

From Flags to Fate: Toward Developing a Queer Utility Heuristic

Michael V. Elwell¹

¹ The University of North Texas

January 6, 2025

Abstract

How are queer persons motivated in the United States to behave politically? How does queer-linked fate impact an individual's willingness to participate in voting and non-voting political activities? Building on the work of Dawson (1994) and utilizing data from the 2020 Collaborative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey (CMPS), I offer a new theoretical framework for the motivation of queer political participation in the United States. Rooted in the deep shared history of the queer community, this paper investigates the idea of the existence of a queer utility heuristic that queer folks in the United States are mobilized based on the feeling that their life chances are tied to that of the group. Utilizing a robust suite of statistical techniques, this paper finds that higher levels of queer-linked fate amongst LGBTQ+ individuals lead to greater voting and non-voting participation, highlighting the importance of identity and group connection to political behavior for US-based queer folk.

Keywords: Queer Politics, Political Behavior, LGBTQ+, Linked Fate, Utility Heuristics

Introduction

On June 28th, 1969, what started as a routine police raid in New York City rapidly evolved into a movement of resistance and liberation against police violence and brutality targeting queer persons. Stonewall Inn was a local gay bar, and on that June night, the raid started an uprising amongst queer persons, a call for the right to live openly as queer without fear of retaliation or criminal punishment, as was common in the United States during that time. Years later, the civil disobedience at Stonewall was recognized amongst the public as the beginning of a decades-long legal and social battle over the existence of queerness, and the ability of queer persons to enjoy and fully be entailed as part of the American Experience. Political participation and its motivators are central to the understanding of political behavior in the United States. Classic studies of political behavior amongst groups typically seek to understand what motivates these groups. While political science has generally done a good job of being inclusive of the movements it includes in its studies of minority groups, a large vacuum remains when it comes to assessing the behavior and motivations of queer persons in the United States. I seek to help close this gap in our understanding and contribute a novel theory of queer participation in the United States, and some of the first studies of how and why queer people behave politically in the United States.

Framing the Study

What explains queer political behavior? Why should the discipline be considering queerness in our understanding of political science? American politics scholars have sought to understand how and why people turn out to vote and participate in politics more generally. However, as political science as a discipline has evolved, scholars have wrought with the once radical fact that not everyone is the same, and some groups behave differently than others, this provides a rich corpus of literature that explains how different groups behave, however, one flaw with current political science scholarship is that frequently it fails to capture queer-

ness as a group of interest in our literature. Typically work regarding queerness in the field engages research at an individual level, and while this work provides a rich value to the field, attempts to explain the behavior of the community at large are few and far between. The purpose of my work is two-fold in this area, not only do I advance further the agenda of queer politics in American politics scholarship, I provide an original theory for the understanding of queer political behavior in the United States. To understand how I tackle queerness as a means of study in this project, it's important to lay out a few key pieces of the puzzle. Social and group identity are some of the strong bases for the work laid out in this project, and classical explanations of political participation in the United States are necessary to consider because they provide a robust corpus of literature to synthesize and build theory. The next section will frame queerness in the social identity and group consciousness literature; then, I consider the classical explanations of political behavior in the United States. Finally, I make considerations of relevant literature regarding alternative explanations of behavior amongst social identity groups and how this comports to my original explanation of queer political participation amongst U.S. queers.

Literature Review

Framing of Queerness

Identity and history amongst queers are imperative to the understanding of what causes them to behave in the political realm. The acronym LGBTQ+, simply put, acts as an acronym for the phrase “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus”. However, within the queer community, many consider the phrase to encompass any person outside of the cisgender (a person whose gender identity is disconnected from their gender assigned at birth)-heterosexual (cis-hetero) identity (Bernstein, 1997). This is why many people use the term queer to identify the LGBTQ+ community. There is, however, much discussion over what the term “queer” identifies, or what it represents. Queer can be a slur, it can be used as

an empowering form of identity, a term of ambiguity, a theoretical framework, or a catchall term (Bernstein, 1997). For many, being queer is connected to being non-cis/non-hetero. As the term and community evolve over time, people who self-identify as queer might have varying reasons to do so (Worthen 2021). This sort of distinction is important to this article and from a societal standpoint because the LGBTQ+ community is diverse, encompassing many identities and persons looking for acceptance and community despite their perceived differences from what society defines as normal.

Most historians agree that there is some form of homosexual activity and/or same-sex love in every documented culture, regardless of whether they faced persecution. Movements that surrounded the acceptance of queer persons began typically as responses to centuries of persecution by established institutions, whether political or not, such as churches, state authorities, police, and medical disciplines (Morris 2019). This is where the uprising at Stonewall that was discussed earlier becomes relevant, and the many more riots/protests that called for queer liberation and acceptance that followed it. The call for liberation is a large definer of the queer identity, and as such, it helps me to define and understand queerness more generally. Additionally, it serves as a key point that underlies the theory contained in this paper, this shared history amongst queer persons is imperative to understand the later framing of my theory.

Within the study of political science, we regularly consider two key concepts, and this work is no exception. To understand queerness as a political force, we must consider its basis in social identity and group consciousness. Group identity and group consciousness evolved in the discipline based on the psychological theory of social identity. Effectively, a person's sense of belonging matters more than the identity of the group (Tajfel 1978, Tajfel and Turner 1979) and three criteria must be met to construct a group identity: you categorize others and the self as an ingroup and outgroup; identification, or primary and secondary marginalization of the outgroup; and a comparison between the ingroup and the outgroup. This psychological theory was then adopted by political science with Miller et al.

pioneering group consciousness, or the idea that identity can become politicized, and the shared marginalization of the group leads to collective action (Miller et al. 1981). For the purposes of broad theory, I believe that Miller et al. 1981 definition serves best. It provides an excellent framework in which to understand how marginalization shapes identity. There is a need to establish the in and outgroups, the shared marginalization, and the inherent politicization of the identity. If we consider both Tajfel and Turner's (1979) and Miller et al.'s (1981) points it is clear that the queer community fits not only the three criteria to be considered a social identity group, but they have a longstanding shared history of oppression within the United States. These arguments combined with the idea that “group membership is a powerful basis for the development of self-identity and perceptions of individual interest” (Bobo 1983), provide not only the basis of my theory but also shows the importance that political scientists should be giving greater attention to the queer community.

