behavior and contextual conditions. In using county as the unit of analysis, we join a long tradition of context research (see, for examples, Beck, 1974; Campbell, 2002; Giles & Dantico, 1982; Huckfeldt, 1979; Key, 1984 [1949]; Knack & Kropf, 1998).

Because the majority of illegal immigrants in the state are Hispanic and because the publicity surrounding immigration prior to the 1994 election fairly blatantly made Mexicans the scapegoat group,[13] in the analysis of Proposition 187 we operationalize the racial threat hypothesis as the percent Hispanic population in a county. We also use percent Hispanic for Proposition 227, because Spanish speakers comprise the largest group affected by bilingual education in California.[14] Affirmative action is still often perceived as an issue about African Americans, even though other racial minorities benefit from it as well—a fact that was confirmed in our results as well as in previous work.[15] Thus, for our analysis of Proposition 209, we operationalize racial threat as the percent of the population that is black. We did test alternative measures for all propositions, including percent

[11] We use the term ''whites'' to mean non-Hispanic whites.

[12] Appendix 2 contains descriptive statistics for all 58 California counties and the sampled counties. More information about the counties sampled is available upon request. The exit poll data were weighted to represent the actual vote.

[13] Governor Pete Wilson fueled the perception that Mexicans were the source of the illegal immigration problem; he ran prime-time television ads, linking Proposition 187 to his own campaign, with pictures of people running across the California–Mexico border.

[14] Although some research (Green et al., 1998) has indicated that shifting contexts might have a greater effect than the actual level of diversity, we focus here on the relative size of each group. We did test whether changes in the size of racial/ethnic populations in counties drove vote choice on these propositions, but the effects were not statistically significant. For Propositions 187 and 227, we tested percentage change in the Hispanic population since 1980 and since 1990; these were significant neither with nor without percent Hispanic in the equation. Similar tests of changes in percent black for Proposition 209 also were not statistically significant. However, the data were not ideal for examining the effects of changing contexts. In order to assess the political effects of change, one must assume that a respondent has lived in the same area for a number of years, in order to have experienced and been affected by the increase or decrease in diversity. We do not have such measures of tenure in these data.

[15] 1995 data from Princeton Survey Research Associates indicate that Latinos, Asians, and blacks are often blurred together when people state their opinions about affirmative action, but distinctions between racial groups are made when deciding who had benefited from these programs at work: Blacks were significantly seen as benefiting the most (Steeh & Krysan, 1996). In the recent debates over affirmative action, both proponents and opponents are focused particularly on the potential effects of Proposition 209 on African Americans. Glazer (1997, p. 25), for example, argues that ''Asians apparently can fend for themselves, and so, for the most part, can Latinos.... Can we restrict affirmative action only to African Americans?''

minority in the county, percent white, percent black, percent Hispanic, and percent Asian (the multi-level analysis contained in Table 2 shows the results for percent Hispanic, percent black, and percent nonwhite).

We use the county unemployment rate to operationalize the economic context hypothesis, predicting that voters in counties where the unemployment rate is high are more likely to vote for Propositions 187, 209, and 227.[16] We operationalize the fiscal burden hypothesis as AFDC spending per capita in a county, with the expectation that greater programmatic spending in a county could lead voters to support these initiatives. Again we tested many alternative measures of fiscal context and found similar results.[17] Finally, county political climate is operationalized as the percentage of registered Republicans in one's county.[18]

The contextual data come from a variety of published sources. For the ethnic/racial, language, economic and fiscal variables, we use 1980 and 1990 Census data located in various volumes of the County and City Data Books (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1983,1994; Slater & Hall, 1996) multiple years of the California Statistical Abstract, and the California Department of Finance's website. Data on county-level party registration and vote returns for the propositions come from the ''Statement of the Vote'' (California Secretary of State, 1994, 1996, 1998).[19]

Multivariate models of individual-level voting behavior are estimated with logistic regression, with Huber/White robust standard errors that account for clustering of respondents at the county level (i.e., analyses presented in Table 1).[20] The inclusion of contextual-level variables (i.e., analyses presented in Table 2) requires hierarchical modeling rather than ordinary regression. Because survey respondents are nested within counties, random errors are not independent, violating OLS assumptions. Hierarchical estimators are more appropriate for this multi-level analysis because they account for the non-independence of observations (''level-1 units'' in the hierarchical modeling parlance) within counties (''level-2 units''), while providing estimates of the effects of these county-level variables. Recent advances in hierarchical modeling (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002)

[16] We also tested as measures of economic context (1) income per capita in a county, which gives similar results, and (2) county median education, which is highly correlated with both unemployment and median income, and which had similar, although weaker, effects.

