

Chapter 1

Introduction: Civic and Political Inequalities

In the spring of 2006, the United States experienced some of the largest, most widespread protest marches in its history, from massive demonstrations of a half million people or more in large cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and Dallas to unprecedented rallies in places like Schuyler, Nebraska, and towns across South Carolina. In total, several million demonstrators, with estimates ranging from 3.5 to 5 million, waved banners and walked in pro-immigration rallies from March 10 to May 1 (Bada, Fox, and Selee 2006; Wang and Winn 2006). The public, politicians, and even advocates for immigrant rights were taken unaware by the scale and breadth of these public protests. Yet, contrary to the depictions in many mainstream news outlets, the immigrant protests were not simply a spontaneous uprising against restrictive immigration legislation passed by the House of Representatives (ABC News 2006).¹ They arose instead from an existing scaffold of immigrant-serving organizations, the groundwork for such large-scale civic and political engagement already established by organizations ranging from immigrant advocacy groups and labor unions to religious institutions and transnational hometown associations (Wang and Winn 2006).² The protests of spring 2006 thus drew back the curtain on the rich and pervasive forms of community organization and mobilization operating within immigrant communities. They also showcased the political engagement of noncitizens who are, in large part, excluded from formal electoral politics.

The sudden visibility of immigrant community organizations and their ability to mobilize millions run counter to some recent studies of civic participation, which suggest that immigration is one of the primary reasons for declining civic engagement and the persistence of racial and ethnic gaps in participation (Gimpel 1999; Camarota 2001; Putnam 2007). Indeed, some of the steepest decreases in civic participation have coincided with the growing share of first- and second-generation immigrants in the United States, particularly those of Latin American and Asian origins. Other observers, less pessimistic, note that apparent group differences in participation may instead be the result of inaccurate measures of voluntarism that do not incorporate the different experiences of immigrants (Reynoso 2003; Vasquez 2003). These debates about the civic engagement of immigrants stand against a backdrop of scholarship suggesting that civic participation is declining for everyone: today's June Cleaver no longer helps out at

the school bake sale and today's Ward Cleaver no longer belongs to his father's fraternal or local community organizations. These changes in civic participation are variously attributed to the societal transformations of postindustrial economies, the rise of private forms of entertainment, and the growth of expert-run member associations (Putnam 2000; Skocpol 2003).

Scholars and public officials alike worry about declines in civic engagement and social capital because of their troubling implications for democratic politics. Engagement with community organizations is often tied to political involvement and policy influence at all levels of government (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). Thus declining levels of voluntarism may contribute to continuing declines in political interest and participation. Low levels of voluntarism may also adversely affect the provision of public goods in many communities, especially as cuts in government spending leave civic and voluntary organizations as major providers of social services. Implicit in these concerns is a strong belief that participation in the associational life of the United States is the underpinning of a robust democracy, a belief nurtured by a long historical narrative of America as a nation of joiners.

Taken together, these two strands of literature—on the causes of declining civic engagement and their consequences for democratic politics—warn that immigration and ethnic diversification are undermining the civic and political vitality of the United States and other liberal democracies (Putnam 2007). Before taking this large step, however, it is important to better account for the various forms of immigrant civic participation, especially with respect to immigrant- and ethnic-serving organizations. Studies suggesting that declines in civic participation may be related to immigration and ethnic diversification lack such a detailed understanding. As a consequence, several questions remain unanswered: To what extent are immigrants' community organizations, ranging from religious institutions to homeland associations and soccer leagues, transforming our taken-for-granted understandings of associational life? Will Sandeep Singh join—or be invited to join—the local Rotary Club? Will Mai Nguyen participate in the Chamber of Commerce, or will she feel unwelcome or unable to communicate effectively with other business owners? Will Rosa Hernandez have access to a Parent Teacher Association, ideally one that provides Spanish-language support? Will these immigrants join existing organizations, form their own groups, or will they lead private lives disconnected from collective, public-minded action? More generally, are stories of American civic (dis)engagement equally relevant to immigrants, or might immigrants revitalize community organizations?

This volume probes these questions of immigrant civic and political engagement, paying particular attention to community organizations and the processes linking them to political institutions (above) and to individual residents or constituents (below). We have organized the chapters to offer a better understanding of how immigrant civic engagement may vary across geographic contexts, national origins, and types of organization. Finally, we also draw attention to the political consequences of immigrant civic participation, especially as they relate to questions of inequality: To what degree do Americans open the doors of their clubs, associations and organizations to those not born in the United States? Will

newer immigrant and ethnic organizations play the same role in local civic life and politics as suggested by older, pluralist narratives of American democracy, or do we find instead a stratified civic arena marked by group inequalities in political visibility and access to public officials?

This book thus asks whether the civic paths of immigrant participants lead to greater visibility and influence in politics, or whether such hopes dissipate in the face of political stratification. In particular, we focus on immigrant participation in formal and informal associations, and the interaction of immigrant-based organizations with mainstream political institutions as well as other collective groups in civic and political life. We strive to do this in a truly interdisciplinary manner, bringing together perspectives from political science, sociology, anthropology, ethnic studies, and history. With the study of contemporary immigrant community organizations still in its infancy, we need to think carefully about the factors that influence the growth and political relevance of such organizations, paying particular attention to the role of place, immigrant national origins, and organizational form. We also need to consider the interplay between community organizations and political institutions in other immigrant-receiving countries for the lessons they may provide for the United States. The result, we hope, is an innovative, thought-provoking account of immigrant organizing and the relationship between organizations and immigrants' civic and political engagement.

IMMIGRANT POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT: EXPANDING AND CHALLENGING WHAT WE KNOW

This volume is situated at the intersection of several research traditions in sociology and political science: literatures on immigrant adaptation, civic engagement, and minority political incorporation. As such, it seeks to address gaps in each tradition. The immigrant adaptation literature in sociology and related fields has focused primarily on economic, demographic, and other social outcomes, with much less attention to political and civic institutions and processes (see Alba and Nee 2003; Bean and Stevens 2003). The contemporary literature on civic participation and civic engagement, while rich in many ways, is largely silent on issues related to immigrant adaptation, focusing primarily on the native-born (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Putnam 2000; Skocpol 2003). Finally, the literature on minority political incorporation in urban areas offers several potential insights to understand the incorporation of immigrants (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984), though its focus on electoral mobilization may not be especially useful in explaining the political incorporation of immigrant residents, many of whom cannot vote (but see Jones-Correa 1998 and Wong 2006).

Indeed, several factors related to the immigrant experience may shape the extent to which residents form civic organizations and the extent to which such organizations are visible and influential in their local communities. Here we outline the reasons why it is important to draw particular attention to immigrants

and the immigrant experience when considering civic and political engagement. We also provide a brief overview of the relevant literatures in sociology and political science on immigrant adaptation, civic engagement, and minority political incorporation.

Special Challenges—and Opportunities—of Immigration for Civic and Political Engagement

Our definition of *immigrant* rests on foreign birth and spans all legal statuses held by the foreign-born: naturalized citizen, legal permanent resident, legal temporary visitor (such as students or temporary workers, some of whom later become permanent residents), refugee or asylee, and undocumented or unauthorized resident.³ As of 2006, more than 12.5 percent (37.5 million) of United States residents fit this definition of immigrant, more than the entire population of California and more than twice that of New England (U.S. Census Bureau 2006). We are also interested in the adult children of immigrants—often referred to as the immigrant second generation—because they can sustain, transform, or abandon the organizations of the first generation. Today, second-generation immigrants account for about 8 percent of the adult population in the United States and a slightly larger proportion of the adult citizen population.

The most obvious difference between the native-born and the foreign-born is the issue of legal status and access to formal membership through citizenship. Legal status critically informs the study of immigrant community organizations. The great majority of immigrants in the United States, about 65 percent, cannot vote because they have not applied for citizenship or are ineligible to do so.⁴ Given this electoral exclusion and the generally lower propensity of naturalized citizens to vote, we may expect community organizations to play an even greater role in political representation for immigrants than for the native-born. At the same time, lack of citizenship or legal status may lessen the vitality and political influence of immigrant organizations, with noncitizens unable to provide voting blocs and with unauthorized immigrants reluctant to get involved in the public sphere. Differences in legal status may also affect whether immigrant joiners are more likely to participate in transnational associations targeted to the homeland or in organizations focused primarily on the host society.

We may also expect differences in civic and political engagement between refugees, who are eligible for government support and assistance from refugee settlement organizations, and economic or family migrants, who must largely rely on personal resources and the help of friends and family (Bloemraad 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 2006). About 7 percent, or 2.7 million, of the foreign-born are refugees or have previously held refugee status (Passel 2006). A related issue—important for any government-supported program directed to immigrant organizations—is the question of whether, and under what conditions, government assistance promotes the growth and sustenance of local organizations, or whether such support crowds out community-driven alternatives and undermines the autonomy of civic groups.

A third fundamental distinction between immigrants and native-born citizens lies in the cultural and linguistic distance that can separate the two groups. Although the fabric of American society is woven from diverse strands across regions and racial-ethnic groups, the linguistic and cultural gaps associated with foreign birth tend to be greater, especially among more recent arrivals to the United States (Hirschman, Kasinitz, and DeWind 1999).

One of the most important gaps is language. Despite fears in some corners that the United States is becoming a Spanish-speaking nation (Huntington 2004), English is without doubt the language of public and political discourse. Lack of English proficiency often emerges as a central barrier to immigrants' civic and political engagement within mainstream institutions (Ramakrishnan and Viramontes 2006). Language barriers also contribute to stratification between mainstream and ethnic organizations, because leaders in ethnic organizations often lack the linguistic skills to speak out in public hearings and apply for program grants or for nonprofit status (Ramakrishnan and Lewis 2005; Aptekar, chapter 8, this volume). Organizations in which immigrants can speak their native language consequently provide important spaces for newcomers to participate in the civic life of their adopted countries, and possibly in their home countries as well (chapter 13, this volume). To the extent that limited English skills might be characteristic of immigrants from a variety of class backgrounds, organizations that support such linguistic communities may provide a space for the kinds of cross-class alliances some see disappearing from mainstream America (Skocpol 1999).

Beyond language, immigrants may also face cultural gaps in understanding their new country's political institutions, its taken-for-granted norms about politics and civic activity, and the very ways that politics and civic engagement are understood and discussed. Immigrants must learn the ropes, so to speak, of their host country, and research indicates that those from authoritarian regimes are less prepared to participate in politics (Ramakrishnan 2005; Bilodeau 2005). On the other hand, immigrants from countries with stronger or more radical union traditions than in the United States may help reinvigorate the American union movement (La Luz and Finn 1998), and religious precepts from the homeland may give a distinctive spin on how immigrants get involved in community service (chapter 7, this volume). The immigrant experience can thus create obstacles to political and civic incorporation, but it can also rejuvenate or transform norms and practices in host societies.