Explanation of Political Behavior

Conventional explanations of political behavior in the United States find their roots in studies of the “average” American voter in the mid-20th century. Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee (1954) argue that people’s attitudes and turnout are a function of their social circle, while others like Downs (1957) make the argument that voting turnout and choice is a rational calculus that people perform to decide whether or not they will participate. While Downs notes the idea that the most rational voter should almost never vote, queer people gain some utility by being able to utilize information shortcuts to mobilize and inform themselves based on group preferences. Further work sought to explain attitude development and political behavior further than both socialization and rational choice. Campbell et al. (1960) provide an explanation of behavior that originates in familial and social contexts that through some logic, priming, and experience distill (funnel) into a position and mobilization. While the classic cannon gives decent groundwork, more recent political science scholarships seek to extend the literature on voting participation and seek new mechanisms that might influence

people to participate more and more effectively.

The pioneering of group consciousness has given rise to a large body of literature that challenges the conventional wisdom of the study of American political behavior. Before the existence of the measure, we (scholars) largely took for granted that everyone was pretty much the same, and as such built our discipline on the backs of studies about white males, because those were the people that were predominately studied at the time when the field was first beginning to advance. The seminal texts on voting (Berelson, Lazarsfeld and Mcphee 1954, Downs 1957, Campbell et al. 1960) are all based largely upon samples of cisgender, heterosexual white males. At the time women had gained the right to vote, but other marginalized groups were not fully equal to engage, and as such oftentimes were left out of emerging political science research. The radical idea that minorities are also people and behave differently from white people changed the discipline drastically, launching a subfield that sought to investigate these differences and how minorities were motivated to behave and serve to inspire and inform this particular research agenda.

Contemporary Explanations of Political Behavior

More contemporary explanations of group behavior have seen the emergence of a concept termed “linked fate”. Pioneered by Michael Dawson in 1994, linked fate is the idea that one feels connected to one’s social identity group, intrinsically to the point that what happens to the group has an impact on their own life. Specifically applying the theory to African American voting behavior, Dawson finds that people who feel higher levels of linked fate will be motivated to adopt policy positions that are beneficial to the group even if that position might be counter-intuitive to their personal benefits. Dawson attributes this new measure to the violent, shared history experienced by African Americans in the United States, formal constraints and violence placed onto blacks because of the institution of slavery, combined with the legal battles over rights, and existent informal constraints faced by this group has activated their group consciousness in a way that mobilizes them as a bloc. However, for

Dawson, group identity and consciousness are not the same thing as linked fate, rather it is a predecessor and natural extension or distillation of group consciousness.

Effectively you cannot have the existence of linked fate without the existence of group consciousness. Where group consciousness is a set of shared ideals and values within the group, linked fate is the group cohesion that pursues these politically. However, it isn't easy to separate the two, at least empirically. For many studies, linked fate and group consciousness are used interchangeably, and generally in survey instruments there is the use of linked fate as a proxy for group consciousness, it should be noted that the two are not the same, one precedes the other in terms of existence, and this should be thought about.
(Tajfel 1978, Tajfel and Turner 1979, Dawson 1994)

Since the pioneering of linked fate in the 90's multiple other scholars have sought to use the measure to explain the behavior of other racial and social minorities in the United States, with various results depending on the group for the explaining power of linked fate and the group behavior (Gay, Hochschild, and White 2016). Sanchez and Masuoka (2019) find that while there might be some existence of linked fate among Latinos the evidence is mostly mixed. Prior work by Sanchez and Masuoka (2010) in the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS) found that immigrants and those Latinx persons who are more low income experienced linked fate at a rate disproportionate to other Latinx people. Additionally, discrimination was not important for the linked fate feeling. Later Sanchez and Masuoka (2019) argue that the group has evolved and now they contend that linked fate is not as powerful of an explainer as earlier. Ultimately they conclude that there is an important link between discrimination and the experience of linked fate amongst Latinx individuals. Very differently than Latinx persons, Asian Americans' experiences of linked fate coincide with the rejection of party identification (Lien et al. 2004), but is also highly associated with voting and other forms of different political participation, which varies among the different Asian nationalities (Lien et al. 2004; Haynes and Skully 2012). Regardless, there is a strong feeling among Asian Americans for linked fate (Junn and Masuoka 2008, Masuoka

2006). The concept has even begun to be extended toward White Americans, who find that they experience linked fate at a rate similar to that of their minoritized counterparts. It is associated with higher levels of participation and engagement in politics (Berry, Ebner, and Cornelius 2021).

There have been important deviations from simply regarding linked fate as a racial concept. Simien (2005) contributes the critical idea that gender is important in the racial identity of women of color and gender will often strengthen their linked fate. We see this corroborated with more intersectional work that also argues that linked fate is experienced intersectionally with women of color, as well the concept that linked fate can become intra-racial as well (Bejarano, Brown, Gerrshon, Montoya 2021; Campi and Junn 2019; Carey Jr. and Lizotte 2023). Now there is an idea that linked fate can even supersede a specific ethnic group's linked fate. There is the idea that there has been an emergence of the idea of an inter-racial linked fate that supersedes linked fate among co-ethnics, and people identify with the "person of color" label (Tyson 2016, Chan and Jasso 2021).

Queer Politics in America

As was alluded to earlier, explanations of queer political behavior are slim within the literature of political science. Some seminal work has investigated the mechanisms that make Lesbians, Gay men, and Bisexuals (LGBs) such staunch supporters of democrats. Lewis, Rogers, and Sherrill (2011) posit that LGBs widely supported Gore in the 2000 election because Gore ran on a platform that supported equality for LGBs, namely LGB rights, and policy liberalism. Lewis et al. attribute this party adhesion to the idea that the willingness and conditions to adopt an LGB identity also makes them more likely to be liberal Democrats, and this is driven by adult socialization, and the coming out process. While Lewis et al. have a good theoretical foundation, two issues should be considered going forward. At the time of writing, transgender folx were not part of the sample, not for any malicious reason, they are a traditionally under-sampled group because of how hard it is

to capture that demographic. Luckily this is a demographic that scholars have been able to capture with more recent data. The other issue is that their survey is now two decades old, in which time politics and the queer identity specifically have become increasingly polarized. Still, the mechanisms interrogated by Lewis, Rogers, and Sherrill (2011) ultimately contribute to the theory outlined below.