[17] For Proposition 187, which would potentially affect a wide range of social services, we also tested Food Stamps and General Relief spending per capita in counties, spending on school districts per capita in counties, Medi-Cal payments per capita in counties, Medi-Cal payments for aliens and refugees per capita in counties, and the proportion of jail inmates in a county. For Proposition 227, which focused only on bilingual education programs—in comparison to Prop 187's possible much broader policy impact—we did not test such a wide range of fiscal context measures. Instead, in addition to AFDC spending, we also tested percent limited English proficiency enrollment in a county, percent Hispanic K through 12 enrollment, and percent Hispanic plus Asian K–12 enrollment. Unfortunately, neither school districts nor the California Department of Education tracks funds by the category of ''bilingual instructional services'' (personal correspondence with Dr. David Dolson, coordinator of the Emergency Immigrant Education Program of the California Department of Education).

[18] Using percent Democrat resulted in similar effects for political context.

[19] Appendix 2 presents correlations among the contextual variables for all 58 California counties and the sampled counties. There is less variance along some contextual dimensions in the counties sampled for the exit polls, compared to the state as a whole, and therefore contextual effects may be harder to detect. However, for these instances of statewide direct democracy, it should be noted that 74% of California's population resides in the 13 counties sampled for Proposition 187, 86% reside in the 22 counties sampled for Proposition 209 and 94% reside in the 30 counties sampled for Proposition 227.

[20] Respondents were sampled from counties, not from the state as a whole. Because we therefore cannot assume independent observations, we need to adjust the standard errors for serial autocorrelation.

Table 1 Predicting proposition votes with individual-level social and political variables

Independent variables	Proposition 187		Proposition 209		Proposition 227	
	All respondents	Whites	All respondents	Whites	All respondents	Whites
Age	−.004 (.040)	−.014 (.047)	.060* (.028)	.053 (.033)	.026 (.025)	.069* (.031)
Male	.325** (.126)	.402** (.131)	.248* (.104)	.266* (.126)	.186* (.088)	.310** (.104)
Education	−.268** (.091)	−.346*** (.107)	−.125# (.068)	−.154* (.073)	−.050 (.047)	−.150*** (.042)
Income	−.056 (.050)	−.014 (.061)	.061 (.039)	.060 (.042)	.071# (.040)	.108** (.035)
Black	−.132 (.346)		−1.293*** (.277)		−.344# (.190)	
Hispanic	−1.309*** (.301)		−1.011*** (.194)		−.991*** (.185)	
Asian	−.219 (.512)		−.804*** (.209)		−.347 (.234)	
Ideology (conserv. high)	.530*** (.110)	.700*** (.105)	.700*** (.096)	.772*** (.118)	.682*** (.083)	.720*** (.082)
Party ID (Repub. high)	.515*** (.081)	.483*** (.091)	.635*** (.076)	.628*** (.096)	.334*** (.059)	.311*** (.062)
Constant	−.686# (.387)	−.851# (.438)	−2.367*** (.415)	−2.364*** (.519)	−1.736*** (.267)	−1.787***(.274)
n	1482	1118	1976	1390	3564	2750
Wald χ^2	123.96***	90.71***	309.55***	137.80***	279.01***	227.03***
Log likelihood	−874.23	−632.99	−1096.17	−759.97	−2100.90	−1545.49
Pseudo-R^2	.13	.14	.19	.17	.12	.11

Sources: Voter News Service (VNS), California General Election Exit Poll, November 8, 1994 (Prop 187); VNS, California General Election Exit Poll, November 5, 1996 (Prop 209); LA Times/CNN California Primary Exit Poll, June 2, 1998 (Prop 227).

Note: Cells contain logit coefficients and Huber/White robust standard errors in parentheses. Racial/ethnic reference category is Whites

#$P < .10$; *$P < .05$; **$P < .01$; ***$P < .001$, two-sided

Table 2 Predicting whites' proposition votes with contextual- and individual-level variables

