

## 1 Introduction

*THE POLITICS OF DEMOCRATIC INCLUSION* seeks to contribute to our understanding of the processes and mechanisms by which traditionally underrepresented groups have and have not achieved political incorporation, representation, and influence—or what we refer to broadly as *democratic inclusion*—in American politics. The issue of democratic inclusion has been central to American politics since the Founding. The challenges are evident in the juxtaposed perceptions of America as a “nation of immigrants” on the one hand, and the historical “dilemma” of race (Myrdal 1944) on the other. The former suggests an open, pluralistic system in which diverse groups, including successive waves of immigrants, are eventually able to achieve status and influence in the political system, while the latter emphasizes that the political position of disadvantaged groups (particularly, but certainly not only, African Americans) remains structurally and centrally problematic and unequal. Using different lenses and considering distinct phenomena, the chapters in this volume seek to determine how various institutions have or, more characteristically, have not served as mechanisms for democratic inclusion in the United States. The analytic approach of this volume gives particular attention to the role of institutions in structuring the potential for political incorporation of traditionally disadvantaged groups. Taken together, the chapters evaluate and advance our understanding of the ways in which the structure, processes, rules, and context of the American political order encourage, mediate, and hamper the representation and incorporation of traditionally disadvantaged groups.

The politics of democratic inclusion are central to an understanding of the quality of American democracy. The standards of political equality and popular sovereignty imply broad and deep representation of the governed. Throughout American history, the degree to which these standards are achieved by traditionally disadvantaged groups, such as women, ethnic and racial minorities, and immigrants has been a persistent question and controversy. The last half-century or so has witnessed significant strides in the incorporation of many such groups into the mainstream of American political life. At the same time, unevenness and limitations in that incorporation continue to characterize American politics. Not coincidentally, recent decades also have seen the emergence of a rich body of research examining the political activities and experiences of disadvantaged groups where once attention to such issues was sparse and underdeveloped (important exceptions include Key 1949; Myrdal 1944). There has not yet been, however, an effort to systematically consider and take stock of the recent past, this literature, and its many implications. Now is a propitious time to step back and reflect on the current state of knowledge.

In bringing together work addressing various groups and institutional arenas, this volume provides valuable evaluations of the state of research on democratic inclusion. Unlike typical edited volumes, the chapters do not present a slice of a related research endeavor. Instead, the authors aspire to offer broad, “big picture” assessments of the ways in which particular institutions and behaviors have, or have not, served as mechanisms for the representation of certain disadvantaged interests in American politics. More than simply literature reviews, these papers are critical syntheses of the state of research in specific areas. The chapters consider a number of related questions: What has been the record of democratic inclusion? How have institutions, group characteristics, and historical context (among many other factors) shaped the process of democratic inclusion for different groups? What have changes over time and across groups meant for democratic inclusion? What overarching conclusions about democratic inclusion can be drawn from the literature? What are the questions that should drive our future research, and why? By providing theoretical and empirical synthesis, the chapters in this volume should be of interest to anyone concerned with the incorporation and representation of disadvantaged groups. More broadly, by focusing our attention on the ways in which American political institutions may systematically facilitate or hamper democratic inclusion, this volume requires consideration from any scholar seeking to understand how American politics really functions.

The primary argument of this volume is that an understanding of the politics of democratic inclusion requires close attention to the role of institutions. As we argue below, institutions determine the context (incentives, constraints, opportunities) in which political elites respond to demands for inclusion by disadvantaged groups. If we want to know, for example, why there are so few blacks in Congress, or immigrant political mobilization is low, or education policy fails to serve the needs of the poor, the institutional context should be a central focus of inquiry.