While the literature regarding linked fate occasionally regards queerness as a concept (Bejarano et al. 2020, Moreau et al. 2019) it is typically utilized intersectionally or comparatively with racial linked fate rather than treating it as a standalone concept. However, emergent scholarship has begun to treat queerness and queer-linked fate as a motivation for political behavior.

The Politicization of Queerness and Queer Group Interests

While there is still inherent value in understanding how queerness works regarding intersections of Race, Gender, and other forms of identity, I believe it is important to consider the group as a singular force, that queerness itself is an important motivator contained within an individual. I argue that queerness is a factor that is self-reinforcing the identity of queer Americans, and thus strengthens the link between one's fate and the fate of the group at large. The greater the perceived link between one's fate and that of the group, the more salient one's identity, and thus willingness to participate becomes. The social identity of queerness becomes solidified within oneself, and the political salience of the identity comports to participation.

The group interests and the motivation of queerness have a social and political component. The social component includes interactions between the group and society, a general perception, and public ideal of the group within the public eye of the United States. The political component must deal with the legal, formal, and informal barriers that have placed

an undue burden on the group, and for the sake of this paper, I will be considering them in this order. The social component of queer identity has two major components, internal and external, as falls in line with most of the research on group identity in political science. While suboptimal in normative terms, the queer identity is not always shaped by internal processes. Yes, the internal component is deeply significant to the motivation of oneself to even identify with the group, but there are outside forces that work to define what queerness is and who is not subjected to the social norms that are associated with it. In this sense, the attitudes of the out-group are a determinant of the social status of the group, and in a way shape the boundaries of queerness. Historically speaking, the attitudes of the out-group have not seen kindly the members of the queer community. There has been a long history of the group having to fight to erase social stigma in society and often they face social discrimination because of their identity. All too often there are instances where even out-group members are discriminated against just because of their perceived membership in the group. There are also high social costs associated with the process of coming out and adopting the queer identity, the loss of friends, the looking down upon of your family, and in some places in the United States, it can even threaten the stability of your economic or housing situation.

From a political standpoint, there must be a consideration of how queerness has interacted with the state and the conditions that queerness has gone through in terms of formal and informal legal battles. Akin to the stigma faced socially by US queers, there has also been a great deal of uphill climbing in terms of legal status. In many states, it was legal to discriminate against same-sex couples in terms of serving them, and in some places, such as Texas were allowed to arrest and evict people for engagement in homosexual activities. Many states did this through sodomy laws, and it was not until Lawrence V Texas in 2003 that the Supreme Court guaranteed the right to practice homosexuality publicly. This however still did not protect gay individuals from the whims of the public, and some civil servants. While homosexuality was legal nationally, states could deny you the right to marry your partner, until the Supreme Court intervened and guaranteed the right to gay marriage in

2015 with Obergefell V Hobbes Case.

While this significant legal progress has occurred, different parts of the community have become more vulnerable and targeted as part of the anti-queer movement that exists broadly. To this day there are still violent and brutal acts taken against queer persons for simply existing in the United States. There is a pattern of brutalization against queer folks, innocent people such as Matthew Sheppard (1998), the victims of the Pulse Nightclub shooting (2016), and even as recently as the killing of Nex Benedict, a non-binary teenager in Oklahoma (2024), were all martyred in this fight for legal and social protections. This brutal pattern of social segregation, and direct violence despite legal guarantees, has solidified the queer identity broadly as a group. The group must operate in a two-tiered pluralistic fashion (Hero 1992) that places an undue burden on the group. This shared historical experience of queers has implicitly tied life chances to the chances of the group due to the pervasiveness of queer oppression for the better part of American history.

Queering the Utility Heuristic

The queer utility heuristic is a mechanism that enables one to specify the conditions under which queer interests become stronger or weaker relative to individual interests and states that as long as the life chances of queers are shaped by these components of their identity, queer persons use the perceptions of the interests of the Queer community at large as a proxy for their own interests, and are motivated to political behavior because of this. Rationality is measured instead of as utility maximization, but rather by how the process of decision-making enforces group identity. In the historically risky environment where queer Americans have been forced to reside, this procedural rationality enforces the salience of the group identity (Dawson 1994, Simon 1985). Procedural rationality, rather than global rationality, provides a framework in which people make decisions based on information and goals and is bounded because people are unable to observe counterfactual events. Coupled with the

emotional attachment intrinsically tied to identity, the salience of this identity and shared history of the queer community in the United States has led to the activation of their group consciousness and thus motivates queer individuals to action. There is the expectation that queer folx, make decisions to participate based upon this bounded rationality, and is the grounds for the existence of the queer utility heuristic. Based upon this theory I assert two hypotheses of queer political participation. Simply put those who identify with the group at greater strengths will be more pushed to participate in politics in both voting and non-voting manners.

H1: Queer individuals who experience higher levels of Queer Linked Fate will be more likely to vote.

H2: Queer individuals who experience higher levels of Queer Linked Fate will be more engaged in alternate electoral behavior.

This paper focuses on voting participation and an index of alternate electoral activities that are not voting for a few reasons. The focus on voting comes because it is the traditional legal avenue for changing policy, politics, governments, and political actors in the United States. The optimal mode of function is that constituents choose candidates that represent them, and when that representation, whether that be descriptive or substantive, ends, constituents replace that actor with one who falls in line with their representative needs. I additionally focus on general political participation because not every person residing in the United States has the time/ability to vote. The employment of an index of alternate electoral participation lets us assess other activities that are able to be participated in regardless of time/ability. While some activities are more costly (whether that be in time or other means) than others in the index, the nine-point scale constructed and described below should provide a robust test of the interaction between queer identity and non-voting behavior.

Data, Variables, and Methods

Data for this paper comes from the 2020 Collaborative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey (CMPS), a survey conducted in each major election year that specifically over-samples racial minorities. I employ the use of the CMPS for two major reasons, the first is that it captures a good sample of queer individuals in the United States, seeing 1740 respondents that self-identify as either gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, non-binary or with other markers that are typically part of the group. The second major reason to use the CMPS is that it includes a measure of Queer-Linked Fate (coded as qlf), as well as a veritable wealth of demographic information for us to be able to test my two hypotheses.