Independent variables	Proposition 187 W/diff racial context vars			Proposition 209 W/diff racial context vars			Proposition 227 W/diff racial context vars		
	Hispanic (%)	Black (%)	Nonwhite (%)	Hispanic (%)	Black (%)	Nonwhite (%)	Hispanic (%)	Black (%)	Nonwhite (%)
Age	.032 (.044)	−.017 (.034)	.030 (.044)	.026 (.034)	.027 (.035)	.027 (.035)	.055# (.030)	.053# (.027)	.057* (.038)
Male	.371* (.151)	.317* (.140)	.367* (.156)	.139 (.143)	.134 (.143)	.138 (.142)	.220* (.084)	.204* (.085)	.218* (.083)
Education	−.314** (.101)	−.300*** (.073)	−.324* (.108)	−.135# (.071)	−.146* (.070)	−.136# (.071)	−.125** (.041)	−.123** (.041)	−.122* (.040)
Income	−.013 (.071)	.039 (.057)	−.005 (.070)	.009 (.049)	.010 (.049)	.009 (.049)	.077* (.033)	.082* (.034)	.080* (.032)
Ideology (con high)	.520*** (.120)	.625*** (.113)	.527*** (.124)	.629*** (.126)	.647*** (.123)	.632*** (.126)	.713*** (.054)	.724*** (.054)	.706*** (.055)
Party ID (Rep high)	.509** (.135)	.469*** (.089)	.497** (.136)	.678*** (.090)	.628*** (.090)	.677*** (.090)	.326*** (.070)	.329*** (.070)	.323*** (.069)
County racial context	.032# (.014)	.105# (.049)	.017 (.013)	.008 (.013)	−.012 (.036)	.006 (.009)	.004 (.007)	.047 (.029)	.003 (.007)
County unempl rate (%)	.079 (.054)	.128 (.075)	.040 (.064)	.014 (.068)	.015 (.069)	.027 (.070)	.002 (.019)	.060* (.024)	.001 (.016)
County Rep party (% regis)	.044** (.011)	.093** (.022)	.060** (.014)	.072*** (.015)	.070*** (.015)	.076*** (.015)	.035*** (.006)	.044** (.011)	.039*** (.009)
County AFDC spending per capita	−.001 (.003)	−.003 (.004)	.002 (004)	.000 (.002)	.001 (.003)	.000 (.003)	.002* (.0009)	−.000 (.002)	.002 (.001)
Constant	.308# (.142)	.309# (.154)	.324# (.174)	.475** (.143)	.479** (.126)	.477** (.144)	.360*** (.070)	.359*** (.066)	.349*** (.074)
Number of Level-1 Units	1118			1141			2750		
Number of Level-2 Units	13			22			30		

Sources: Voter News Service (VNS), California General Election Exit Poll, November 8, 1994 (Prop 187); VNS, California General Election Exit Poll, November 5, 1996 (Prop 209); LA Times/CNN California Primary Exit Poll, June 2, 1998 (Prop 227). *Note:* Cells contain estimates from a hierarchical generalized linear model (population-average model) where the identity link function is logit and Bernoulli distribution of the dependent variables is assumed. The figures in parentheses are standard errors for Propositions 187 and 209 and robust standard errors for Proposition 227 (permitted by the larger number of level-2 units). County-level contextual data are from 1994 for Prop 187, 1996 for Prop 209, and 1998 for Prop 227 (except County % Hispanic, which is from 1996)

#$P < .10$; *$P < .05$; **$P < .01$; ***$P < .001$, two-sided

allow for dichotomous dependent variables by using a binomial sampling model and a logit link function, which constrains the level-1 values to fall between 0 and 1.[21]

Individual-Level Factors in the Vote on Propositions 187, 209, and 227

The focus of our analyses is contextual-level effects, but we first confirm which individual-level factors affect voting on these initiatives. Besides basic demographic characteristics of age, gender, education, income, and race, we add ideological self-identification and partisanship as predictors in the models.[22] Previous research on immigration issues and affirmative action lead us to believe these variables, at a minimum, are important influences on Americans' preferences about these policies.

The multivariate analyses of these individual-level data in Table 1 show that political ideology and partisanship are the most consistent predictors of vote choice: conservatives and Republicans were more likely to support the initiatives than liberals or Democrats. This is consistent with previous research on propositions more generally (Branton, 2003). Gender and education (especially among whites) also predict proposition votes, with men and the less educated being more likely to vote for the initiatives than women or better-educated respondents. Not surprisingly, compared to whites, Hispanics were less likely to vote for 187, Hispanics and blacks were less likely to vote for 227, and Hispanics, blacks, and Asians were less likely to vote for 209. Older whites were more likely than their younger counterparts to vote for Proposition 227; perhaps the bilingual policy initiative tapped symbolic attitudes of American identity that especially influenced older voters.[23]

In terms of predicted probabilities, ideology, party ID, and education had large substantive effects for white respondents. The likelihood of voting for Propositions 187, 209, and 227 increased from 44, 47, to 46%, respectively, among liberals to 76, 79, and 78% among conservatives (all other variables held to their means or modes). Similarly, the likelihood of voting for the propositions increased from 52, 48, and 58% among Democrats to 72, 80, and 72% among Republicans. Higher education results in a lower likelihood of voting for the propositions: the likelihood that those with less than high school educations would vote for Propositions 187, 209, and 227 were 79, 73, and 75%, while only 52, 61, and 58% of those with post-graduate educations voted yes. Finally, men were more likely to vote for the propositions, with predicted probabilities of doing so of 68, 68, and 69% while the likelihoods of women voting yes were 58, 62, and 61%.