Finally, immigrants may also get involved in transnational social fields where social, economic, and political activities collectively engage people in the homeland and the host country (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Levitt 2001). An open question is whether transnational political and civic activities sap energies and resources that would otherwise involve immigrants in the adopted country, or whether the lessons learned and skills gained through transnational activities create a virtuous circle of civic and political engagement across borders (chapter 13, this volume).

In short, understanding immigrant civic and political engagement is important not only for the unique issues raised by immigration—from the importance

of formal citizenship and legal status, to linguistic challenges and differences in culture—but also as a lens on general theories of civic and political engagement and as a hint of how organizational life may evolve in the decades to come.

The Immigrant Adaptation Literature: Its Relative Silence on Politics

Since the advent of the post-1965 wave of immigration, one of the most vigorous debates on immigrant adaptation has been over the continued relevance of immigrant assimilation and the utility of alternative frameworks such as reactive ethnicity or segmented assimilation. Classic models of immigrant assimilation in the United States viewed immigrant adaptation largely as a linear process. Scholars in this tradition disagreed over whether this process was marked by Anglo-conformity or the creation of a new melting-pot hybrid, and whether assimilation in some areas (such as acculturation to sociocultural practices) would inevitably lead to assimilation in others (Gordon 1964). However, they largely agreed that, with time and generational succession, immigrants would give up their distinctive languages, norms, identities, and practices, eventually becoming largely undifferentiated Americans (Park 1930; Warner and Srole 1945; Gordon 1964).

Scholars of the post-1965 wave of immigration to the United States are divided as to whether this older model applies to new immigrants. A number of scholars challenge the assertions of the classic assimilation model—of inevitable progression on matters such as cultural homogenization, intermarriage, occupational mobility, and the like—offering instead a model of segmented assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Zhou 1999). These researchers note that integration experiences are heavily stratified by class and race: Depending on an immigrant group's class background, minority status, and their context of reception in the United States, they may follow a path of straight-line assimilation, assimilate downward into the American minority underclass, or advance socioeconomically while retaining their ethnic and cultural differences (Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Waters 1999; Zhou and Bankston 1998). In contrast, others favor a new assimilation model that forgoes the assumption of cultural homogenization and acknowledges the impact of multiculturalism in American life. These studies point to the continued relevance of certain critical aspects of the assimilation model—such as occupational mobility, intermarriage, English proficiency, and the pursuit of higher education—all of which are made possible by immigrants' desires for a better life and changes in social norms and legal frameworks that make discrimination less likely today than before (Alba and Nee 2003; Perlmann 2005).

This ongoing debate over immigrant adaptation has produced numerous empirical and theoretical studies, but neither the segmented assimilation nor the new assimilation frameworks have much to say about immigrant civic and political incorporation. For instance, Richard Alba and Victor Nee (2003) implicitly acknowledge the role of political institutions in shaping antidiscrimination laws,

but they pay limited attention to the formation of civic organizations and groups' relative levels of politicization. The logic of the new assimilation approach nevertheless implies that immigrants and their children will increasingly choose to participate (and be welcomed to participate) in mainstream civic organizations and political activities. Similarly, the segmented assimilation model implies that class, legal status, and race will stratify entry and participation in political and civic affairs. However, as Portes and Rumbaut note, "the typology is largely based on the different *class* resources that immigrants bring with them, while . . . ethnicity regularly trumps class as a motive for collective mobilization" (2006, 182, emphasis in original). Nevertheless, a segmented assimilation approach to civic and political engagement would likely predict that nonwhite immigrants with socioeconomic resources will use ethnicity as an identity category and a source of organizational cohesion; minority immigrants of modest class backgrounds may join the (limited) organizations for poor minorities in the United States; and that white immigrants will blend over time into the American middle class mainstream.

Ultimately, however, these applications and approximations are unsatisfactory. Even though we can draw civic and political implications from the new assimilationist or the segmented assimilation frameworks, we lack detailed theoretical and empirical attention to civic organizations, political institutions, and processes of civic or political engagement. The present-day debate in the immigrant adaptation literature is largely silent on the role of civic and political participation or the formation of community organizations. We lack a clear understanding of the factors that catapult some organizations and groups to political prominence and leave others at the periphery of local influence, nor do we fully understand the role of state actors and mainstream social institutions in allocating and shaping power and access to political resources.

The Civic Participation Literature: Nascent Attention to Immigrants

A wealth of scholarship in political science shows that civic participation (also referred to as voluntarism or volunteerism) plays an important role in shaping political participation such as voting, writing letters to elected officials, and contributing money to politics. Even though the association of higher socioeconomic status with greater political participation is a widely applicable finding in the United States and other liberal democracies, more recent scholarship shows that such mechanisms often operate through prior forms of engagement, such as participation in religious institutions and other community organizations (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Indeed, participation in civic activities can even help individuals overcome some of the disadvantages associated with lower socioeconomic status, providing residents with the civic skills and political information necessary to engage in politics (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Lee 2002).

Scholarly attention to civic voluntarism received a considerable boost during

the 1990s with Robert Putnam's work on associational life across Italy's various regions (1993) and in the United States (2000). One of Putnam's central claims regarding the United States is that civic voluntarism has declined over the past several decades, and that this has led to negative outcomes on matters ranging from interpersonal trust and confidence in government institutions to bureaucratic efficiency, economic development, and even public health outcomes. There have been several criticisms of Putnam's wide-ranging approach to civic voluntarism. Some involve disagreements over what has been responsible for the decline in voluntarism, with Theda Skocpol (2003) pointing to the rise of national, bureaucratic organizations disconnected from local concerns, and Jason Kaufman (2002) identifying competition from private insurance companies and changing norms regarding racial and gender exclusion.

Scholars have also called for a narrower and more detailed articulation of how civic voluntarism relates to political incorporation, particularly with respect to racial and ethnic minorities. For instance, Rodney Hero (2003) noted that Putnam's measures of social capital may predict improved outcomes for whites, but fail to do so—and, in some cases, even predict worse outcomes—for nonwhites. Kaufman offered a similar critique with respect to historical data on civic participation from the first half of the twentieth century, arguing that civic associations grew out of a process of competitive voluntarism, as new groups splintered along ethnic and religious lines and many native-born groups sought to maintain racial and gender exclusion. Thus, higher levels of voluntarism did not produce favorable outcomes for everyone in society, as members of excluded groups were worse off living in contexts of high voluntarism also characterized by strong biases in race, nativity, class, and gender.

Despite these vigorous debates about whether civic participation is declining, the causes for such declines, and the consequences for political participation, civic participation in contemporary immigrant communities has received much less attention. Part of this silence is due to the kinds of data currently available to scholars of civic and political engagement: surveys such as the 1990 Civic Participation Study (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995) and the 2000 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (Putnam 2007) were not conducted in languages apart from English and Spanish, had relatively small sample sizes of Asian immigrant groups, and collected little information on respondents' national origins and immigration histories. Indeed, in the 2000 Social Capital Survey, there was no question regarding the nativity of survey respondents. Furthermore, even surveys such as the Current Population Survey, with detailed immigrant characteristics and large sample sizes (Ramakrishnan 2006), fail to include measures of voluntarism that adequately capture immigrant participation. For instance, measures that focus on involvement in neighborhood associations often ignore the role of hometown or home-region associations among Latino immigrants or the continuing connections between suburban immigrants and ethnic organizations in central cities (Jones-Correa 1998; Levitt 2001; Zhou 2001). In addition, it is unclear whether civic involvement in groups such as ethnic soccer leagues, storefront churches, and cultural associations has different implications for political participation than, say, involvement in main-

stream churches, neighborhood associations, labor unions, and chambers of commerce.

Finally, the standard literature on civic participation gives relatively short shrift to organizations. Although organizations play a role in civic association models, such as that proposed by Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman, and Henry Brady (1995), the focus is usually only on the extent to which organizations endow individuals with information, skills, and motivations to participate. Organizations are less likely to be the subject of independent study (but see Schlozman and Tierney 1986; Wong 2006; Strolovich 2007). Thus, scholars have paid less attention to the political stratification of organizations, in particular to inequalities over agenda setting and influence on politics and decision making at the local level. The limited focus on local stratification and influence is particularly problematic given that many community organizations operate at this level, rather than at the national level studied by scholars such as Skocpol (2003).

Scholars of immigrant politics have done a better job in examining community organizations and their role in shaping political power at the local level, but the findings from existing immigrant political incorporation studies have been limited to particular contexts and small-N comparisons (Jones-Correa 1998; Bloemraad 2006; García Bedolla 2005; Wong 2006). Although this volume is not a large-N study, we make explicit comparisons across contexts, groups, and organization types. A number of the chapters also come from the Immigrant Civic Engagement Project (chapters 2, 8, 9, and 13), and consequently share a methodology and are animated by a similar set of questions.⁵

The Literature on Minority Political Incorporation: A Need for New Models

Studies of community power, especially as they relate to ethnic and racial minority groups in the United States, offer a starting point in considering the interaction between community organizations and political institutions. A classic example of such an approach is Dahl's model of pluralist politics, developed from a case study of New Haven, Connecticut (1961). New Haven's population contained a significant proportion of European-origin immigrants and a small stratum of well-to-do Yankees. Dahl suggested that the nature of democratic politics in New Haven made decision making reliant on changing coalitions of actors, some of whom represented immigrant concerns. Significantly, Dahl argued that many immigrant issues stemmed largely from immigrants' working class background rather than their cultural or ethnic differences. He contended, as a result, that as immigrants and their descendants achieve upward mobility and social assimilation, ethnic groups pass through three stages of political assimilation, eventually becoming indistinguishable in their civic and political activities from others (1961, 32–36). This process, he posited, would also be furthered by the move of political administration toward greater bureaucratic and technical expertise. Dahl's characterization of ethnic politics as a temporary phenomenon was in line with the prevailing view of modernization theory during the 1960s.

In particular, modernization theory predicted that traditional views, institutions, and practices would get swept away and that more rational and economic interests would take hold.

