Racially Polarized Voting: Data Sets

Redistricting Data Hub

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Upcoming Trainings

1. Analyzing Proposed Maps on DRA (December 2nd)

2. Section 3: From RPV Data to RPV Analysis (December 7th)
Gingles Criteria

**Gingles I**
Is the minority group sufficiently numerous and geographically compact to constitute a majority in a single-member district?

**Gingles II**
Is the minority group politically cohesive (i.e., do minority voters usually support the same candidates)?

**Gingles III**
Does the majority group consistently vote as a bloc to usually defeat the candidates supported by minority voters?
Gingles I

- Data needed to demonstrate minority group satisfies the 1st prong – census population data by race/ethnicity

Complexities: Benchmark

Complexities: Source of Data

- PL 94-171 census redistricting data reports voting age population by race/ethnicity at the census block level but does not include citizenship data.
- American Community Survey (ACS) data - citizenship rates by race/ethnicity but only at the census block group level and only for rolling 5 year period.

Complexities: Coalition Claims

- 6th circuit expressly denied permissibility of coalition claims (Nixon v. Kent County, 1996)
- Some circuits have at least tacitly recognized permissibility of coalition claims:
  - 9th: Badillo v. City of Stockton, 1992
  - 11th: Concerned Citizens of Hardee County v. Hardee County Board of Commissioners, 1990
U.S. Courts of Appeals and U.S. District Courts

*https://opened.cuny.edu/courseware/lesson/278/student/?task=3
Gingles II and III

- 2nd and 3rd prongs – requires an analysis of voting patterns by race/ethnicity
- secret ballot means we need to estimate voting patterns by race/ethnicity
Data Needed for Analyzing Voting Patterns

● Data needed to conduct statistical analysis: aggregate level analysis with election precincts usually serving as the unit of analysis
● Information needed for each precinct
  ○ Election results
  ○ Demographic composition
● Analysis designed to uncover patterns relating these two variables (demographic composition and voting behavior) across precincts
Sources of election returns

Source of election returns may vary depending on whether

- State, county, or local district boundaries are being challenged
- General or primary election returns are being sought

*https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/election-results-timing/
Relevant elections

- Election contests that include minority candidates v. contests with only white candidates
- Endogenous v. exogenous elections
- Recent v. more dated elections

Complexities: Election results

- Elections in which voters can vote for more than one candidate
- Alternative voting schemes (e.g., ranked choice voting)

*https://www1.nyc.gov/site/civicengagement/voting/ranked-choice-voting.page
Sources of precinct demographic data

- VAP – PL 94-171 redistricting data (block boundary program and VTDs)
- CVAP – ACS citizenship data used in conjunction with PL data to estimate citizens of voting age by race at block level
- Voter registration data by race – reported at the precinct level in some jurisdictions
- Voter turnout data by race – voter file with race of voter may indicate whether voter turned out in given election
- Spanish surname may be used in conjunction with voter file to indicate Hispanic turnout
- Bayesian Improved Surname and Geocoding Method (BISG)
Complexities: Shifting levels of geography

- Changing precinct boundaries over time - need shapefiles to align census geography with precincts
- Disaggregation of precinct election results down to census blocks
  - VAP
  - Geocoded voters

*https://www.restore.ac.uk/geo-refer/91010mwors01y00000000.php
Questions?