[21] The results reported in Table 2 are from a multi-level logistic regression, and the coefficients can be interpreted in the same way as coefficients from a comparable single-level logistic regression would be interpreted. The level-1 variables are group-centered and the level-2 variables are grand-centered. In Table 2, robust standard errors are reported for Proposition 227; the smaller number of level-2 units for Propositions 187 and 209 allow only regular standard errors to be reported. Because we do not have a large number of level-2 units for all the proposition votes, we also reran these models as single-level models with Huber/White cluster-correcting robust standard errors. The results are similar, and our substantive conclusions remain the same (specifically, racial context was only statistically significant for Proposition 187 while political context was significant across all three propositions. The only difference in the single- versus multi-level analyses is that county unemployment rate was statistically significant for Prop 187 in the former; with the multi-level model unemployment rate did not achieve statistical significance, but is influential substantively as shown below).

[22] See Appendix 1 for the coding of the independent variables.

[23] Citrin, Reingold, and Green (1990) did find that Americanism (i.e. beliefs about what makes someone a ''true American'') increases with age.

Contextual-Level Effects Controlling for Individual Effects

The main question of interest is whether county context—racial composition, economic conditions, fiscal expenditures, and political climate—affects vote choice on the propositions once individuals' characteristics are taken into account. If one performs a county-level analysis (not shown here), all four contextual factors are significant in explaining county-level support for Proposition 187; the racial, economic and political factors are significant in explaining the vote for Proposition 209; and the economic and political factors are significant in explaining Proposition 227. However, county-level regressions introduce two kinds of aggregation bias. First, without individual-level controls, we cannot determine whether the context effects that appear to operate at the county level are merely patterns arising from the differing average levels of individual characteristics across counties. For example, in the vote for Proposition 187, perhaps it is not the varying size of Hispanic populations across counties, but rather the educational level and ideological predilections of individuals living in various counties that account for differences in perceived cultural/racial threat from those Hispanic populations. Second, county-level regressions cannot isolate the influences on whites' voting behavior from those on Hispanics' and blacks' vote choices, the structure of which may be quite different. Fortunately, from the election-day exit polls, we can incorporate into the models information on individuals within counties. Our analysis focuses on the behavior of non-Hispanic white voters.[24]

The results in Table 2 combine individual- and contextual-level effects. The individual-level characteristics that were significant in explaining vote choice among whites in Table 1 continue to exert influence with the addition of the contextual characteristics. Of main interest here, however, are the contextual variables themselves. For Proposition 187, two of the contextual factors influence vote choice: holding individual and other county characteristics constant, white respondents in counties with higher proportions of Hispanics ($P = .055$) and more Republicans ($P < .01$) were more likely to vote for the proposition than whites who lived among fewer Hispanics or Republicans. The predicted probability of voting for Proposition 187 increases from 51 to 67% as percent Hispanic ranges from the minimum (12%) to the maximum (41%). Similarly, as the percentage of registered Republicans in a county increases from the minimum of 16% to the maximum of 53%, the predicted probability that a white respondent will vote for Proposition 187 increases from 33 to 74%. The hypothesis that contextual factors matter beyond individual-level influences is supported for racial/ethnic composition and political climate. Neither economic nor fiscal climate, however, influenced whites' votes to limit services to illegal immigrants.[25] We

[24] We also examined the voting behavior of black and Hispanic respondents, but do not report the results here. Such analyses are outside the scope of this paper, as different theoretical considerations drive the voting behavior of these groups around ethnic/racial related propositions. Also, small sample sizes—ranging between 123 and 346 individuals, scattered across counties, per proposition—limit the statistical power of the analyses. Only two contextual effects were significant: blacks in counties with worse economic conditions were more likely to vote for the anti-affirmative action proposition, the opposite of expectations; and Hispanics in more Republican counties were more likely to vote for the anti-bilingual education proposition, similar to the behavior of their white counterparts.

[25] We also tried predicting vote choice on Proposition 187 with alternative measures of racial context: percent nonwhite, percent black, percent Hispanic *and* Asian, percent white, percent immigrant, and percent foreign born (the first two, along with percent Hispanic, are reported in Table 2). Whites' vote choice on Proposition 187 is influenced by the county presence of Hispanics and blacks only (and only at the .10 level of statistical significance). While there are other measures of racial and ethnic heterogeneity, such as fractionalization (Branton & Jones, 2001), using the percentage of a group in a locale is the standard in research on racial context, dating from Key's work.

should note, however, that although the level of county unemployment did not achieve statistical significance in explaining vote choice, it does have a large effect size relative to the other contextual variables, and the predicted probability of voting for Proposition 187 increases from 52 to 72% as unemployment ranges from the minimum in the sample (5.7%) to the maximum (16.4%).