However, dissenting voices in the political incorporation tradition argued that ethnic politics may be a more permanent part of political power and mobilization. Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1963) raised this possibility in their examination of New York City with their observation that ethnic politics remain central to city politics. They argued that ethnicity remains a powerful force in political and civic life because it is emotionally salient to immigrants and their descendants, and because ethnic labels overlay socioeconomic distinctions, thereby providing relevant markers of political interests (Glazer and Moynihan 1975). The state can also encourage ethnic labels over class or other collective identifiers through its systems of categorization and the development of the welfare state. Michael Parenti (1967) developed similar arguments, but emphasized how socioeconomic advancement might reinforce the political salience of ethnicity: with more resources, immigrant groups and their children could better build civic organizations, may witness prejudice and discrimination more directly as they seek upward mobility, and may gain what he called the psychological strength to make political demands. According to these early alternative views, ethnic cohesion—reflected and reinforced in ethnically based civic organizations—facilitates political engagement and, by extension, immigrants' overall integration into American society.

Research on the political incorporation of American ethnic and racial groups further developed in the 1980s, with revisionist scholarship on urban political machines and more detailed attention to the empowerment of African Americans and Latinos. The revisionist scholarship accepted the premise that ethnicity was often a convenient way of packaging political coalitions, mobilizing voters, and providing benefits such as government jobs. However, these scholars challenged the notion that urban political machines arose because of immigration (Bridges 1984) or that such institutions were the natural friends of immigrant groups (Erie 1990; Gamm 1989). Instead, they argued, political parties mobilized immigrant groups selectively, including only those groups necessary to win office (the Irish, for instance) and ignoring the rest. These studies were useful in illustrating how immigrant and ethnic organizations were selectively incorporated into politics in the early 1900s, but were less so in explaining the incorporation of racial and ethnic minorities in the contemporary era, especially given the absence of strong local parties in the West, the decline of such institutions in the rest of the country, and the rise of African American protest power and electoral power in many urban areas.

The political consequences of African American protest activity were well documented by social movement scholars such as Douglas McAdam (1982) and Aldon Morris (1984), who showed that the civil rights movement was not simply an expression of disaffection among excluded groups but rather a multipronged strategy to advance group interests in the face of electoral exclusion and newly expanding opportunities for political change. The success of the movement also depended on a dense organizational infrastructure, including churches, teacher

groups, and student groups, that mobilized participants and helped to shape public opinion on minority rights (McAdam 1982; Lee 2002). Yet despite the successes of the civil rights movement, scholars of minority politics in the mid-1980s began to question the relative value of protest strategies compared to electoral strategies in gaining influence, especially in local politics and policy. In their seminal work from 1984, *Protest Is Not Enough*, Rufus Browning, Dale Marshall, and David Tabb analyzed politics in the San Francisco Bay Area and found that protest politics were inadequate and electoral strategies more important for the political empowerment of African Americans and Latinos. These strategies included mobilizing group members, forming coalitions with other supportive groups, and getting racial and ethnic minorities elected to office. Thus, with the civil rights movement increasingly fading from view, electoral strategies became key to advancing the interests of racial minorities in the United States.

The framework of minority political incorporation by Browning, Marshall, and Tabb has proved influential to the study of Latino and African American empowerment (Hero 1992; Meier and Stewart 1991; Sonenshein 1997), but it faces several limitations when applied to immigrant populations. For one, electoral strategies are less applicable to immigrants in the United States than to the native-born populations who were part of most earlier studies of minority political incorporation. Naturalized citizens vote at lower rates than the native-born, two-thirds of immigrants do not have citizenship, and half of those without citizenship currently have no path to citizenship because they are undocumented. The limited utility of electoral mobilization is especially pronounced in new immigrant destinations, where a large proportion of the foreign-born population is recently arrived. However, the limits are also evident in more traditional destinations, where local governments sometimes respond to the needs of immigrant residents even without significant electoral pressures (Jones-Correa 2004; Lewis and Ramakrishnan 2004, 2007). Language barriers and fragmentation among community organizations and ethnic media are also more complex when considering Asian immigrants, given their greater levels of residential dispersion and linguistic and occupational diversity. Finally, with immigrants increasingly settling in suburban areas, the political opportunities, resources, and coalition partners available to immigrant groups are likely to be considerably different than those found in large, densely populated cities. Thus, even though the framework of minority political incorporation may continue to be relevant for long-term immigrant populations with high rates of citizenship, it needs to be expanded to include nonelectoral incorporation for those unable or unlikely to vote.

The upshot of all this is that existing integration models and political theories fit awkwardly with the contemporary immigrant experience. We need better conceptual and analytical tools with which to approach this field, and more detailed empirical information, especially with respect to community organizations and their relative involvement in political activities and policy issues.

In the remainder of this introduction, we lay out some of the concepts and tools we find helpful for understanding immigrant organizing and introduce the empirical studies showcased in the book.

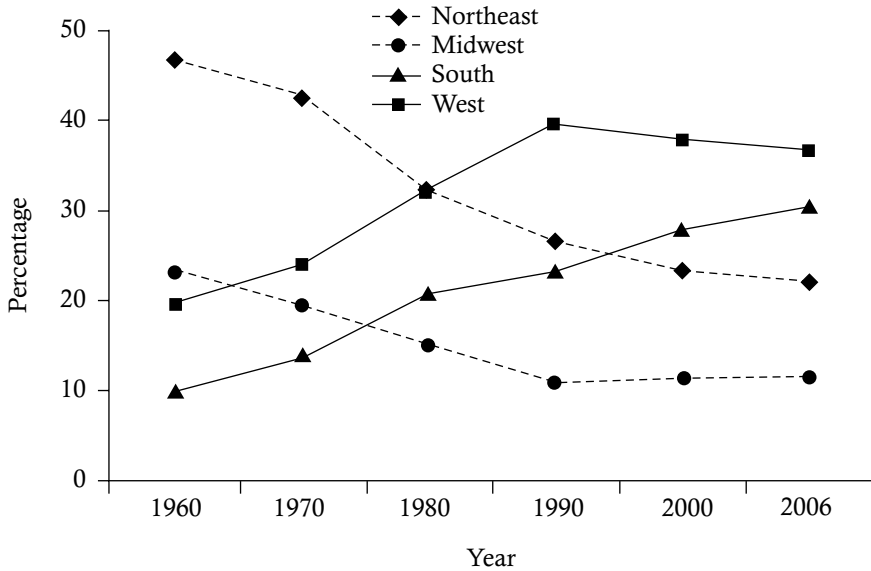
CENTRAL THEMES AND COMPARISONS

The contributions to this volume all focus on organizations—whether founded and run by immigrants, or organizations that include substantial numbers of people with immigrant origins in their membership or clientele. By organizations, we mean more or less institutionalized collections of individuals that come together periodically for a common goal or activity. Organizations, and civic associations more generally, have always been considered central to American democracy. They take on added importance, however, when we consider the processes by which immigrants become part of American civic and political life. All newcomers, regardless of visa status, cannot immediately access American citizenship. Lack of citizenship shuts them out of the formal political system, such as voting and running for office, implying that immigrants' early civic and political socialization may occur first through local organizations, rather than through formal political groups such as parties. Even with citizenship, however, a growing body of research suggests that the workhorses of political integration of yesteryear, political parties, largely ignore or shut out new citizens or would-be citizens (Dahl 1961; Erie 1990; Jones-Correa 1998; Wong 2006). Finally, as figure 1.1 indicates, most immigrants today live outside the Northeast and the Midwest, regions most likely to have cities with partisan local elections and remnants of party machines. With no local partisan elections in the West and most areas of the South, local party organizations are largely irrelevant to the political mobilization of immigrants today (chapter 3, this volume). In these circumstances, we need to know whether other collective groups are stepping in to fill the breach, or whether our political life is becoming increasingly stratified not just by class, but also by immigrant origins and ethnicity.

This volume advances a framework for the study of immigrant organizing, offering a conceptual map for this type of research, profiling some of the most innovative scholarship in this area and setting an agenda for future research. The volume is motivated by three primary themes.

First, we want to understand the conditions under which organizations that speak for and bring together immigrants have visibility in their communities and have an impact on other civic and political actors. We thus develop the concepts of civic and political presence and weight to help researchers measure and evaluate organizational effects in the civic and political sphere. We also offer a wide-ranging list of factors that can help us understand these dynamics. These conceptual efforts are informed by frameworks around contexts of reception in North America (Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Reitz 1998; Bloemraad 2006) as well as the structuring influence of political institutions such as political parties, citizenship and voting rules, and government policies toward immigrants and refugees (Ireland 1994; Jones-Correa 1998; Koopmans et al. 2005; Wong 2006). In European studies of immigrant political incorporation, the concept of political opportunity structure (POS), taken from the social movements literature,

FIGURE 1.1 *Share of Foreign-Born Population By Region of Settlement in the United States*



Source: Gibson and Lennon (1999); U.S. Census Bureau (2000, 2006).

captures the idea that institutional structures—and even discursive norms—channel civic and political engagement in distinct ways (for example, Koopmans et al. 2005; chapter 6, this volume). We cast a wide net in considering which factors may help us understand the nexus between immigrants, organizations, and the political system. As contemporary research in this area is still quite new, we want to reflect the range and breadth of questions that need to be explored.

Second, we introduce the idea of civic and political stratification, pointing out that all civic engagement and political organizing is not equal. Whereas many past studies of civic engagement and social capital take as their starting point the idea that participation is good in and of itself, we argue that studying immigrants' experiences highlights patterns of stratification in the degree to which immigrants are recognized in the civic sphere and are incorporated into community organizations (either through ethnic or mainstream organizations), and the extent to which local officials know of these organizations or acknowledge their importance. Although we are interested in how organizations affect individuals' attitudes, identities, and behavior—and a few of the contributions in

this book discuss such dynamics explicitly—the volume’s primary focus is on how organized collective actors affect or are affected by other organizations and institutions.