The analytic approach distinguishes this volume from much of the previous research on democratic inclusion, in large part because that literature has been overwhelmingly interested in mass behavior and attitudes. The character, experience, and behavior of the disadvantaged groups themselves are not unimportant. Indeed, we maintain that an understanding of democratic inclusion must be attentive to inter- and intra-group diversity. How institutional structure will affect any specific group’s progress toward political incorporation is in part a function of the group’s experiences and characteristics. Yet, even in the analysis and examination of group diversity, the chapters in this volume emphasize the role of institutions in structuring and constructing group identity and behavior as well.

The remainder of this introduction proceeds as follows. We begin with some definitions, highlighting the importance of attention to group diversity and the many forms of democratic inclusion. We then proceed to (1) demonstrate that the previous work in this area has generally, though not entirely, underemphasized the role of institutions, (2) argue for the utility of institutional analysis for understanding the politics of disadvantaged groups, and

(3) illustrate how the papers in this volume contribute to our understanding of democratic inclusion through the lens of institutional analysis.

## DEFINING TERMS

The very goals and conceptualization of this project immediately present some definitional questions. These are not minor issues: The failure to clearly define terms can hamper the development of knowledge across groups and institutions. In this section, we provide a set of broad guidelines as to how this volume in general approaches various concepts, while simultaneously arguing that these definitions remain contested, as the diversity of work between these covers attests both implicitly and in some cases, explicitly.

### *What Groups?*

When we examine the mechanisms and institutions by which disadvantaged groups seek political inclusion, what sort of groups do we have in mind? Our interest here is in understanding how those social groups traditionally *without power* (or with relatively little power) seek and achieve greater power and influence in the American political system. Thus, within the American context, this definition draws our attention to groups identified by an ascriptive status, such as race, ethnicity, and gender, as well as to particular economic and immigrant groups. As befits the American historical experience, racial and ethnic minorities and immigrants tend to be center stage in this analysis. To a lesser extent, the authors also consider the experience of other disadvantaged groups, such as women and the poor.<sup>1</sup>

To some degree, these and other group identities and categorizations may blur or overlap. Latinos, for example, may be thought of as both an ethnic group and in some cases, an immigrant population. Black women often struggle with the multiplicative effects of their various identities. Indeed, this blurring may be of such a degree that traditional categorizations no longer “work analytically, politically, or normatively as they used to,” in the words of Jennifer Hochschild (this volume). While most of the authors work within traditional categories, Hochschild’s chapter calls our attention to the ways in which many politically, economically, and socially relevant differences may take place *within* groups and across other sorts of characteristics and experiences other than blunt (but increasingly blurred) racial categories.

Many of the chapters also remind us that important inter- and intra-group diversity shapes our ability to draw broad conclusions and develop an encompassing theory of democratic inclusion. Chong and Rogers, for example, note that the multiple ethnic identities of new minorities complicate our original conceptions of group consciousness developed largely from the black experience. Both the Jones-Correa and the Andersen and Cohen chapters highlight the diversity of immigrant interests vis-à-vis democratic inclusion deriving from varying ties to home countries, English-language skills, and motivations for immigration. Thus, we are interested in this volume, broadly speaking, in disadvantaged groups, particularly racial minorities and

immigrants, while seeking to incorporate an understanding of the substantial variation both between and within the groups that fall under our definition.

### *What Is Democratic Inclusion?*

Our goal is to consider how the institutions of American *democracy* bring about or hinder the *inclusion* of disempowered groups into the political system. Broadly speaking, we view democratic inclusion as the incorporation, influence, and representation of various disadvantaged social groups within democratic institutions in the United States. We are specifically interested in the processes, mechanisms, and behaviors by which traditionally disadvantaged groups pursue power and influence in American politics. As the organizers of this project, we purposely invited papers from authors who could address various aspects of and arenas for democratic inclusion. The resulting essays both conceive of the goal of inclusion in various ways (e.g., formal citizenship rights, active political participation, presence in Congress, substantive policy outcomes, social or economic parity) and consider divergent means to inclusion (e.g., through political parties, voting, the courts, and so on).