Vote choice on Proposition 209 has a different structure. Of the county-level variables, only political climate has an effect on the vote above and beyond individual-level attributes. The more Republicans that were registered in a county, the more likely white voters were to vote for Proposition 209, regardless of their education level, ideology, or personal party identification. The predicted probability of voting for the proposition increased from 28 to 80% as percent Republican registration increased from the minimum to the maximum in the sample. The proportion of black residents in a county, county economic climate, and county fiscal conditions did not affect vote choice on the affirmative action proposition. We also tested racial threat operationalized as percent Hispanic and percent nonwhite, but these, like percent Black, were not statistically significant in explaining whites' vote choice on Proposition 209.[26]

The structure of the vote for Proposition 227 is different yet. Political climate was a strong influence on vote choice, as it was with the other two propositions, and fiscal climate mattered as well (although its effect was small)—unlike for the other propositions. The more registered Republicans and spending on AFDC per capita in a county, the greater whites' support for Proposition 227. The predicted probability of support for the proposition increased from 40 to 69% as the percent of registered Republicans increased from the minimum to the maximum; the predicted probability of voting for the proposition increased from 55 to 62% in the counties with the lowest to the highest AFDC per capita spending. Neither racial/ethnic nor economic climate had a statistically significant influence on the bilingual education vote.[27]

Discussion and Conclusion

Individual-level characteristics do much of the work of explaining vote choice on the three racial/ethnic-related ballot propositions. Education, party identification, and ideological self-identification were significant predictors of whites' votes for all of the propositions, while gender was also significant for Propositions 187 and 227, and age and income were

[26] Although the contextual variables are not highly correlated (see Appendix 2), we also reran all of the models in Table 2 with only the single contextual-level measure of racial context (see Appendix 3). We find nearly identical results: racial context is influential only for Proposition 187, where whites in counties with more Hispanics are more likely to vote yes. Racial context as operationalized as percent black was of borderline statistical significance ($P < .10$) for Propositions 187 and 209, but the ''wrong'' sign—whites in counties with more blacks were less likely to vote for these propositions. Thus the presence of the other contextual variables in the models shown in Table 2 is not ''knocking out'' an effect of racial context, since little such effect is evident in models containing only racial context.

[27] For all three propositions, political context influenced vote choice whether measured with county percent Republican or county percent Democrat. We also tested interactions between income and county unemployment, hypothesizing that lower income whites might be particularly sensitive to local economic conditions; the interaction term was not statistically significant for any of the propositions. In addition, we tested the interaction between county racial and economic climates, hypothesizing that whites might be even more likely to vote for these propositions in counties where there are both a greater proportion of Hispanics or blacks and worse economic conditions; these coefficients were not statistically significant for any of the propositions.

significant for Proposition 227.[28] Adding the contextual variables does not alter the effects of those individual-level predictors. However, context did influence vote choice. Four main findings are apparent from the multi-level analyses. First, political climate emerges as the most important and consistent influence, structuring vote choice on all three initiatives. Second, racial context influenced only Proposition 187, and its effect only approaches standard levels of statistical significance ($P < .10$). Third, economic context did not achieve statistical significance in influencing vote choice on any of the propositions, although it appears to have substantively influenced vote choice on Proposition 187. Finally, fiscal considerations mattered only for Proposition 227.

The single contextual hypothesis supported for all three propositions was the political one: white respondents in counties with higher proportions of Republicans were more likely to vote for the propositions, other characteristics—including their *own* party identification—held constant. Most interestingly, political climate mattered despite the differences in the level of elite mobilization of the issues. The early campaign for CCRI was similar to that of Proposition 187, with Wilson and the California Republicans stumping for Proposition 209; Republicans elsewhere may have been more ambivalent about attacking affirmative action, but the partisan association with the anti-affirmative action initiative was not negated in California. In contrast, elites did not make Proposition 227 into the same kind of partisan issue as 187 and 209; nevertheless, political climate still affected vote choice. Because the parties differ on racial lines (Carmines & Stimson, 1989), and because Republicans among the public were much more supportive than Democrats of the initiative—voting 78–52% for it, according to the exit poll—local conversations and messages about 227 could have differed with local partisanship. Thus county-level partisanship (and subsequent influence or pressure) could matter, even if elite politicization were muted or if an elite Republican message did not resonate in more Republican counties.