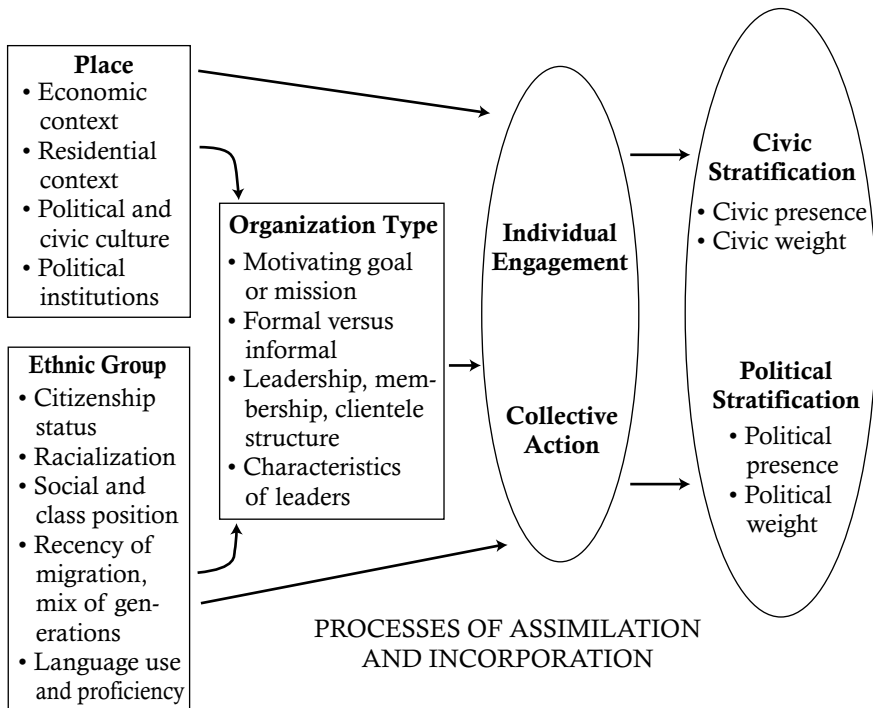
Third, we argue that comparative case studies are methodologically and conceptually invaluable for broadening our understanding of immigrant organizing and civic or political engagement. In particular, we highlight three types of comparison: the importance of the place in which immigrants organize (city versus suburb, regions within the United States, and variations across countries); the importance of the immigrant group that is organizing (national origin, religious background, group resources, and so on); and the importance of the type of organization that immigrants join (unions, churches, social services providers, hometown associations, and the like). To this end, the volume is divided into three sections—place, group, and organizational form—to help explain the political relevance of immigrant community organizations. Reading within and across these axes of comparison, we deepen our understanding of the political relevance of immigrant community organizations, in general, as well as the relative importance of place, group and type of organization in understanding similarities and differences in civic experiences and stratification.

Figure 1.2 brings various aspects of our theoretical framework together. The right side of the figure shows that civic stratification and political stratification are largely the result of processes and outcomes related to individual behavior and collective action. It is relatively straightforward to gauge level of civic and political stratification based on individual engagement: one obtains the rates of participation among various groups and compares their shares of the participating population to their shares of the overall population (DeSipio 1996; Ramakrishnan 2005). It is too simplistic, however, to rely exclusively on aggregations of individual behavior to gauge group inequalities on civic and political visibility, access, and influence. One must also take into account dynamics of collective action: the extent to which immigrants join existing organizations and create new ones, and the extent to which organizations are able to command political resources and take advantage of opportunities to gain visibility and influence in the policy process.

Collective dynamics involving community organizations and ethnic groups can be thought of as processes related to civic and political group-based *incorporation*, whereas dynamics involving individual participation and attitudes can be deemed relevant to questions of civic and political *assimilation*. Thus, in the language of contemporary assimilation, individual immigrants are assimilated when they have equal chances of being a member of a neighborhood association, Little League baseball club, or chamber of commerce, compared to native-born residents. The same would be true for political participation.

Thus, the contemporary scholarship on assimilation centers on questions of convergence in individual-level outcomes. In contrast, political incorporation suggests integration based on collective mobilization as a group of a particular background, ethnicity, culture, religion, or race. Such a pattern could suggest dynamics of segmented assimilation or processes of racialization hold sway. For

FIGURE 1.2 *Framework of Political and Civic Integration and Stratification*



Source: Authors' compilation.

example, we might say that Vietnamese Americans in Orange County, California, are politically incorporated because Vietnamese Americans play an important role in local, state, and congressional elections, because public officials see Vietnamese organizations as important players in local affairs, and because Vietnamese immigrants have regularly held protests against visits by cultural groups and government officials from Vietnam. It is possible that political incorporation at a group level may eventually lead to political assimilation at the individual level, though this empirical question can probably best be answered after multiple generations.

A third possibility is failed integration, in which immigrants do not become engaged in civic and political life, either as assimilated individuals or incorporated groups. Under this scenario, immigrants are either shut out or choose to remain outside civic and political spheres. In one way or another, all the chapters in this volume confront the question of whether and how immigrants get woven into the existing civic and political fabric of their new homes. By shining the

spotlight on organizations, we place particular emphasis on group-based political incorporation.

ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITIES AND THE POLITY: DEFINITIONS

Because the study of civic and political engagement is rife with varying definitions and conceptualizations, we outline concepts used in this volume to facilitate greater transparency in comparisons. First, we suggest that participation in a community and in the polity can be conceptualized at three levels: the individual, the organizational, and the ethnic group. At each level, civic engagement refers to involvement in communal activities that have some purpose or benefit beyond a single individual or family's self-interest—either for a community organization, social group, or the general public. This could include volunteering for a local food bank, helping to organize the India Day Parade, or joining a cleanup day in a local park. Political engagement refers to involvement in activities related to the formal political system, often with the intention of influencing government policies and practices. Such involvement can be conventional (such as voting, running for office, or contacting officials) or unconventional (such as participating in protests and boycotts). We use the term *engagement over participation* to reflect aspects of involvement that go beyond the individual level, giving a more explicit role to government and organizational actors in producing engaged communities.

Although much current scholarship on civic engagement stems from an interest in how civic involvement spills over into the political sphere—an interest this volume shares—civic and political engagement should be conceptualized separately. The distinction is not merely academic: it is sharply felt by many immigrants. For instance, Kristi Andersen, in her chapter on parties and organizations in six U.S. cities, quotes a member of the Waco Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, who explained, “I didn’t want to be in a political organization, I wanted to be in an organization that promoted business . . . and wanted to stay away from politics.” Thus, immigrants may disavow interest in politics or perceive politics to be dirty and corrupt, but nonetheless be positively inclined toward civic endeavors and participate in community groups.

Yet self-defined nonpolitical activities can provide fertile grounds for later political engagement by making people more aware of current events, increasing participants’ sense of personal and collective efficacy, teaching skills useful for politics and providing sites of mobilization around political or policy ends. For instance, participation in a chamber of commerce could well lead to direct or indirect political engagement when the chamber takes a position on local issues. Many Mexican hometown associations (HTAs) started as social and familial organizations, but some have recently become more involved in the politics of their home regions and places of settlement in the United States (chapter 13, this vol-

ume). Also, as Els de Graauw shows in her study of San Francisco (chapter 12, this volume), nonprofit social-service providers often get involved in a limited, yet important, form of political activity by serving as advocates and providing important information to government agencies. Indeed, as the chapters in this volume attest, outreach and mobilization by political actors can include not just political parties and candidates but also bureaucratic actors ranging from local government agencies to foreign embassies and consulates (see also Jones-Correa 2004; Ramakrishnan and Lewis 2005; chapter 4, this volume). An important goal of this volume is to compare the circumstances and conditions under which community organizations may be more or less likely to be drawn into the political process.

Civic and Political Engagement: The Individual Level

Although organizations and immigrant-origin groups are the primary focus of this volume, discussion of individual-level factors is inevitable. Table 1.1 summarizes some of the major individual-level indicators of civic and political engagement, distinguishing between people's behaviors and their attitudes or knowledge. We focus on adults rather than school-age children or adolescents, and our concern is largely with behavior rather than psychological orientations such as the development of civic norms, in-group trust or generalized trust. At a behavioral level, civic engagement can be measured as formal membership in a community organization, volunteering for a local group or initiative (that is, providing one's time and labor to a civic cause), donating money to a charitable cause, or taking a leadership role in an organization or initiative. Similarly, political engagement at the individual level can be measured by activities such as voting, supporting a political campaign, writing letters to elected officials, attending public forums, signing petitions, and participating in protests and rallies.

Civic and Political Engagement: The Organization Level

This volume focuses primarily on community organizations and their political relevance. Community organizations can range widely in their degree of formal organization (including incorporated or nonprofit status), leadership structure (ranging from flat to hierarchical), financial mechanisms (dues-paying, revenue-generating, grant-receiving, and so on), and territorial focus (cities or neighborhoods, domestic or transnational). We pay particular attention to organizational variation by activity type—such as transnational, arts and culture, social services, labor, advocacy, and religious- or faith-based—and we are sensitive to the potential for place-based variation in organizational coalitions and partnerships with government.

Within the immigration literature, organizations have taken a back seat to other collectives, notably the family and household unit, or the ethnic group. Immigrant households have received detailed attention as facilitators of migration

TABLE 1.1 *Measures of Civic and Political Engagement at the Individual Level*

	Civic Engagement	Political Engagement
Behavior	Being an associational member Contributing time and labor (volunteering) Giving monetary contributions (donating) Assuming a leadership role	Attending public forums Voting Writing to elected officials Donating campaign money Doing campaign work Signing a petition Participating in protests, rallies, marches, or boycotts
Knowledge and attitudes	Information about civic opportunities Civic skills (enabling collective action) Civic norms Generalized trust in others	Political information Politically relevant skills Sense of political efficacy Trust in government Political interest Party identification

Source: Authors' compilation.

and as sites of conflict and succor during integration (Kibria 1993; Pessar 1999). The ethnic or national origin group—often labeled as the ethnic or immigrant community—also receives attention as providing a potential economic enclave within which individuals can find work and entrepreneurs can set up businesses, or as a source of social networks and community norms that influences migration and incorporation (Portes and Bach 1985; Zhou and Bankston 1998; Menjivar 2000; Massey et al. 1998; Palloni et al. 2001).

Yet while studies of immigrant families and ethnic networks are invaluable for understanding migrants' experiences, the lack of attention to more formal organizations is problematic. From the perspective of political science, community organizations can be the building blocks of political engagement. They are attractive sites for politicians to mobilize would-be supporters, and they also provide individuals with skills, attitudes, and information relevant to political participation. The civic roots of political action have received considerable attention in political science during the last two decades (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993), but studies of immigrant civic participation are rare, and even rarer are those that tie together immigrant organizations to political institutions and processes.

From the perspective of sociology, the tradition of studying organizations dates back at least to Max Weber. Research in recent decades has considered the

role of organizations in social movements, social capital formation, and in the development of a third sector between the market and the state (Salamon 1999; Van Til 2000; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Yet most of these studies fail to consider whether immigrants engage in organizing to the same degree, in the same way, and with the same results as the native-born population. Much of this research has centered on organizational and nonprofit studies or contentious politics rather than on organizations' role in incorporating newcomers into mainstream political institutions, a key interest of this volume (but see Bloemraad 2005, 2006; Chung 2005; Marwell 2004).