For this analysis, I utilize one independent variable, queer-linked fate, employed in two different analyses. *Queer Linked Fate* is a variable that ranges from 1 to 5 and asks the respondent to rate “What happens to LGBTQ People will have . . .” with 1 being “Nothing to do with what happens in my life” and ranges to 5 being “A huge amount to do with what happens in my life”. The dependent variable for my first hypothesis is simply whether the respondent self-reported that they voted, coded as a 1 if they voted, and a 0 if they did not, and is tested using both logit and probit regression models with the employment of a linear probability model for robustness checks. The dependent variable for my second hypothesis is a scale of non-voting political participation (self-identified respondent actions) that accounts for the number of activities that a respondent engaged in. The scale ranges from 0 (engaged in no political activities) to 9 (engaged in all political activities) and includes: wearing a button, talking about politics, working for a campaign, donating to a campaign, contacting your representatives, getting help from your local government, making an internet post, signing a petition, and participating in a boycott. Hypothesis 2 is modeled using a beta-binomial regression model, to account for some overdispersion seen in the data. For a robustness analysis to help corroborate the model, I also employ the use of several other statistical techniques, Binomial regression, Poisson regression, Negative-Binomial regression, and Ordinary Least Squares help to give greater confidence that the model is reflecting

an accurate measure of the change in participation as someone's level of queer linked fate changes.

I specify numerous controls/additional covariates of interest in the model to try and capture the true effect of queer linked fate upon our voting and participation variables. I measure gender in two ways, the first is as *Woman* which is a dummy variable where respondents are coded as a 1, similarly *Non-Binary* is a dummy coded as 1 for those who self-identify as such. *Age* is the age of the respondent at the time of the survey based upon the year they were born and ranged from 17 to 83. The variable for *Education* is based upon the highest level of education that the respondent completed. At the low end, 1, the respondent has completed between 1st and 8th grade, and at the high end, 7, a respondent has some form of post-graduate degree. *Working* is measured as a dichotomous variable. 1 is someone who is employed either full or part-time, and 0 is not employed. I measure *Religiosity* based on the importance of religion to someone's life and is scaled from 1 which is not important at all, to 4 which is very important, with 0 reflecting someone who responded "Don't know" or "Refused". *Conservative Ideology* is the textbook liberal-conservative scale and includes 5 categories. 1 denotes "Very Liberal" and the scale ranges to 5 which is "Very Conservative" The model accounts for *Race* in a categorical way, utilizing *White* as the baseline category, and then shows estimates for *Latino*, *Black*, and *Asian American/Pacific Islanders* in separate, respective categories. I also specify if someone has a high level of racially linked fate within the model, and categorize it based upon their race, this is done in *Race x Racial Linked Fate* in which a respondent with high racial linked fate, is multiplied by their race to create the variable. *Income* is a categorical variable that separates people into different brackets and is measured from one to twelve. One reflects a person whose income is less than 20,000 US Dollars, and twelve reflects a person whose income is at 200,000 US Dollars or more. The categories increase in brackets of 10,000 USD until 100,000 USD, at which those (coded as ten and eleven) increase in the amount of 50,000 USD. *Percent Queer* reflects the proportion of a state's population that identifies as queer and is

sourced from the group population estimates produced by The Williams Institute (2019). The model accounts for a person's level of *Trust in Federal Government* and *Trust in Local Government* and are scaled from 1 to 4, with the scale taking a 1 for someone who never trusts the respective government and taking a 4 for someone who always trusts the respective government. Finally, I included a means of fixing effects (*Regional Fixed Effects*) by region to control for any undetectable regional variation. This process is done by utilizing the US Census Regional map (Census 2020), and coding the regions into four categories, 0 being the Western Part of the United States, 1 being the Northeast, 2 being the Midwest, and 3 being the Southern part of the US.

Analysis and Results

Table 1: Effect of Queer Linked Fate on Voting (Logit in odds ratios)

Queer Linked Fate	1.30931*** (0.07202)
Woman	1.58407** (0.22988)
Non-Binary	1.31878 (0.35448)
Income	1.05004* (0.02216)
Age	1.67081*** (0.09699)
Latino	0.47713*** (0.09138)
Black	0.47915** (0.10808)
AAPI	0.24558*** (0.06845)
Working	1.17693 (0.15650)
Trust in Federal Government	0.88099 (0.09157)
Trust in Local Government	0.94084 (0.09827)
Religiosity	0.92235 (0.05061)
Percent Queer	0.94603 (0.09513)
Race * Racial Linked Fate	1.18811* (0.08041)
Conservative Ideology	0.77515*** (0.03860)
Education	1.47771*** (0.07109)
Regional Fixed Effects	X
Observations	1401
Pseudo R^2	0.235
AIC	1525.97100
BIC	1630.86983
Log lik.	-742.98550
Chi-squared	276.16242

Exponentiated coefficients; Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 1 reports the results of a logistic regression model in odds ratios, on the likelihood of someone voting at different levels of queer-linked fate. One can see that given our range of control variables, queer-linked fate is a positive and statistically significant factor in determining voting for queer individuals. While exponentiated logistic regression coefficients are interpretable, Figures 1 and 2 give illustrations of the effects that are seen within these tables.