The other major finding that contrasts with previous research is the minor role played by ''racial threat.'' Racial context influenced whites' voting only on the anti-illegal immigrant proposition, and then only modestly.[29] That county racial climate mattered only for Proposition 187 makes sense in that the campaign for 187 most explicitly emphasized California's increasing Hispanic population. To the extent that affirmative action is seen as a policy about blacks, not Hispanics, racial context did not influence vote choice on Proposition 209, perhaps because blacks are not the focus of racial/ethnic change in the state (although percent Hispanic was not significant in explaining vote choice either). Perhaps another reason racial climate did not affect the affirmative action vote is that few people have personal, localized experiences with affirmative action. Most whites have no personal knowledge of a situation where a minority or female individual got a job or promotion they did not deserve (Cain, Citrin, & Wong, 2000), and they rarely encounter (personally or on the news) groups of individuals they suspect are all affirmative action beneficiaries. That the percentage of Hispanics in whites' counties did not influence their vote on the bilingual education proposal is puzzling. However, prior to the 1998 election,

[28] That gender did not predict vote choice on Proposition 209 is somewhat surprising, given the efforts by proponents of affirmative action like the National Organization of Women (NOW) to mobilize women, particularly white women, against the initiative (Chavez, 1998).

[29] Furthermore, even the modest racial effect we find for Proposition 187 may be an artifact of the exit poll sample. The correlation between % Hispanic and county vote on 187 was .04 for the 58 counties, but much higher, .42, for the 13 counties sampled. Thus, the racial effect may appear for Proposition 187 only because the bivariate correlation between % Hispanic and county proposition vote is much higher in the counties sampled than in all 58 California counties (see Appendix 2A).

Hispanics were reported in the media to be relatively favorable toward the proposition—and ultimately supported this proposition at higher rates than the other two—support that may have blunted the influence of racial climate for white voters.

The effect of county economic climate on whites' vote choice is not discernible from zero for any of the propositions, although it may have influenced the Prop 187 vote. News about state-level unemployment rates or recession did not seem to resonate more in areas that were harder hit. This could be because most Anglos are not in direct competition with Hispanic immigrants for jobs. Furthermore, by 1996 and certainly by 1998, economic conditions in California were improving, which may explain the failure of economic context to explain vote choice on 209 or 227.[30]

Finally, the fiscal burden hypothesis was upheld only for Proposition 227, the bilingual education initiative. To the extent that bilingual education is a social service funded by tax revenues, this makes sense. That fiscal concerns did not influence vote choice on Proposition 187 is surprising, since the proposition's language and advertising campaign emphasized the fiscal consequences of illegal immigration, and we tested numerous different measures for fiscal context. Less surprising is the lack of influence of fiscal conditions on vote choice for 209; critiques of affirmative action almost never frame it as a programmatic waste of funds.

This work makes several contributions to the literature on context effects surrounding racial and ethnic issues. First, it provides some support for group conflict theory and little support for contact theory (at least as measured at the contextual level, rather than directly as interpersonal contact). When competition was heightened during the early- to mid-1990s, we found more negative context effects, congruent with group conflict theory. In good economic times, however, context did not have a positive cooperative effect, as contact theory might suggest; there were not, for example, positive effects of county racial environment on vote choice during the later 1990s.

Second, unlike many existing analyses, this work employs both individual- and contextual-level data, challenging some of the previous findings about ''racial threat'' in California initiative voting. By utilizing both levels of data, we are able to avoid the cross-level inference problems that have plagued previous efforts. Here, where we are able to control for individual-level characteristics like education and ideology, we find that the effects of racial context are limited to the Proposition 187 case. An important finding of this analysis is that we cannot assume that where a policy or attitude is race-related there will necessarily be a racial context effect. Scholars of racial context need to think more systematically about why preferences for certain racial policies will be affected by voters' surroundings, while other policy opinions are not.

Finally, this study shows that the search for context effects on voting behavior should not be limited to race and ethnicity.[31] Indeed, the most prevalent county-level effect on vote choice on these race-oriented propositions was not racial context, but political context. While our data do not allow us to specify the precise mechanisms by which political climate operates, the findings are supportive of several different micro-level explanations. For example, party positions on these issues may be symbolic indicators that serve as cues

[30] By 1998, the sentiment that immigrants were taking jobs away from native-born Americans—an attitude that was prevalent only 4 years earlier—had changed. In an April 1998 poll conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California, a plurality of the Californians interviewed agreed that ''immigrants today are a benefit to California because of their hard work and job skills.''

[31] Recent research on racial attitudes has already indicated the need to look beyond racial context to factors like socioeconomic status (see, for example, Oliver & Mendelberg, 2000).

to voters, in line with the symbolic politics theory of Sears and Citrin (1982) and others. Alternatively, political cues could work through friendship and political discussion networks, consistent with the work by Huckfeldt et al. on social networks and local contexts (1993, 1995). Further research is needed to explore these possible mechanisms. Our findings in California do, however, emphasize the importance of *both* the individual and her environment in determining voting behavior: regardless of whether a respondent's own political leanings match up with those of her county, the partisanship of this geographic community has an effect on her vote choices, above and beyond her own partisanship.