Finally, social scientists studying urban environments have long noted the role of local civic organizations in influencing municipal politics and urban communities. Older work by these scholars included immigrants as an integral part of the urban story (Katznelson 1981; Glazer and Moynihan 1963). Today, however, immigrants live outside the traditional urban centers of yesteryear, having moved into metropolitan areas relatively new to immigration, suburban municipalities, and even rural areas. We do not yet know whether traditional accounts of urban politics and community engagement apply equally today, and to these new residential spaces (but see Oliver 2001; Jones-Correa 2004; Ramakrishnan and Lewis 2005).

Distinguishing Ethnic Groups from Political Communities

Finally, we need to define two other terms used in this volume: *groups*, denoted by ethnicity, and *communities*, denoted by geography and political jurisdiction. Individuals who share some attribute (or attributes) traditionally thought of as related to ethnicity—such as a common language, national origin, religion, racial classification, or cultural background—can form an ethnic group.⁶ Ethnic groups can also include native-born citizens with similar origins, religious traditions, and so forth. We reserve the word *community* to talk about entities defined by a clear geographical jurisdiction. Because these geographical entities are legally defined—as towns, cities, counties, states, or even countries—they have some independent decision-making structures that control certain resources or rules in their jurisdiction. Although residents may not always feel unified in a sociological community, they form a necessary civic and political community because they must share public goods, compete over resources, and abide by similar policies. Communities are therefore made up of individuals, ethnic groups, and a variety of voluntary or nonprofit organizations.

CIVIC AND POLITICAL STRATIFICATION

Civic and political stratification can operate at any of the levels of analysis discussed so far: among individuals, organizations, ethnic groups, and political communities, though the primary focus here is on organizations and ethnic

groups. In table 1.2, we offer a typology of civic and political stratification as they apply to organizations, although some of these measures can also be aggregated to the level of ethnic group and community. Because this is an emerging field of study, we want to set out a broad analytical framework from which subsequent chapters could draw.

One way to measure civic and political stratification is to compare the material resources of organizations, in terms of money, personnel, and physical space. How large is the group's budget? How large is the staff, or membership, or pool of volunteers? Does the organization have the exclusive use of a building or office space for meetings and activities, or must it constantly scramble to find space for events? For some organizations, such as unions or even 501(c)(3) nonprofits, resources can be specifically earmarked for political purposes (Berry 2003; chapter 12, this volume). For others, resources directed for general civic activities may be mobilized for political ends in rare instances, such as during the immigration protests and boycotts of spring 2006. One challenge researchers face is the lack of detailed and reliable information on organizations' material resources. This is especially true for detailed breakdowns of spending or overall budget information for informal associations and for small nonprofits not required to file 990 forms with the Internal Revenue Service.

One could argue that resources are at best an indirect measure of civic and political stratification, and that there are more direct ways to conceptualize the visibility and influence of community organizations as civic and political actors. In table 1.2, we advance a framework that distinguishes *presence*—visibility, legitimacy, and alliances—from *weight*—the extent to which organizations are taken seriously in policy decisions—with measures ranging from access to public officials to actual influence over the various stages of agenda setting, policy decision making, and policy implementation. Given the difficulties associated with establishing a particular group's influence in the policy process (which can be affected by multiple types of political opportunities, strategic decision making by many actors, and unintended consequences), we leave the definition of civic and political weight relatively open, capturing the extent to which organizations are able to have their interests represented at various stages of the policy-making process (Kingdon 1984; Hansen 1991).

More particularly, an organization's civic presence can be measured by its visibility among the general population and mainstream media: Do members of the community know about the organization? Do local journalists turn to the organization for stories or commentary on breaking news? Civic presence can also be measured by the degree to which organizations are isolated from, or connected to, other organizations when it comes to particular programs, events, and activities. Having allies, and the form that such alliances take, can act as a marker of prominence.⁷ Finally, we can think about an organization's legitimacy, which can be based on whether it is formally recognized by the state through incorporation or nonprofit status, or the degree to which it is seen as a legitimate player by others in the civic sphere. These three facets of civic presence—visibility, alliances, and legitimacy—are analytically separate but may have important effects on each other.

TABLE 1.2 *Components of Civic and Political Stratification Among Organizations*

	Civic	Political
Resources	Budget Personnel (staff, volunteers, members, clients) Physical space, equipment	Expenditures, personnel, physical space, and equipment devoted to political activities
Presence	Visibility and recognition among general population, mainstream media Degree of isolation or connection to other organizations in civic activities Legitimacy—formal incorporation or state recognition Legitimacy—perceived as having a role in local governance	Visibility and recognition among government officials Organizational affiliations with elected and appointed officials Degree of isolation or connection to other organizations in political activities
Weight	Ability to advance interests in the civic realm Ability to influence allocations of resources to other organizations Ability to shape and influence civic projects involving multiple organizations	Ability to gain access to public officials Ability to have interests represented in agenda-setting policy decision-making and policy implementation Ability to influence allocations of power to other organizations

Source: Authors' compilation.

Analogous to civic presence is the notion of political presence, which is the extent to which organizations and ethnic groups are visible to government officials and other policy makers, and the extent to which they are seen as legitimate actors in the political community. Several chapters in this volume (2, 8, and 9) rely on such assessments by government officials of various community organizations across a range of activities. We can also measure political presence by examining the extent to which an organization has members who serve in local government, either as elected or appointed officials, or as high-placed civil servants within local bureaucracies (see chapters 3 and 6, this volume). Finally, we can consider organizational alliances that work toward explicit political ends, including links to groups such as political parties and lobbying organizations.

Civic and political presence are important measures of standing, showing the degree to which immigrants are recognized as full partners in their communities. Civic and political presence are also important precursors to influence in

a community, what we term civic and political weight. The distinction hinges on the question of whether the state is significantly involved in the allocation of resources and power. Thus civic weight refers to the ability of an organization to advance its interests through actions that do not directly involve the state—for instance, a food service union urges consumers to boycott a major grocery store. Civic weight also refers to the ability of organizations to influence the allocation of resources to other organizations (for example, the United Way's distribution of funds to other organizations), as well as the ability of organizations to shape and influence projects that involve multiple organizations (for instance, if the local Lions Club spearheads a park clean-up day focused on certain local parks but not others).

By contrast, political weight refers to the ability of organizations to gain access to local government institutions and to influence the allocation of resources and power in ways that directly involve government. Thus, the ability of a neighborhood organization to get City Hall to block development of open space land would count as political weight, as would the ability of a PTA to get the school district to provide more language support to first-generation immigrant parents. As previous generations of social scientists have noted (Bachrach and Baratz 1970; Gaventa 1980), political influence can occur at the stage of actual policy making and implementation, but also during the agenda setting stage and in the actual formation of interests.⁸ We can also differentiate weight depending on the types of outcomes that groups seek, such as policy changes, material benefits, electoral successes, or symbolic recognition. Thus, one organization may work to elect one of its members to office, another may try to change a local ordinance, and a third may seek to fly its national flag on a special day in front of City Hall. Finally, political weight can operate at various levels, from national politics to states, counties, school districts and local government. An organization may have political weight at one level of government and not others. For example, Caroline Brettell and Deborah Reed-Danahay profile an Indian organization that is active primarily on foreign policy issues but more silent on local affairs (chapter 7, this volume).⁹

INCORPORATION AND STRATIFICATION: CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Explaining variations in civic and political engagement across immigrant and ethnic groups requires attention to a variety of potential influences. The chapters in this volume are organized to highlight the importance of three dynamics: the role of place, of national origins, and of organizational types. Table 1.3 attempts to summarize some of the main factors that relate to each dynamic. Our goal is to lay out a comprehensive analytical framework useful to many different situations; some chapters in this volume touch on certain aspects more than others.

TABLE 1.3 *Explaining Variation in Civic and Political Engagement*

	Component Factors
Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City size Existence of ethnic enclaves; ethnic residential concentration Type of institutional arrangements or informal norms regulating interaction between government and private-non-profit sector Political-civic culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of racial-ethnic relations and immigrant adaptation Traditions of volunteerism Definitions of legitimate public groups Preferences on taxation and government spending Political factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District versus at-large representation systems Partisan versus nonpartisan elections Political party competition Proportional versus plurality electoral systems Presidential versus parliamentary systems Federalism
Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socioeconomic status Legal status and citizenship status Recency of migration Mix of immigrant generations Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fluency in English (or host country language) Existence and viability of language communities Status in host society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discrimination Model minority status Foreigner or guestworker status
Organization type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivating goal or mission (such as religious, social, advocacy, workplace issues) Formal versus informal Legal nonprofit status Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial (including type of financing mechanisms such as fees, dues, fundraising, and so on) Personnel (volunteer, staff, and so on) Physical location Leadership and membership—clienteles structure Characteristics of leaders (cultural competency, social capital) Connections to other groups, including national federations or international coalitions

Source: Authors' compilation.

The Importance of Place

We expect place to have important effects on immigrant civic and political engagement. Indeed, the chapters that follow repeatedly highlight how place affects immigrant organizing and its repercussions, both directly and by mediating the relative importance of group resources or organizational activities.

Many characteristics of place may affect immigrant organizing. For instance, ethnic organizations will probably be more numerous in ethnic enclaves than elsewhere because of greater numbers, visibility, ease of coordination, and support from ethnic businesses. However, the potential organizational penalty of residential dispersion is likely smaller for groups with more material resources—such as access to a car—and with more organizational skills, such as the ability to communicate by email and the Internet. In this way, dynamics of place intersect with other axes of difference, notably a group's resources.

More generally, the size of the city (which includes towns and other types of municipalities) likely matters, even after accounting for the proportion of immigrant or ethnic residents. Size matters because ethnic businesses and nonprofits can benefit from economies of scale with greater numbers of immigrant residents, and larger cities have greater capacity to provide translation services and community liaisons (Ramakrishnan and Lewis 2005). In this way, size might intersect with a third, analytically distinct, feature of communities: the types of formal institutional arrangements or informal norms communities use to manage interactions between government and civic groups. Larger cities generally have more resources, both financial and human, to set up regular channels of communication and interaction—such as formal boards, regular meetings, or a formal comment period for pending political decisions—but innovative smaller cities can also establish similar infrastructures. Finally, cities may do a better job of organizing sustained interaction between public officials and residents than larger jurisdictions such as states or national governments (chapter 4, this volume), reinforcing the notion that the local level is a particularly important arena for the study of immigrant civic and political engagement.