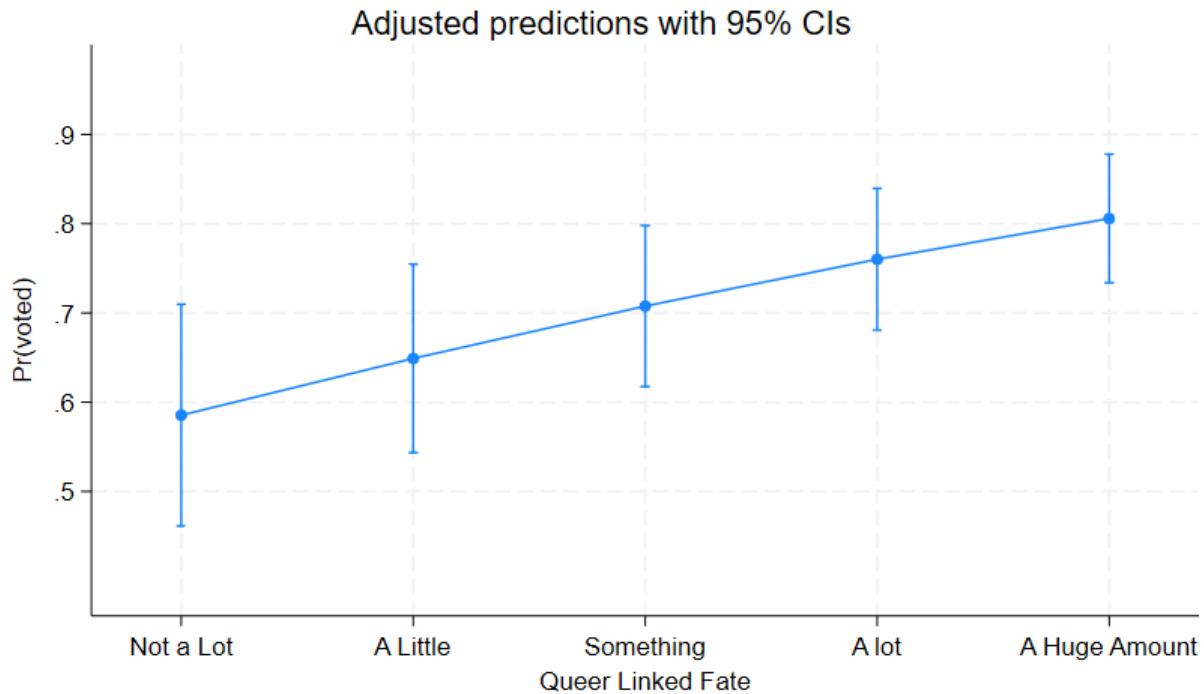


Figure 1: Predicted Probability of Voting at Different Levels of Linked Fate

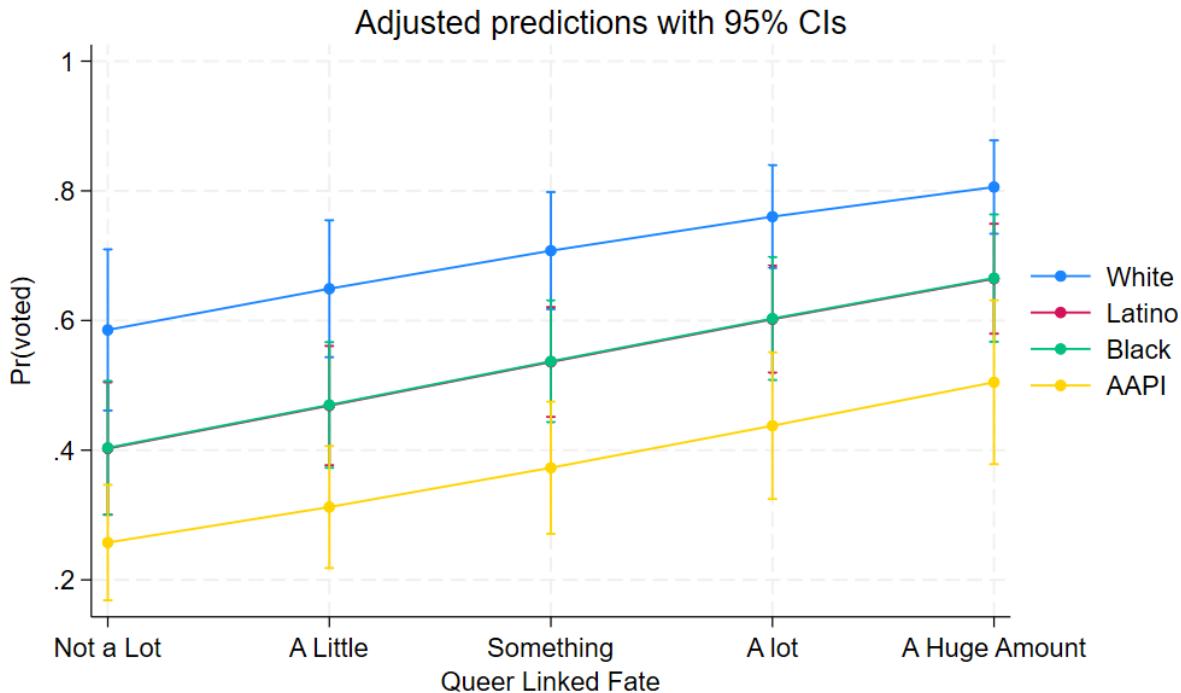


Figure 2: Predicted Probability of Voting at Different Levels of Linked Fate

Figure 1 graphs the predicted likelihood that a person will vote based on the strength of their linked fate with the LGBTQ+ Community. For the simulated probabilities the model makes the prediction based on a white queer Woman who lives in the Western part of the United States. All other attributes in the model are held at their respective means for these predictions. Figure 1 provides a clear illustration of the results in Table 1, over their counterparts at the lower end of the spectrum, there's roughly a 20-30 percent increase in voting turnout based solely upon linked fate. I further disaggregate the results and plot predicted probabilities on two different sets of varying characteristics. Figure 2 shows the plotted predictions for queer Womans across all coded races in the CMPS. Again, there is a continuation of this positive correlation between queer linked fate and voting turnout, despite some variation amongst the different racial groups. These figures and table coupled with the robustness analyses located in the appendix illustrate strong support for my first hypothesis.

Table 2: Effect of Queer Linked Fate on Participation (Beta-Binomial Regression)

Queer Linked Fate	0.05826*
	(0.02687)
Woman	0.07348
	(0.06700)
Non-Binary	0.56925***
	(0.14252)
Income	0.04203***
	(0.01010)
Age	-0.10259***
	(0.02537)
Latino	-0.14682 ⁺
	(0.08776)
Black	-0.07874
	(0.10244)
AAPI	-0.12303
	(0.12843)
Working	0.05710
	(0.06591)
Trust in Local Government	0.28319***
	(0.05018)
Trust in Federal Government	0.13309**
	(0.04988)
Religiosity	0.11507***
	(0.02728)
Percent Queer	-0.05899
	(0.05107)
Race * Racial Linked Fate	-0.05485 ⁺
	(0.03172)
Conservative Ideology	-0.13709***
	(0.02406)
Education	0.04750*
	(0.02361)
Regional Fixed Effects	X
Constant	-1.25049***
	(0.33909)
Observations	1401
Pseudo R^2	0.042
AIC	6115.53156
BIC	6225.67533
Log lik.	-3036.76578
Chi-squared	268.73244

Standard errors in parentheses

⁺ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 2 reports the results of a Beta-Binomial regression model upon queer-linked fate and other covariates on the likelihood of participating in various non-voting political activities. The model illustrates strong support for the second hypothesis, being both in the expected direction and statistically significant. For the sake of consistency in our analysis, I again employ the use of average marginal effects (shown in Figures 2 and 3) to illustrate the predicted probabilities that are seen in the model, and show a similar story that queer-linked fate greatly drives alternate electoral participation amongst United States queers.