The prevalence of the political climate effect on individual vote choice is highly consequential. Research has shown that party is a common cue, an economizing device that voters as cognitive misers often use (Popkin, 1994). If the electorate is ideologically polarized and divided on partisan lines, and if party divisions are linked in part to these racial/ethnic issues (Carmines & Stimson, 1989), then this kind of contextual effect may be persistent. Further exploration should assess whether the strength of political climate varies with the nature of campaigns and with mobilization efforts, as shown in a preliminary way here.

The lack of effects of economic and fiscal context raises a number of interesting questions. First, it simply reemphasizes the fact that scholars need to develop a better understanding of when and why contextual effects—be they economic, fiscal, racial, partisan, or otherwise—appear, above and beyond individual-level factors. Second, it creates a puzzle for how we should understand work that links economic fortunes with attitudes about outgroups, particularly immigrants. How do perceptions of conflict and choices for scapegoats arise, if they are not driven by the environments in which individuals are embedded? It is possible that the relevant geographic unit is smaller or larger than the counties examined here.

Racial diversity may be important in shaping the political agenda of elites and the voting preferences of the mass public—both in California and nationally. Nevertheless, we find that racial context has different effects on different racial policies and that it is not the only kind of contextual effect influencing vote choice on racial policies. Lewin (1951) explains behavior generally as a function of both the person and the environment, and it is clear that further research is needed to develop (1) more nuanced tests for a variety of contextual effects that might arise in the environment, not just ''racial threat,'' and (2) more direct measures of the psychological mechanisms that underlie these contextual effects.

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Appendix 1

Coding of individual-level independent variables in Tables 1 and 2

Age. Propositions 187 and 209: Coded 1 if Age 18–24, 2 if 25–29, 3 if 30–39, 4 if 40–44, 5 if 45–49, 6 if 50–59, 7 if 60–64, 8 if 65 or over. Proposition 227: Coded 1 if Age 18–24, 2 if 25–29, 3 if 30–39, 4 if 40–49, 5 if 50–59, 6 if 60–64, 7 if 65 or over.

Male. Coded 1 if male, 0 if female.

Education. Coded 1 if no high school diploma, 2 if high school graduate, 3 if some college, 4 if college graduate, 5 if post-graduate.

Income. Propositions 187 and 209: Coded 1 if under $15,000, 2 if $15–29.9K, 3 if $30–49.9K, 4 if $50–74.9K, 5 if $75–99.9K, 6 if $100K or more. Proposition 227: Coded 1 if

under $20,000, 2 if $20–39.9K, 3 if $40–59.9K, 4 if $60–74.9K, 5 if $75–99.9K, 6 if $100K or more.

Black. Coded 1 if Black, 0 if White, Hispanic, Asian or Other.

Hispanic. Coded 1 if Hispanic, 0 if White, Black, Asian or Other.

Asian. Coded 1 if Asian, 0 if White, Black, Hispanic or Other.

Ideology. Coded 1 if liberal, 2 if moderate, 3 if conservative.

Party Identification. Coded 1 if Democratic, 2 if Independent, 3 if Republican. Other removed from analysis.

Appendix 2A

Contextual variable descriptive statistics for all 58 California counties and the counties sampled for the exit polls

		Min	Max	Mean	SD
Prop 187					
Hispanic (%)	All counties	3.6	68.4	18.7	13.2
	Sample (n = 13)	11.9	41.0	21.5	8.3
Unemployed (%)	All counties	4.6	26.1	10.7	4.0
	Sample	5.7	16.4	8.3	3.2
Republican (%)	All counties	16.4	52.6	39.2	7.1
	Sample	16.4	52.6	37.0	10.8
AFDC $ per capita	All counties	$40	356	170	80.7
	Sample	$92	286	161	62.1
Prop 209					
Black (%)	All counties	.2	17.7	3.5	3.7
	Sample (n = 22)	.2	17.7	5.1	4.3
Unemployed (%)	All counties	3.4	29.4	9.7	4.6
	Sample	3.4	14.0	7.0	2.9
Republican (%)	All counties	15.4	51.6	39.3	7.5
	Sample	15.4	51.6	36.8	9.2
AFDC $ per capita	All counties	$35	$396	$162	$79
	Sample	$50	$268	$150	$75
Prop 227					
Hispanic (%)	All counties	3.8	69.2	19.4	13.4
	Sample (n = 30)	4.4	42.4	21.4	11.3
Unemployed (%)	All counties	2.7	26.5	8.9	4.4
	Sample	2.7	15.5	6.9	3.6
Republican (%)	All counties	15.0	51.3	39.0	7.5
	Sample	15.0	51.3	36.9	8.6
AFDC $ per capita	All counties	$35	$369	$162	$78
	Sample	$35	$333	$154	$85