Cities, states and countries also differ, often substantially, on other factors, such as political and civic culture and the institutions structuring politics in a particular place. Measuring cultural influences is notoriously difficult, and it is usually even harder to show a cultural effect on civic and political outcomes. Nonetheless, it is clear that a community's cultural context (including its history of racial and ethnic relations, experiences with immigrant adaptation, traditions of volunteerism, definitions of legitimate public groups, and preferences on government spending and taxation) affects patterns of civic and political stratification, as well as individuals' abilities, interests and understandings of civic and political engagement (Bloemraad 2006; chapters 5 and 6, this volume).

Identifying relevant political institutional structures is easier than identifying cultural effects, and has a long tradition in political science. Thus, we know that systems of elections and representation (district versus at-large systems, partisan versus nonpartisan elections, proportional versus plurality electoral systems and presidential versus parliamentary systems) affect political participation and out-

comes, as do the level of political party competition and the presence or absence of multiple political jurisdictions, such as under federalism. Intersections of institutions, ethnic residential patterns, and strategies of organization and mobilization together make attention to place critical in understanding the political and civic engagement of immigrants.

Group Resources and Immigrant Agency

Beyond place, we also expect variation in civic and political engagement across national origin groups because such groups often share common attributes, not only of language and culture, but also of socioeconomic and legal status, length of residence, and histories of discrimination. In general, we would expect community organizations to be stronger and more vibrant among immigrant groups of higher socioeconomic status and more stable legal status. We would also expect that the recency of immigration and the mix of immigrant generations within an ethnic group will influence the viability of ethnic organizations as well as the group's orientation toward domestic versus transnational issues and its visibility among those of the majority population.

Significantly, as some of the chapters in this volume highlight, the relationship between group resources and civic or political engagement, presence, and weight is not always straightforward. Particular organizational forms can mobilize resource-poor groups, and particularities of place can shut out even the most economically privileged immigrants. For instance, a group-resource perspective would accurately predict that Mexican immigrants—among the lowest-income immigrant groups in the country with the highest rates of unauthorized residents—tend to have fewer community organizations and less political presence among existing organizations. Notable exceptions occur, however, in large cities with strong social service infrastructures and long traditions of transnational activities (chapters 2, 9, and 13) and in cities where political machines are selectively incorporating Mexican immigrant groups into politics, such as in Chicago (chapter 9). On the other end of the socioeconomic spectrum, Indian groups with high average incomes and education levels have a relatively high incidence of community organizations, but their political presence and weight depend on the openness of political institutions. As Sofya Aptekar notes in chapter 8 of this volume, Indian organizations in Edison, New Jersey, find themselves shut out of local governance, and Laurencio Sanguino (chapter 9) finds that those in Chicago are relatively marginal players in local politics. Finally, Vietnamese organizations may be less prevalent and active in politics than Indian organizations in the Dallas/Fort Worth area (chapter 7), but in places where they are a large proportion of the adult citizen population, such as parts of Orange County in California, Vietnamese organizations are visible and influential in local affairs (chapter 2).

Beyond socioeconomic resources, the existence of relatively large language communities—as with the Spanish-speaking population, which draws from many countries of origins—facilitates organizations of cultural production and media. The religious makeup of a group can also be a resource, or a liability. If a

group's primary religious identity overlaps with existing mainstream religious institutions, such commonalities could ease ethnic-mainstream bridges, as is the case for the largely Catholic Mexican-origin population in the United States. Other faith traditions might face greater obstacles, such as religious groups that are largely ethnically defined, such as Hindus and Sikhs; traditions that are not as easily organized in formal houses of worship, such as Buddhism; or religions that are stigmatized as problematic, such as Islam because of its perceived association with terrorism and fundamentalism.

Finally, religious bridges and gulfs raise the more general issue of how the reception and reactions of the larger host society bear on the nature, existence, and viability of immigrant community organizations. Religious discrimination may lead to a lower public profile among affected groups, though perhaps also to a high degree of within-group organizing. Similarly, the persistent image of a group as foreign may alter the visibility of domestically oriented ethnic organizations versus their transnational counterparts, and the image of an immigrant group as a model minority may lead to greater civic and political presence among organizations dedicated to business and education, but greater invisibility—by mainstream society and group elites worried about the group's image—for those organizations working on issues such as labor exploitation, mental health, and poverty. More generally, mainstream actors' racial categorization of immigrant groups, and their implicit or explicit racial hierarchies, will likely create opportunities for some groups and hardship for others.

What Sort of Organization?

The third central comparison in this volume contrasts types of organizations. In what ways does the type of organization in which immigrants and ethnic groups participate affect civic and political stratification? Getting some purchase on this question requires paying attention to the primary mission of the organization (for example, as religious, social, or political); the institutionalization of the organization (formal or informal, registered as a non-profit or not); and the organization's resources, as discussed earlier. Of particular interest is the extent to which organizations set up for one purpose, especially a nonpolitical purpose, might find themselves involved in local civic and political affairs (chapter 13, this volume), or whether a strong adherence to a particular purpose, say religious worship, keeps an organization and its members isolated from civic and political involvement at the local level (chapter 10, this volume). In a similar way, we can ask whether formalized 501(c)(3) status, the primary Internal Revenue Service registration for nonprofit organizations, helps immigrants' civic and political engagement by making it easier to receive funding from government or foundations, or whether it hurts local engagement because of legal restrictions on political activism (chapters 4 and 12, this volume). One notable finding reported in a couple of chapters is that organizations seen by some observers as apolitical or antithetical to engagement in domestic civic and political life, notably formal 501(c)(3) organizations and hometown associations, can indeed play an important role in the civic and political incorporation of immigrants.

Consideration of organizational type also requires attention to the internal dynamics of recruitment (recruitment to leadership and of members), decision making, and organizing, and to the external dynamics of cooperation and forming coalitions. Regarding the latter, we need to study the extent to which and ways in which local organizations ally with other organizations through informal coalitions, formally federated structures, local umbrella groups, or international networks of nongovernmental organizations. Here we must ask how well existing literatures on voluntary organizations, social movement organizations, and organizational behavior speak to the immigrant experience.

A TASTE OF WHAT'S TO COME

We end by briefly outlining the individual contributions to this volume, and the emergent themes that we observe across the various cases and different lenses used to understand immigrant organizing.

Part I of this volume explores place-based determinants of immigrant civic and political organizing, across localities in the United States and across different countries in Europe. In chapter 2, Karthick Ramakrishnan and Irene Bloemraad examine the incidence and political presence of community organizations across six cities in northern and southern California, paying attention to variations across national origin groups and between ethnic and mainstream organizations. Although differences across ethnic groups are significant, we also find variations across localities according to the size of a city, the city's ethnic makeup, and local government policies toward immigrants. We note that the presence of ethnic business districts can play an independent role in boosting the number of ethnic community organizations, though the lack of a corresponding electoral base limits the political presence and weight of such organizations.

Notably, party competition and party organizations are a relatively minor part of the story in these California cities, a finding echoed in Kristi Andersen's chapter on immigrant-serving organizations in six medium-sized cities throughout the United States. In chapter 3, Andersen examines the extent to which community organizations mobilize immigrants into politics in the absence of local party efforts, and finds that such mobilization is limited: community organizations serve as weak substitutes for the parties of yore. She notes that variations in the political relevance of immigrant community organizations depends on the city's geographic isolation from large metropolitan centers, its connection to refugee resettlement programs, and the presence of potential coalition partners such as unions and universities that can serve as allies to immigrant communities.

In chapter 4, the final U.S. place-based comparison, Shannon Gleeson shows the complexities of place within the federal American political system, where different levels of government and different administrative branches of the same government take distinctive tacks to immigrant labor issues. Comparing Houston, Texas, and San Jose, California, Gleeson argues that a more robust set of labor protections in California depresses organizing around Latinos' labor rights in San Jose relative to the more activist stance taken in Houston. A para-

dox thus emerges in Houston where a distant federal government combined with a weak state apparatus spurs local government to partner with a range of other groups, including community-based organizations, federal bureaucrats and even foreign consulates.

Place is important in explaining subnational variation in the United States, but there is good reason to expect even greater variation across national contexts (Koopmans 2004). Rahsaan Maxwell shows in chapter 5 how cross-national differences in political party outreach, perceptions of government neglect and the existence of robust race relations policies differentially channel the mobilization of Caribbean-origin communities in Great Britain and France. In the strongest example of party outreach in the volume, Maxwell finds that those of Caribbean origin are more integrated into British politics through the Labour Party than in France. He also details an interesting twist in the identity categories used by Caribbeans in the two countries: the French refusal to acknowledge ethnicity has ironically produced much greater ethnic mobilization in that country than in Great Britain, where Caribbeans organize instead around pan-ethnic affiliations.

Maxwell's attention to the context of reception, or political opportunity structure, is mirrored in chapter 6, which compares the number and networks of Turkish organizations in Amsterdam and Berlin. Floris Vermeulen and Maria Berger argue that the Dutch state's greater openness to ethnic organizing and its supportive policy of multiculturalism have led to more Turkish organizations in Amsterdam and more of a civic community, as measured by horizontal ties between organizations. In Germany, where government and political actors distance themselves from migrant or ethnic organizing, Turks have fewer organizations, and those that do exist are ideologically polarized into largely separate networks. Interestingly, Vermeulen and Berger hint that some degree of civic or political incorporation at the group level produces uneven individual-level assimilation. More civic organizing in Amsterdam translates into greater political representation among local elected officials, but appears to lead to less individual-level participation. This is because Turkish organizations in Amsterdam have less reason to mobilize as compared to those living in Berlin.

Part II of the book holds place constant and focuses on diverse immigrant groups in a single city or metropolitan area. Distinctions between civic and political engagement are made more ambiguous in chapter 7, which looks at Indian and Vietnamese immigrants in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Using ethnographic fieldwork and interviews, Caroline Brettell and Deborah Reed-Danahay argue that immigrant organizations, individually and as a constellation, need to be conceptualized as communities of practice where immigrants learn experientially about citizenship. Through organizational participation, those of Vietnamese and Indian origin not only learn civic and political skills, as other studies show, but they also create meanings of civic-mindedness and politics, a process of citizen-making. Their detailed descriptions of four immigrant organizations highlight the many and varied ways immigrants engage with each other and larger society.

In chapter 8, Sofya Aptekar examines Edison, New Jersey, a town that was long a suburb of working class and middle class white ethnics, but which recently has seen a demographic transformation in the rapid influx of highly

skilled, professional Asian immigrants. Aptekar focuses on Indian and Chinese-origin residents in Edison, and shows that despite having substantial levels of human capital—traits that are usually linked to higher levels of political and civic engagement—immigrants in Edison are largely shut out of the political system by the entrenched Democratic machine. She also offers an intriguing glimpse into the various narratives of exclusion that public officials use, holding up Chinese immigrants as a model minority focused on education rather than politics, and treating Indians as potential trouble-makers.