We might think about various forms of democratic inclusion as benchmarks (see the Andersen and Cohen chapter for a similar argument). For example, Schmidt et al. (2002) suggest that full incorporation into democratic politics involves (1) full access to participation, (2) representation in important decision-making processes and institutions, (3) influence in/power over government decisions, (4) adoption of public policies that address group concerns or interests, and (5) socioeconomic parity. Implicit in these benchmarks is a notion of linearity or cumulateness; that is, that most of the time, a group must achieve one prior to the other, and that as one is achieved the later stages become more likely.<sup>2</sup>

With the exception of the final benchmark, the Schmidt et al. (2002) conceptual framework tends to focus on democratic inclusion as a characteristic of the political system. As such, this construction is somewhat distinct from the focus of much of the literature on democratic inclusion as a characteristic of the group. For example, the political system might allow full formal access (benchmark 1), but scholars have tended to examine whether and why disadvantaged groups are less likely to participate than other citizens. Presence of group members in decision-making institutions (benchmark 2) is a characteristic of the political system; research has often focused on whether and why a group is less likely to have members who achieve the skills and experiences necessary to emerge as viable candidates. Adoption of public policies that address group interests (benchmark 4) is another political system characteristic; research has tended to examine whether a group can attain the necessary prerequisite of a certain degree of group consciousness of shared concerns and an ability to articulate an agenda. The traditional emphasis of the literature on political attitudes and behaviors thus reflects an interest in democratic inclusion as a characteristic of those seeking incorporation. A unique contribution of this volume is that the papers consider democratic inclusion as a

characteristic both of the groups themselves *and* of the political system as a whole, with particular attention given to the typically less-examined latter.

The first of the Schmidt et al. (2002) benchmarks—access to participation—has been the focus of considerable research, as various chapters within testify. Certain aspects of formal access, at least formal access to the electoral process, are now largely assured by constitutional amendment and voting rights legislation. Yet, as the Jones-Correa and the Andersen and Cohen chapters detail, immigrant populations still face substantive formal (not to mention informal) barriers to legal access to political participation. Moreover, in terms of democratic inclusion as a characteristic of the group, what full access to participation may mean and whether it is accomplished in arenas outside the electoral process is much less clear (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995). The chapters in this volume provide ample evidence of the inability of many groups to take full advantage of formal access to political participation (see, e.g., Leighley, this volume, on voter turnout).

The literature on representation, specifically descriptive representation (the second Schmidt et al. [2002] benchmark), is wide-ranging and rich, with most of the evidence finding substantial under-representation. The Canon and the Kittilson and Tate chapters draw our attention to the myriad causes of this under-representation, ranging from the legal and political context of legislative elections (e.g., reapportionment) to the role of party institutions in candidate recruitment. Kittilson and Tate, for example, conclude that a mass-driven (rather than an elite-driven) model of party responsiveness to minorities best characterizes the American experience, emphasizing that the activities of groups themselves can be influential in shaping democratic inclusion. At the same time, they attribute this difference with the United Kingdom, where the process is more elite driven, to institutional differences, particularly federalism and the decentralized party politics that flow from it, in the United States. Thus once again, the processes of democratic inclusion appear to be determined in large part by the institutional structure of the political system as a whole.

Beyond these first two benchmarks, both the amount of research and the evidence of achieved incorporation become thinner. It is thus particularly notable that these aspects of democratic inclusion attract particular attention from our contributors. For example, papers in this volume seek to understand how social movements (Costain) and political parties (Frymer, Kittilson and Tate) may help or hinder access not only to political positions (benchmark 2) but to the policy agenda (benchmark 4) as well. Canon explores how group members in political office have (and have not) been able to achieve substantial influence and power over decision making (benchmark 3). Others (Clarke, Meier, Canon, Lovell and McCann, Conley) ask how and why specific institutions have and have not adopted and implemented policies that address group interests (benchmark 4). Finally, all contributors question the potential for achievement of the final benchmark, socioeconomic parity, providing ample evidence of the failure to achieve this goal thus far (see, e.g., Andersen and Cohen, Jones-Correa, and especially Hochschild).