Appendix 2B

Correlations among contextual variables for all 58 California counties and sampled counties

	Country Prop 187 vote	Hispanic (%)	Unemployed (%)	Republican (%)
Prop 187				
Hispanic (%)	−.04 (n = 58)			
	.42 (n = 13)			
Unemployed (%)	.54***	.49**		
	.61*	.24		
Republican (%)	.84***	−.08	.20	
	.92***	.35	.46	
AFDC $ per capita	.30*	.31*	.59**	−.02
	.39	.55#	.50#	.17
Prop 209				
	County Prop 209 vote	Black (%)	Unemployed (%)	Republican (%)
Black (%)	−.51*** (n = 58)			
	−.55** (n = 22)			
Unemployed (%)	.38**	−.21		
	.43*	−.16		
Republican (%)	.90***	−.46**	.19	
	.92***	−.45*	.23	
AFDC $ per capita	.18	.16	.57**	.02
	.23	.34	.66**	.10
Prop 227				
	County Prop 227 vote	Hispanic (%)	Unemployed (%)	Republican (%)
Hispanic (%)	−.29* (n = 58)			
	.04 (n = 30)			
Unemployed (%)	.31*	.48**		
	.28	.53**		
Republican (%)	.84***	−.13	.21	
	.92***	.07	.24	
AFDC $ per capita	−.32*	.85**	.30*	−.34**
	.22	.82**	.28	−.29

The cells contain the correlations for all 58 counties with the correlations for each sample below
*P < .05; **P < .01, two-tailed

Appendix 3

Predicting white' proposition votes with individual-level variables and racial context only

Independent variables	Proposition 187 W/diff racial context vars			Proposition 209 W/diff racial context vars			Proposition 227 W/diff racial context vars		
	Hispanic (%)	Black (%)	Nonwhite (%)	Hispanic (%)	Black (%)	Nonwhite (%)	Hispanic (%)	Black (%)	Nonwhite (%)
Age	.030 (.044)	.028 (.043)	.020 (.045)	.025 (.036)	.023 (.035)	.021 (.035)	.050# (.025)	.054* (.025)	.054* (.026)
Male	.341* (.157)	.321# (.149)	.333* (.151)	.108 (.136)	.111 (.141)	.105 (.137)	.207* (.074)	.183* (.079)	.182* (.080)
Education	−.299* (.105)	−.295* (.100)	−.294* (.098)	−.110 (.072)	−.128# (.070)	−.122# (.071)	−.115** (.038)	−.116** (.038)	−.116** (.038)
Income	−.005 (.072)	−.001 (.069)	−.008 (.068)	.006 (.052)	.021 (.049)	.017 (.050)	.077* (.032)	.078* (.032)	.078* (.032)
Ideology (con high)	.493** (.133)	.456** (.125)	.483** (.122)	.550*** (.117)	.564*** (.119)	.552*** (.118)	.695*** (.053)	.676*** (.053)	.677*** (.055)
Party ID (Rep high)	.480** (.140)	.493** (.146)	.478** (.139)	.642*** (.089)	.638*** (.089)	.635*** (.087)	.308*** (.069)	.317*** (.068)	.317*** (.069)
County racial context	.060* (.020)	−.083# (.043)	−.002 (.018)	.016 (.017)	−.073# (.037)	−.008 (.012)	.011 (.007)	−.006 (.017)	−.001 (.006)
Constant	.283 (.262)	.273 (.302)	.275 (.308)	.410# (.208)	.410* (.190)	.414# (.203)	.314** (.090)	.318** (.095)	.317** (.095)
Number of Level-1 Units		1118			1141			2750	
Number of Level-2 Units		13			22			30	

Sources: Voter News Service (VNS), California General Election Exit Poll, November 8, 1994 (Prop 187); VNS, California General Election Exit Poll, November 5, 1996 (Prop 209); LA Times/CNN California Primary Exit Poll, June 2, 1998 (Prop 227).

Note: Cells contain estimates from a hierarchical generalized linear model (population-average model) where the identity link function is logit and Bernoulli distribution of the dependent variables is assumed. The figures in parentheses are standard errors for Propositions 187 and 209 and robust standard errors for Proposition 227 (permitted by the larger number of level-2 units). County-level contextual data are from 1994 for Prop 187, 1996 for Prop 209, and 1998 for Prop 227 (except County % Hispanic, which is from 1996)

#$P < .10$; *$P < .05$; **$P < .01$; ***$P < .001$, two-sided

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