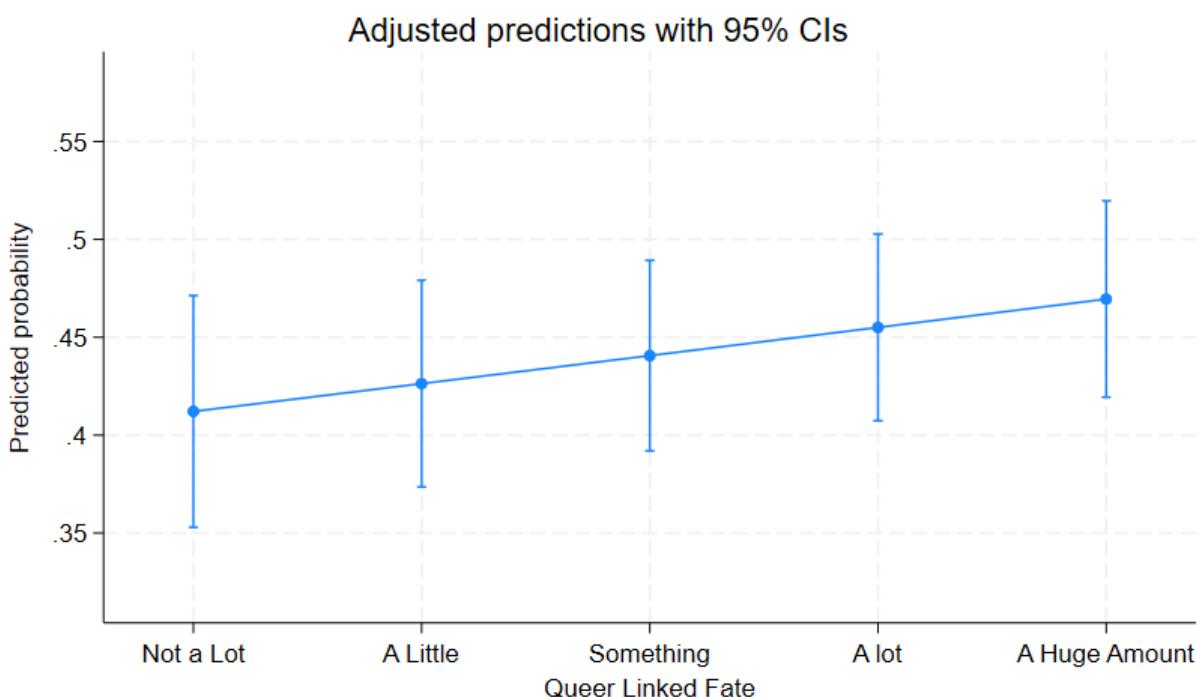


Figure 3: Predicted Increase in Activities at Different Levels of Linked Fate

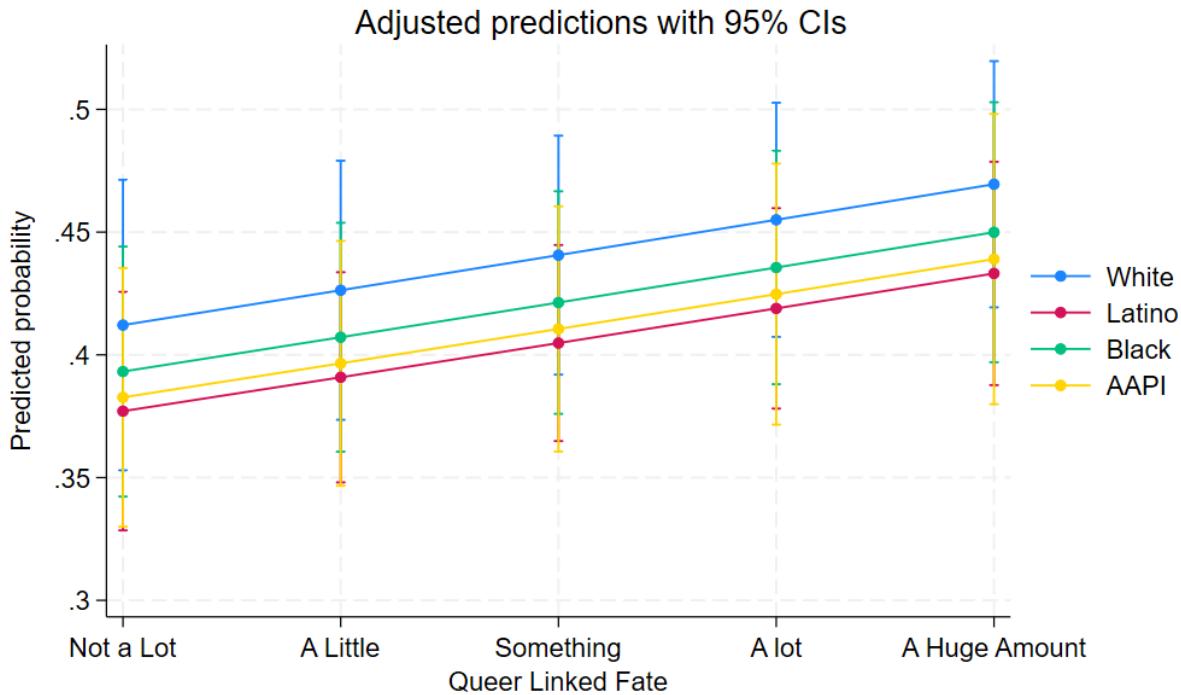


Figure 4: Predicted Increase in Activities at Different Levels of Linked Fate by Race

Figure 3 shows the predicted increase in how many activities a person might participate in based on their levels of linked fate. To facilitate the simulation of these predictions, I utilize the same specifications as in Figure 1, a white queer Woman residing in the Western United States, with average characteristics for the other covariates, and only allow linked fate to vary. As such Figure 4 follows the same specification, only dis-aggregating by the race categories in the CMPS. The results are similar to that contained for hypothesis one in terms of their predicted direction, however, the magnitude of the effects is much less, only about 10 percent.