As this discussion illustrates, democratic inclusion is multifaceted and complex. Asking whether and to what extent a group is incorporated into the American political system directs our attention to phenomenon as diverse as campaign rhetoric, voter turnout, school board policy, and congressional representation. While by no means exhausting the possible indicators, the papers in this volume offer insight into a wide variety of aspects of democratic inclusion, helping paint a broad and nuanced picture of the many possibilities and challenges.

## INATTENTION TO INSTITUTIONS

There have been countless studies, including many edited volumes, addressing various aspects of democratic inclusion. Many of the better known and most influential studies in political science focus on attitudes and behavior, typically drawing on survey and experimental research.<sup>3</sup> Virtually all focus on individual beliefs, opinions, and perceptions; occasionally they note *social* contexts, but seldom, if ever, institutional context and impacts. In contrast, this volume is fairly unique in its focus on aspects of democratic inclusion including, but mostly extending beyond, mass behavior.

In addition to the large and important literature on political attitudes and participation of and related to disadvantaged groups, there is an equally large and august research tradition relating to the prospects for democratic inclusion within the American political system more broadly. One way to conceive of this tradition is in terms of three primary analytical approaches to the study of democratic inclusion: pluralist ethnic integration, class stratification, and racial hierarchy (see Schmidt et al. 2002 for a full discussion of this delineation). While this influential literature has been more attentive to institutional factors than the strictly behavioral school, we believe important work remains to be done in thinking through the role of institutions in shaping democratic inclusion within this line of research as well.

The *pluralist ethnic integration model*, exemplified by Robert Dahl's (1961) classic *Who Governs?*, describes "outsider" ethnic and racial groups as able to make their way into positions of influence in political institutions by organizing cohesively, acting strategically, and eventually becoming members of governing coalitions in those policy arenas most relevant to their interests. Depicting a political system relatively open to new groups seeking influence, this model assumes a plurality of political interests and multiple access/decision points such that no single political arena or interest will dominate all aspects of public life in a given polity (e.g., Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984; Sonenshein 1993). Much of the participation/behavior research as well as the research on descriptive and substantive representation fall within this genre (for a critique, see Hero 1992).

A second model adds *class stratification* as an essential component for understanding the relationship between social groups and the political system (see, e.g., Stone 1980). A major claim of this approach is that capturing most of the key political offices in a polity does not necessarily make a social group an equal partner in the polity's "governing coalition." Because

many important decisions governing key aspects of the polity's allocation of resources and future development may lie outside the confines of the formal governmental institutions, particularly in a polity that combines a market-based economic system with the relatively limited authority granted to local governing institutions, as is typical in the United States, access to formal political roles is not sufficient for attaining actual political power. In short, the class stratification model argues that the political and governmental institutions in a polity are not autonomous but are embedded in a wider network of social, economic, and cultural forces. Political incorporation into a governing coalition must take this broader understanding of political power into account.

The central argument of a third model, the *racial hierarchy* model, is that *racialized* identity operates as an independent force in structuring the relationships between social groups and the political system in the United States (Pinderhughes 1987). A claim of this model is that the U.S. political system was relatively open for white ethnic immigrant groups from Europe, but functions in a decidedly and uniquely exclusive way to diminish the political influence of blacks, as well as other racial minorities. Identifying a substantial contrast between political *ethnicity* among white ethnics and *racial* hierarchy, this model finds white ethnic immigrants able to overcome initial prejudice and political opposition to attain political incorporation, while blacks continue to operate politically under severe constraints more than two hundred years after their arrival in the country. Recent examples of the racial hierarchy model include Hero's (1992, 1998) work on two-tiered pluralism and Kim's (2000) exploration of "racial triangulation" of Asian Americans in relationship to blacks and whites.