Such intergroup differences show up even more starkly in chapter 9, which focuses on immigrant organizing in Chicago. Laurencio Sanguino shows, perhaps surprisingly, that Mexican immigrants enjoy a richer infrastructure of social service organizations and more political presence and weight among local officials than either Indian and Polish immigrants. As Sanguino suggests, the relative prominence of Mexican immigrant organizations is counterintuitive, given the comparatively lower levels of socioeconomic resources among Mexican immigrants and their higher likelihood of experiencing racial and ethnic discrimination. Sanguino also suggests that part of Mexican immigrants' organizational success lies in the long history of the group in Chicago, the relatively generous attitude of local officials and governments toward immigrants (including the undocumented), and the Mexican community's early institution-building around the nonprofit social service model.

Part III, which opens with chapter 10, concentrates on the consequences of organizational form: What is the effect of the type of organizations on immigrants' civic and political incorporation? Although this theme is touched on in other chapters, this section looks in-depth at a number of important organizational types: churches, unions, nonprofit service providers and immigrant hometown associations. Among these types of organizations, none are perhaps so central to the lives of many immigrants, and native-born Americans, as churches. Indeed, in chapter 10, Janelle Wong, Kathy Rim, and Haven Perez note that American residents of Latino and Asian origin make up increasingly large segments of the evangelical, Pentecostal, and charismatic Protestant traditions, either because of existing affiliations in their homeland or through conversion once in the United States. Given the regular, sustained interaction of congregants in these religious organizations, the importance of the church in members' lives, and the Christian Right's links to Republican Party, these churches could influence members' civic and political engagement in important ways. Assessing these possibilities, the authors conclude that pastors' mobilizing activities have been rather limited, congregants view political messages in church with a critical eye, and that any coalitions between native-born white Protestant churches and immigrant or minority churches contain fault lines as well as common ground.

Fault lines and common ground are also themes in chapter 11, in which Rebecca Hamlin focuses on unions' orientations to and organization of immigrants. She argues that in the face of declining union membership, many unions have become immigrant advocates as they try to organize a diverse, foreign-born workforce, including workers who do not have legal status in the United States. Given unions' historic reliance on voting numbers as one of many weapons in

their political arsenal, incorporating immigrants into unions can be complicated, especially when dealing with a hierarchical, top-down organizational structure. Yet Hamlin documents the potential—and pitfalls—of unions in the political incorporation of immigrants, detailing the success of a bottom-up grassroots campaign to change the AFL-CIO's stance on undocumented workers.

Dealing with the needs of undocumented migrants and legal migrants without formal political voice in the electoral system is also a central theme in chapter 12, Els de Graauw's examination of immigrant social service providers in the city of San Francisco. De Graauw argues that though many observers assume that the legal status of 501(c)(3) organizations—a reference to the tax code governing these groups—prevents them from engaging in politics, immigrant social service providers play real and important roles in local and even state politics. She outlines the various ways such organizations advocate for clients and mobilize members, suggesting that they can be quite effective, especially around bureaucratic and regulatory politics. At the same time, she notes the limits of such organizations in promoting the wholesale incorporation of immigrants into the political system: social service advocacy is often limited to a relatively narrow set of issues, and mostly confined to particular local communities.

Finally, in chapter 13, Celia Viramontes grapples with the important question of whether groups formed out of nostalgia for the homeland and focused on community projects in immigrants' hometowns can facilitate civic and political engagement in the United States. Her chapter on Mexican hometown associations (HTAs) in Los Angeles speaks to a growing discussion over transnationalism and cross-national civic and political engagement.¹⁰ She concludes that such hometown associations do indeed hold promise for bringing certain hard-to-reach groups into American civic and political life, especially the undocumented and recent migrants, since these are safe and comfortable spaces for immigrant participation. Fulfilling this promise, however, requires that hometown associations navigate a set of institutional and organizational stages, an evolution that she notes is far from inevitable.

ORGANIZATIONAL BAND-AIDS OR CIVIC BACKBONE?

Are immigrants' organizations and the mainstream organizations of which immigrants are a part the backbone for a new civic revival in the United States—as witnessed by the impressive show of strength during the spring 2006 rallies—or are such organizations merely band-aids, doing some good work with some people, but largely invisible and ineffectual in America's civic and political space? Do answers to this question differ in other countries, or even between cities and states in the United States?

Organizations Matter

This volume cannot provide definitive answers to these questions, but it does point out several promising paths. First, almost all of the chapters argue that im-

migrant organizations do important work, especially absent the traditional institutions of political incorporation. Many of the chapters find that political parties—especially in the United States, but also in Germany and France—have done relatively little to incorporate immigrants into the political system. In part, this might be because most immigrants do not have citizenship, because they lack the legal status to apply, they have not yet taken the steps to do so, or they are facing delays in naturalization due to processing backlogs. When noncitizens cannot directly access the political system through their votes, or face obstacles to electoral participation because of language barriers, they are more likely to need collective organizations to engage in representational politics.

But even when immigrants are citizens, it seems that many parties are not reaching out to newcomers. In U.S. regions such as the West and the Southwest, where more than 40 percent of the foreign-born live (U.S. Census Bureau 2006), party systems are weakened by nonpartisan local elections and other Progressive-era institutions such as the referendum and recall. In places such as New York and Chicago, parties remain important actors in local politics but are incorporating immigrant groups either piecemeal (Jones-Correa 1998; Wong 2006; chapter 9, this volume) or not at all (chapter 8, this volume). One exception to this story seems to be the United Kingdom, where the Labour Party has played an important role in minority political incorporation (chapter 5, this volume).

The decline or absence of political parties as vehicles of political incorporation might not matter, or not matter as much, if other organizations and institutions were taking their place. In examining the role of community organizations in fostering civic and political engagement, it is instructive to consider the putative role of parties in the political system. Political parties are important because they mobilize citizens to political ends, socialize political subjects by shaping political orientations or aggregating attitudes and opinions on policy, represent the interests of party members and voters, train individuals—elites as well as ordinary citizens—in political skills and provide resources to engage in the business of politics, simplify vote choices and help get candidates elected to political office, and help formulate, package, and pass public policy. Taken together, these functions represent the core of what may generally be termed political incorporation.

In the absence of party mobilization, do community organizations and civic associations act as parallel or alternative sites for political incorporation? The chapters in this volume suggest that community organizations can play a valuable role in political incorporation, although their roles are constrained in several ways.¹¹ As Kristi Andersen notes in chapter 3, community organizations are not federated in the same way as political parties, nor do they have the same enduring stakes and involvement in elections and everyday politics. Unlike political parties, community organizations are also more likely to focus on a smaller range of issues such as language access, worker protections, and U.S. foreign policy, making them more akin to interest groups than political parties (Schattschneider 1942). Also, as Celia Viramontes notes in chapter 13, many community organizations may only be informal associations, lacking the resources (such as paid staff, office space, and politically skilled leaders) to get involved in politics. Finally, immigrant-serving organizations also face some im-

portant internal constraints that may limit their political influence, including divisions over strategy and priorities (chapter 11, this volume), an estrangement from grass-roots membership with increased bureaucratization, and an over-reliance on charismatic authority that leads to difficulty in planning for leadership succession (Bloemraad 2002; Cordero-Guzmán 2005).

Even if community organizations are able to solve these internal constraints, they may still choose to eschew politics because they feel constrained by IRS rules governing political activities by nonprofits. As Jeffrey Berry and David Arons (2003) have noted, little-known IRS rules allow for nonprofit organizations to devote a percentage of their expenditures to political activities.¹² However, many nonprofits are reluctant to take on explicitly political roles for fear of running afoul of tax regulations (Chaves, Stephens, and Galaskiewicz 2004; Chung 2005). Yet, as Els de Graauw (chapter 12, this volume) and others (Bloemraad 2006; Wong 2006) show, even nonprofits that forswear political activity can play important roles in the political process, either through issue advocacy or by providing important policy information to elected officials and administrative agencies. Moving beyond nonprofits, chapters 4 and 11 show that unions can play an important role in issue advocacy and the formulation of public policy—although, as Gleeson notes, the involvement of local unions in the formulation of local policies depends on the state regulatory context. Even when unions are relatively strong and involved in politics, they may not take up issues dear to the day-to-day issues affecting immigrant workers at the local level. Dynamics of place—be they local, regional or national—clearly matter in explaining internal and external differences in the fate of immigrant organizing.

Organizational Inequalities

A second consistent theme across most chapters centers on civic inequality and political stratification. Our authors find organizational life in most immigrant communities, but it is unclear how much of this translates into real presence and influence among their fellow residents. Thus, even though immigrants clearly participate in a wide variety of organizations from hometown associations and unions to social service agencies and churches, many organizations with a substantial immigrant base have little visibility or weight in the political system.¹³ Low levels of visibility and influence appear especially marked in suburbs and in newer-destination cities—places where the vast majority of immigrants now live (chapters 2, 3, and 8). Thus we can talk about civic and political stratification of organizations and groups in the United States, a stratification that also seems apparent, though perhaps along slightly different lines, in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the Netherlands.

What are the potential solutions to civic and political stratification? One possibility is proactive government policies directed toward immigrants, refugees, and ethnic groups. Supportive government policies can help level the playing field between ethnic and non-ethnic organizations by boosting the resources of organizations that serve marginalized communities (see chapters 2, 3, 9, and 6). Government assistance can also prove crucial in widening access to elected and

non-elected officials among those organizations that receive funding (Jones-Correa 2001; Bloemraad 2006). By contrast, private sources of funding such as foundation grants, charitable giving, and support from ethnic businesses can help bridge resource gaps among community organizations and boost the civic presence of immigrant organizations. They are likely, however, to have a less direct impact on the access of such organizations to government officials. Finally, in addition to providing financial assistance, governments can also help mitigate levels of civic and political stratification by appointing immigrants to local boards and commissions and by creating special liaisons and commissions to foster communications with immigrant groups with limited English proficiency, low rates of citizenship, and little participation in local politics.