Discussion and Conclusion

The above findings represent a vital first step in the systematic study of queer political behavior in the United States. They help to explain what motivates them to political action, and add to the literature on political behavior and queer politics by advancing a new theo-

retical model of group behavior amongst US queers. There are a few key takeaways from the presented models which can help social scientists systematically study queer behavior and provides a better foundation for scholars interested in this body of research. My analysis shows that the presented hypotheses hold in that there is a statistically significant increase in multiple different forms of political participation amongst queers who strongly feel that their life chances are tied to the well-being of the at-large group in the US.

My findings show that within queer individuals whose lives are more greatly tied to that of the group (having higher levels of linked fate), there is a 20-30 percent increase in their chance to vote, and they participate at a rate of roughly 10 percent more as they move up the linked fate scale. We can attribute these increases to the observed need to engage politically and work to shape the life chances of the group to which their own are so heavily tied. Additionally, when broken down by race, we see that this increase is consistent amongst all racial groups, showing that this effect is not an isolated incident, and is shared by the group at large.

Practically, this lends credence to my argument for the idea of a queer utility heuristic, the idea that individuals within the queer community are motivated toward political action based on how largely they feel their life chances are tied to that of the group. The underlying utility gained by queer people who share in the community is political action, and as legal and social battles surrounding queer identity continue in the United States, the politicization and polarization of queer group interests will likely strengthen these findings.

To conclude, I hope that there is greater attention to queer political behavior in the study of American Politics. While this paper provides a necessary step in advancing the agenda of research on US-based queer folks, more work is required to better understand the nexus between queer-linked fate and political participation. Future iterations of this agenda include further advancing this work, working to understand different functions of other forms of political behaviors amongst US-based queers, and seeking to deepen our understanding of the functions of queer-linked fate amongst the community at large. Multiple avenues are

exciting within this field of queer politics and political behavior that involve novel survey data. Working to disaggregate the community and assessing if they have a specifically linked fate with the group at large, or rather with their subgroup. Additionally, there needs to also be continual systematic studies of queer voting behavior, the policies and preferences that queer voters are supporting, and their practical impacts on policy outcomes.

Robustness Analyses

Table 3: Effect of Queer Linked Fate on Voting (Probit Regression)

Queer Linked Fate	0.15270*** (0.03234)
Woman	0.25446** (0.08463)
Non-Binary	0.16510 (0.16337)
Income	0.02963* (0.01249)
Age	0.29711*** (0.03314)
Latino	-0.41094*** (0.11022)
Black	-0.40640** (0.12915)
AAPI	-0.81183*** (0.15976)
Working	0.09467 (0.07938)
Trust in Federal Government	-0.07917 (0.06154)
Trust in Local Government	-0.02723 (0.06168)
Religiosity	-0.04432 (0.03253)
Percent Queer	-0.03792 (0.06024)
Race * Racial Linked Fate	0.10598** (0.03924)
Conservative Ideology	-0.14949*** (0.02886)
Education	0.23138*** (0.02846)
Regional Fixed Effects	X
Constant	-1.70441*** (0.41271)
Observations	1401
Pseudo R^2	0.233
AIC	1529.48712
BIC	1634.38595
Log lik.	-744.74356
Chi-squared	320.39923

Standard errors in parentheses

⁺ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 4: Effect of Queer Linked Fate on Participation (Binomial Regression)

Queer Linked Fate	0.05741*** (0.01633)
Woman	0.07545+ (0.04079)
Non-Binary	0.58026*** (0.08627)
Income	0.03935*** (0.00615)
Age	-0.10694*** (0.01548)
Latino	-0.12439* (0.05335)
Black	-0.05602 (0.06216)
AAPI	-0.07098 (0.07780)
Working	0.06907+ (0.04019)
Trust in Local Government	0.26703*** (0.03007)
Trust in Federal Government	0.11930*** (0.02985)
Religiosity	0.10967*** (0.01646)
Percent Queer	-0.06446* (0.03158)
Race * Racial Linked Fate	-0.06425*** (0.01919)
Conservative Ideology	-0.12876*** (0.01458)
Education	0.05339*** (0.01435)
Regional Fixed Effects	X
Constant	-1.16976*** (0.20844)
Observations	1401

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 5: Event Count of Activities (Negative Binomial Regression)

Queer Linked Fate	0.03423*
	(0.01502)
Woman	0.04673
	(0.03897)
Non-Binary	0.30692***
	(0.06522)
Income	0.02079***
	(0.00536)
Age	-0.05818***
	(0.01497)
Latino	-0.04910
	(0.04812)
Black	-0.01100
	(0.05711)
AAPI	-0.02221
	(0.07382)
Working	0.03910
	(0.03799)
Trust in Local Government	0.14404***
	(0.03034)
Trust in Federal Government	0.05708 ⁺
	(0.02986)
Religiosity	0.05292***
	(0.01600)
Percent Queer	-0.03708
	(0.02685)
Race * Racial Linked Fate	-0.03409 ⁺
	(0.01877)
Conservative Ideology	-0.07331***
	(0.01511)
Education	0.03186*
	(0.01332)
Constant	0.85690***
	(0.18520)
/	
lnalpha	-1.71142***
	(0.11467)
Observations	1401
Pseudo R^2	0.033
AIC	6376.32295
BIC	6486.46673
Log lik.	-3167.16148
Chi-squared	240.09344

Standard errors in parentheses

⁺ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 6: Event Count Number of Activities (Poisson Regress)

Queer Linked Fate	0.03416*
	(0.01464)
Woman	0.04990
	(0.03810)
Non-Binary	0.29628***
	(0.06464)
Income	0.02033***
	(0.00521)
Age	-0.05577***
	(0.01472)
Latino	-0.05341
	(0.04631)
Black	-0.01752
	(0.05492)
AAPI	-0.02129
	(0.06947)
Working	0.03894
	(0.03693)
Trust in Local Government	0.14407***
	(0.02986)
Trust in Federal Government	0.06388*
	(0.02966)
Religiosity	0.05463***
	(0.01549)
Percent Queer	-0.03681
	(0.02563)
Race * Racial Linked Fate	-0.03349 ⁺
	(0.01787)
Conservative Ideology	-0.07436***
	(0.01502)
Education	0.02874*
	(0.01278)
Regional Fixed Effects	X
Constant	0.84855***
	(0.17787)
Observations	1401
Pseudo R^2	0.059
AIC	6537.31864
BIC	6642.21747
Log lik.	-3248.65932
Chi-squared	280.57216