However one perceives the accuracy, completeness, and overall utility of the three dominant models, they share an important trait: They tend to pay rather little attention to institutional factors. To be sure, important aspects of these traditions give some attention to institutions. The fragmented American political structure, rooted in federalism and separation of powers, is essential to the "multiple access/decision points" element so central to the pluralist ethnic integration model, for example. Other studies (particularly of urban politics) consider the impact of electoral structure, such as at-large versus district elections, on the election and thus the "descriptive representation" of racial minorities, but the relevance for other dimensions of inclusion is not clear.

Thus, we argue, our central ways of thinking about democratic inclusion have tended to be somewhat inattentive to the role of institutions. This deficiency is somewhat striking given the centrality of institutional analysis to much of the work on American politics. We envision this volume as an attempt to encourage greater attention to the role of institutions in our theorizing about and analysis of democratic inclusion.

## INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF DEMOCRATIC INCLUSION

Students of American politics have been profoundly conscious of the importance of institutions (e.g., March and Olsen 1984). In *The Federalist Papers*,

Madison describes the central goal of the American Constitution as the creation of institutions and structures to curb detrimental behavior, taking the presence and pervasiveness of interests (factions) as a given, while also assuming that certain ideas are legitimate and widely accepted. Rules and practices—be they informal norms, mediating institutions such as parties, or formal governmental institutions—structure interactions, confer power and legitimacy, reward certain skills and resources and devalue others, create incentives, encourage particular behaviors, and otherwise go a long way toward shaping—even determining—the outcome of political conflicts over interests and ideas. Yet even institutions motivated by the most democratic and inclusive of goals may create structures that hamper the cause of equal and broad participation and influence in politics (see Morone 1998). If we want to understand how American politics works, we must be attentive to institutions. It follows, then, that if we want to understand democratic inclusion in American politics, institutions must be center stage in our analysis.

Heclo (1994) has insightfully contended that there are three pillars of politics: ideas, interests, and institutions. In Heclo's framework, *ideas* are "mental constructions"; *interests* refer to "self-interested and purposive pursuit of material goals"; and *institutions* are "enduring rules, procedures, and organizations that tend to structure individual conduct" (1994, 375). Politics occurs in the interaction of the three: "ideas tell interests what to mean," "interests tell institutions what to do," and "institutions tell ideas how to survive" (1994, 383). This framework is useful in thinking about the previous literature on democratic inclusion, including the literature's limited attention to institutions. The pluralist ethnic integration model, which has arguably dominated the literature on democratic inclusion, essentially argues that as weak entities typically lacking organizational resources, minority *interests* are seldom able to "tell institutions what to do," or at least not able to effectively tell them very much for very long (cf. Stone 1980, Hero 1992, Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). But interest-based approaches emphasize the nature (weakness) of interests rather more than specifying how various institutional factors and processes also affect minority influence. The class stratification model suggests that interests may not be able to tell certain important institutions, particularly economic institutions, what to do. However, that model often neglects important *political* or *governmental* institutions as such. The racial hierarchy model recognizes that the prevalent *ideas* in American politics commonly make assumptions about, or assume away, racial, class and other inequalities relevant to inclusion (see, e.g., Smith 1993). Yet while the racial hierarchy model indeed stresses ideas, it has tended to say little about how institutional context may alter or channel those ideas.

The argument of this volume might be conceived of as an amended version of the last of Heclo's points: "Institutions tell ideas, *and interests*, how to survive." Based on their authority, organization, structure, and procedures, institutions have implications for whether interests and ideas will be more or less likely to be partly or fully incorporated, and how sustainable they will be. In short, institutions structure politics (Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992). How and the extent to which they structure certain kinds of politics and



policies emerging from the interests, needs, concerns, and ideas of particular (types of) disadvantaged groups is at the core of what this volume seeks to illuminate.