Other strategies for boosting the civic and political influence of immigrant organizations may include the creation of regional and national federations and collaborations or alliances with other organizations, whether mainstream, of the same ethnic group, of a different ethnic group, or transnational. One of the strengths of the party system in fostering political incorporation lies in its hierarchical structure and symmetry with U.S. federalism. As Theda Skocpol (2003) argued about fraternal groups and other historic civic associations, federated structures are more likely to bring ordinary people into politics. Of the organizations highlighted in this volume, few follow such a traditional federated structure. One exception is unions, and as chapter 11 makes clear, there are opportunities for individuals to affect important change by working within a federated organization structure. At the same time, organizational leaders will have a harder time maintaining institutional cohesion as various affiliated locals have their own interests and agendas. In the case of unions, the inability to resolve such differences contributed to the breakup of the AFL-CIO, and arguably further weakened organized labor's ability to speak with a strong, unified political voice. Because relatively few Americans are represented by unions, and even a smaller proportion of immigrants are union members, unions cannot be a panacea for immigrants' political incorporation.

Beyond unions, almost all of the other organizations showcased in this volume either are stand-alone organizations or form shifting horizontal coalitions with local groups, often on a temporary basis. The nonprofit social service providers discussed in chapter 12 engage in important advocacy work within the city of San Francisco, but their ability to affect national policy—including immigration policy—is limited by their lack of permanent relationships to actors in other places and in Washington, D.C. Similarly, Andersen notes in chapter 3 that across her six-city comparison, immigrant organizations in those cities with more developed coalitional structures are more likely to enjoy a greater presence in local decision-making bodies. Wong, Rim, and Perez show in chapter 10 how issues related to immigration and civil rights have the potential to unravel political coalitions among Evangelical groups, and in chapter 6 Vermeulen and Berger provide more general lessons of how the form and shape of coalition structures can have important consequences for political participation. In chapter 2, Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad show that mainstream organizations and ethnic organizations are largely disconnected from each other in terms of day-to-day par-

ticipation in the civic and political lives of their communities. Future research needs to look more carefully at the dynamics of coalition formation: how it is done in the civic arena (and not just around particular electoral contests); the forms it takes; and the relationship between coalition form and political or civic outcomes.

Coalitions can also form across international borders, bringing in issues of transnational political and civic involvement. A central question is whether transnational engagement by immigrants in the United States hurts or helps incorporation into the American civic and political landscape. On the one hand, transnationalism can hurt incorporation into the receiving country if money sent home for community development projects decreases the resources immigrants can put into building civic organizations in the host country. On the other hand, the desire to send money home for community projects may encourage organizing that would have been absent without the transnational interest in homeland development.

Some have wondered whether transnational activism saps civic and political energies away from U.S.-based concerns by promoting an exclusive (and implicitly parochial) interest in the homeland. The research reported in this volume suggests the opposite: concern about homeland issues helps push immigrants to engage in the American system. This can happen through transnationalism from above, as with Mexican consular activities around hometown associations or labor violations, or from below, as immigrants translate homeland concerns into domestic U.S. politics (Smith and Guarnizo 1998). For example, Brettell and Reed-Danahay document in chapter 7 how Indian immigrants in the Dallas-Fort Worth area have learned about the workings of American politics by trying to influence U.S. foreign policy toward India. Future research might consider whether such transnationalism from below happens more readily when the immigrant group is relatively well-educated and well-off, as in the case of Indians in Texas and Cubans in Miami (Torres 2001). Where communities have relatively fewer resources, such as Mexican immigrants in most regions in the United States, perhaps some support from above facilitates both the building of transnational organizations and their (re-)orientation to U.S. politics.

Finally, potential solutions to civic and political stratification may lie well beyond the control of local governments and community organizations, and depend instead on sudden changes in political opportunities and more systematic changes in the nature of political contestation. For instance, immigrant-serving organizations have been relatively marginal to politics in most regions of the United States, but for a few months in early 2006, they were at the epicenter of some of the largest political debates over federal and local immigration policies. The challenge of using external threats and other political shocks for mobilization lies in maintaining the momentum from such events into lasting civic and political engagement. This is where the role of organizations becomes critical.

In the case of the immigrant protests, after the explosion of activity in spring of 2006, it became evident by the fall that movement leaders were unable to bring more than a few thousand protesters to the streets. Once Congress had reached a stalemate on immigration legislation, it was difficult for leaders to forge a more

proactive and pro-immigrant agenda.¹⁴ It is quite possible, then, that more sustainable solutions to mitigating civic and political stratification between immigrant and nonimmigrant organizations require systematic changes to the political system. These may include government support for organizations, such as for immigrants in the Netherlands or for refugees in the United States, the creation of district, proportional- and cumulative-voting systems of representation (Lublin 1997; Brockington et al. 1998), the extension of noncitizen voting rights at local and perhaps higher-level offices (Hayduk 2006), or measures intended to increase party competition such as open primaries and balanced electoral districts.

The upshot from the contributions here is that immigrant civic organizations have the potential to be vehicles of political engagement, but that much of that power depends on their ability to build wide-ranging coalitions with mainstream and ethnic organizations, to draw on assistance from government and private sources, to create federated structures, to harness the positive returns to homeland participation, and to take advantage of political events that facilitate organizing. One of the major challenges is to maintain gains made as a result of such developments and to prevent backsliding in political presence and weight when external funding dries up and political opportunities close.

Despite heated debates around border control and national immigration policy in the United States and other industrialized democracies, the issue of immigrant integration and the local challenges accompanying large-scale migration also remain important. It is clear that in many American cities, immigrants have transformed workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods. They are also establishing civic groups, although such organizations remain invisible to government officials in many places across the United States. Similar patterns of activism and stratification can be found in other countries around the world. We hope this book will help spark further intellectual debate and scholarly attention to whether immigrants' participation and organizing will (re)invigorate the civic ideals of Western democracies, or whether inequalities in resources, outreach, and recognition will continue to sow the seeds of civic and political stratification for the foreseeable future.

NOTES

1. Peter Prengaman, "Immigration March Draws 500,000 in LA," Associated Press, March 25, 2006.
2. Randal Archibold, "Immigrants Take to U.S. Streets in Show of Strength," *New York Times*, May 2, 2006, 1.
3. Those who are foreign-born to American citizen parents—and who are thus themselves American citizens at birth—would generally not be included in the category of immigrant.
4. According to demographer Jeffrey Passel (2006), in 2005, only 35 percent of the foreign-born were naturalized citizens, 32 percent were noncitizen legal permanent residents, 30 percent were unauthorized migrants without legal status, and three percent were temporary legal migrants such as students and temporary workers.

5. We outline the common methodology of the Immigrant Civic Engagement Project, of which we are principal investigators, in chapter 2. The common set of questions that animate this project is laid out later in this chapter.
6. In this formulation, an ethnic group is a descriptive classification: individuals with some common trait can be grouped together to compare the group to other individuals with different backgrounds. We do not assume that sharing a language, origin, religion, or racial classification necessarily or naturally makes people come together in a sociological community. Indeed, a central question for the study of immigrants' political and civic engagement is to ask when certain characteristics become salient for group identity and political mobilization, and how the make-up and salience of ethnic identity or common ethnicity might vary across time and places. We thus concur with the predominant view of ethnicity as a social construction; to help us get at the dynamics of these constructions, we use the concept of ethnic group to make comparisons between immigrants.
7. On the importance of alliances and the form they take, see the network analysis by Dirk Jacobs and Jean Tillie (2004) and Floris Vermeulen and Maria Berger, chapter 6 in this volume.
8. There are various ways in which social scientists have measured political influence—some have relied on reputational measures of influence among the general population (Hunter 1953), while others have measured influence based on particular decisions (Dahl 1961), and others still argue for more in-depth case study work on a particular issue, from identity formation and issue gestation through the agenda setting, policy-making, and policy implementation processes (Gaventa 1980).
9. Although civic and political presence and weight are loosely operationalized across this volume, we can establish the kinds of evidence that scholars would need to better specify these measures. Thus, for instance, robust measures of civic presence would require content analysis of mainstream news sources, network analysis of organizational activists, and surveys that measure the visibility of organizations among the general population and various ethnic populations. Similarly, robust measures of civic weight would need to rely on information about transfer of resources across organizations, and other evidence from in-depth interviews, news reports, and archival records that indicate the extent to which some organizations have a greater hand in shaping projects involving multiple organizations. Finally, measures of political presence would require in-depth interviews with elected officials regarding the visibility of organizations (mainstream, ethnic, and panethnic) across various issues while measures of political weight could rely on interviews with elected officials and organization leaders, as well as content analysis of news coverage and public records such as city council agendas and minutes.
10. Indeed, some imply that in addition to an individual-level political assimilation or group-based political incorporation account of immigrants' civic and political integration, we can speak about a third, transnational model (Portes and Rumbaut 2006). Such a model recognizes that immigrants' political attention is not necessarily or uniquely focused on their country of residence, but also on their countries of origin. The expansion and lowered cost of international communication and transportation clearly broadens the scope of possible participation. It is unclear, however, whether enlarging our view of civic and political engagement across international borders necessarily changes the models by which we understand incorporation into the new system. As others have pointed out, transnationalism remains a strongly nation-bounded model; immigrants have a foot in multiple countries, but the fact that

these are countries—with their particular histories, institutions, and discursive structures—remains highly salient (Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004).

11. A well-developed body of research argues that participation in civic groups, even ones with no political interests, plays an important role in teaching individuals the skills and aptitudes needed for political engagement, outside formal parties (compare Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995; Putnam 2000). These arguments operate at the meso-micro level, suggesting that organizational settings help with individual skill building. The focus in this volume is more squarely centered on meso-macro dynamics: to what extent do organizations represent the interests of members or of immigrant groups in the political arena, and do they successfully mobilize immigrants into the political system in such a way as to provide immigrants with visibility and weight in political discussions, decision making, and policy implementation.
12. The H election that 501(c)(3) organizations may take has a sliding scale—where those with budgets under \$500,000 can devote up to 20 percent of expenditures on direct lobbying, and those with larger budgets have a lower percentage, but potentially larger absolute amount, they can give to lobbying (Berry and Arons 2003, 55).
13. These findings are in line with other studies that report low visibility and influence for immigrant organizations in local politics. For instance, Michael Jones-Correa (1998) found that one-party dominance in New York diminished the political influence of Latino immigrants and immigrant organizations, and Ramakrishnan and Lewis (2005) found in a 300-city study of California that city council members rank labor unions and immigrant advocates among the lowest in influence over matters that come before city hall, and rank developers, neighborhood associations, and mainstream business associations the highest.
14. Rachel Swarns and Randal Archibold, “Immigration Movement Struggles to Regain Momentum Built in Spring Marches,” *New York Times*, September 11, 2006, 11.

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