Standard errors in parentheses

⁺ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 7: Linear Probability Model and OLS Regression Coefficients

	LPM Voted	OLS Other Electoral Activities
Queer Linked Fate	0.04988*** (0.00983)	0.11750* (0.05623)
Woman	0.07836** (0.02514)	0.15484 (0.14240)
Non-Binary	0.04460 (0.05070)	1.24054*** (0.28890)
Income	0.00781* (0.00387)	0.08250*** (0.02098)
Age	0.09168*** (0.00939)	-0.22155*** (0.05332)
Latino	-0.13648*** (0.03446)	-0.26164 (0.18543)
Black	-0.12838*** (0.03876)	-0.12254 (0.21813)
AAPI	-0.24071*** (0.04604)	-0.15572 (0.27383)
Working	0.03279 (0.02431)	0.14711 (0.13679)
Trust in Federal Government	-0.02891 (0.01813)	0.24930* (0.11010)
Trust in Local Government	-0.00872 (0.01811)	0.55378*** (0.11134)
Religiosity	-0.01289 (0.00984)	0.22738*** (0.05918)
Percent Queer	-0.00869 (0.01993)	-0.13635 (0.09741)
Race * Racial Linked Fate	0.02723* (0.01105)	-0.13526* (0.06890)
Conservative Ideology	-0.04484*** (0.00841)	-0.25607*** (0.05031)
Education	0.07480*** (0.00881)	0.10688* (0.04992)
Regional Fixed Effects	X	X
Constant	-0.04185 (0.13013)	2.06908** (0.67233)
Observations	1401	1401
R^2	0.280	0.163

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

References

- Bejarano, Christina, Nadia E. Brown, Sarah Allen Gershon & Celeste Montoya. 2021. “Shared Identities: Intersectionality, Linked Fate, and Perceptions of Political Candidates.” *Political research quarterly* 74(4):970–985.
- Berelson, Bernard, Paul Felix Lazarsfeld & William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting : a study of opinion formation in a presidential campaign*. University of Chicago Press.
- Bernstein, Mary. 1997. “Celebration and Suppression: The Strategic Uses of Identity by the Lesbian and Gay Movement.” *The American journal of sociology* 103(3):531–565.
- Berry, Justin A., David Ebner & Michelle Cornelius. 2021a. “White identity politics: linked fate and political participation.” *Politics, groups identities* 9(3):519–537.
- Berry, Justin A., David Ebner & Michelle Cornelius. 2021b. “White identity politics: linked fate and political participation.” *Politics, groups identities* 9(3):519–537.
- Bureau, United States Census. 2020. “2020 Census Regions and Divisions of the United States.” .
- Campbell, A. & University of Michigan. Survey Research Center. 1980. *The American Voter*. University of Chicago Press. lc76021115.
- Carey, Tony E. & Mary-Kate Lizotte. 2023. “The Ties that Bind: Public Opinion and Linked Fate among Women of Color.” *Journal of women, politics policy* 44(1):5–19.
- Chan, Nathan Kar Ming & Francisco Jasso. 2023. “From Inter-Racial Solidarity to Action: Minority Linked Fate and African American, Latina/O, and Asian American Political Participation.” *Political behavior* 45(3):1097–1119.
- Dawson, Michael C. 1994. *Behind the mule : race and class in African-American politics :pbk*. Princeton University Press.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An economic theory of democracy*. New York: Harper Row.

- Gay, Claudine, Jennifer Hochschild & Ariel White. 2016. “Americans’ Belief in Linked Fate: Does the Measure Capture the Concept?” *Journal of race, ethnicity, and politics* 1(1):117–144.
- j. Morris, Bonnie. 2023. “A Brief History of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Social Movements.”.
- Junn, Jane & Natalie Masuoka. 2008. “Asian American Identity: Shared Racial Status and Political Context.” *Perspectives on politics* 6(4):729–740.
- Klandermans, P. G. 2014. “Identity Politics and Politicized Identities: Identity Processes and the Dynamics of Protest.” *Political psychology* 35(1):1–22.
- LEWIS, GREGORY B., MARC A. ROGERS & KENNETH SHERRILL. 2011. “Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Voters in the 2000 U.S. Presidential Election.” *Politics policy (Statesboro, Ga.)* 39(5):655–677.
- Masuoka, Natalie. 2006. “Together They Become One: Examining the Predictors of Panethnic Group Consciousness Among Asian Americans and Latinos.” *Social science quarterly* 87(5):993–1011.
- Miller, Arthur H., Patricia Gurin, Gerald Gurin & Oksana Malanchuk. 1981. “Group Consciousness and Political Participation.” *American journal of political science* 25(3):494–511.
- Moreau, Julie, Stephen Nuño-Pérez & Lisa M. Sanchez. 2019. “Intersectionality, Linked Fate, and LGBTQ Latinx Political Participation.” *Political research quarterly* 72(4):976–990.
- Sanchez, Gabriel, Natalie Masuoka & Brooke Abrams. 2019. “Revisiting the brown-utility heuristic: a comparison of Latino linked fate in 2006 and 2016.” *Politics, groups identities* 7(3):673–683.
- Sanchez, Gabriel R. & Natalie Masuoka. 2010. “Brown-Utility Heuristic? The Presence and Contributing Factors of Latino Linked Fate.” *Hispanic journal of behavioral sciences* 32(4):519–531.

Simon, Herbert A. 1985. "Human Nature in Politics: The Dialogue of Psychology with Political Science." *The American political science review* 79(2):293–304.

Tajfel, Henri. 1978. *Differentiation between social groups : studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations*. Published in cooperation with European Association of Experimental Social Psychology by Academic Press.

Tajfel, Henri & John C. Turner. 1979. "An integrative theory of intergroup-conflict." *The social psychology of intergroup relations* .

te Lien, Pei, M. Margaret Conway & Janelle Wong. 2004. *The Politics of Asian Americans*. 1 ed. Oxford: Routledge.

The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. 2019. "LGBT Demographic Data Interactive."

Tyson, Vanessa C. 2016. *Twists of Fate : Multiracial Coalitions and Minority Representation in the US House of Representatives*. 1 ed. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

Worthen, Meredith G. F. 2022. "Categorically Queer? An Exploratory Study of Identifying Queer in the USA." *Sexuality research social policy* 19(3):1090–1113.