## CONTRIBUTION OF THIS VOLUME

We have argued that the role of institutions has not been directly and adequately addressed in the analysis of democratic inclusion. The papers in this volume are an effort to *begin* such an analytical undertaking. We do not claim that these chapters provide a complete institutional analysis of democratic inclusion, or that institutions are the sole focus of these authors' evaluations (nor do we believe they should be). What these papers do at minimum is provide a critical synthesis of existing research, highlighting the central role of various democratic institutions. In doing so, they reveal the (mis)match and/or (in)capacity of various institutions with group interests, beliefs, and goals. They begin to point the way to research strategies that are macro-oriented, to complement the prevailing micro-orientation of the research. Similarly, they emphasize context—institutional context primarily, but also social and other contexts as well.

The volume is organized to reflect our analytical focus. In the first part, *Diversity Within and Across Groups*, the various chapters examine the multiplicity of definitions, experiences, and concerns that characterize some of the different groups for which democratic inclusion is a goal. In the next two parts—*Mediating Institutions* and *Governing Institutions*—authors consider the ways in which institutions ranging from social movements and interest organizations to school boards and federal courts have both facilitated and hindered democratic inclusion. As indicated by our multiple references to the chapters in this volume throughout our discussion above, the authors' arguments overlap and complement each other both within and across the sections. In this section, we provide an overview of each part, while keeping in mind that all of the chapters speak to our overarching argument regarding attentiveness to intra- and inter-group complexity and the central role of institutions.

### *Diversity within and across Groups*

As we have argued above, an important first step to understanding the politics of democratic inclusion is to think theoretically and critically about diversity both within and between excluded groups. The chapters in this section raise crucial questions about group identity, interests, and diversity. Do our traditional ways of thinking about racial groupings no longer help us to understand the politics of democratic inclusion in the twenty-first century? How does variation within one kind of group (e.g., “immigrants” or “Hispanics”) affect processes of inclusion and incorporation? How can we best conceive of group consciousness among different disadvantaged populations? Can our models simply be extrapolated from one social group to another? One barrier to the development of a coherent literature on democratic inclusion is the degree to which different disadvantaged groups have been studied in isolation from each other. The papers in the first part of this volume address this problem by

confronting questions of group definition directly and indirectly. In doing so, they point to important definitional issues with which any attempt to build a coherent literature must contend.

Each of these chapters confirm (1) the need to be attentive to important inter- and intra-group differences in understanding the processes of democratic inclusion and (2) the central role that institutions play in shaping group definition and delineation. Hochschild argues that the reality that skin tone may explain a great deal more variation in social, political, and economic achievement than do traditional racial or ethnic demarcations has important implications for how we think about who is disempowered and what that might mean for political representation. She claims that the ways in which political institutions, particularly the U.S. Census, solicit and use racial self-identification have clear political consequences in terms of recognition, legitimization, and representation, not to mention access to specific material policy benefits. In Jones-Correa's careful evaluation of immigrant incorporation, he recognizes the considerable variation in immigrant experience and stresses the different processes of inclusion across time, place, and immigrant group. His essay shows how formal rules and practices (e.g., voting rights acts, naturalization laws), together with other factors, contribute to an increasingly complicated set of immigrant identities (see also the Andersen and Cohen chapter). Moreover, the process of incorporation is clearly mediated by political parties and other organizational institutions in ways that are not always conducive to effective democratic inclusion (for a similar conclusion vis-à-vis parties and racial groups, see the Frymer chapter). Chong and Rogers call for an understanding of group consciousness that is attentive to its multiple dimensions, particularly common fate and support for group autonomy, while simultaneously delineating the ways in which an understanding of group consciousness developed from the black experience may require significant and appropriate revision when applied to other racial and social groups. Accurate measurement of consciousness is important as it appears to be a crucial psychological prerequisite for effective participation within political institutions.

### *Mediating Institutions*

Social movements, political parties, and interest groups link citizens to the formal institutions of government. Thus the degree to which these institutions facilitate or hamper the influence and representation of disadvantaged groups is a crucial aspect of democratic inclusion. The papers in this section detail the ways in which such mediating institutions interact with governing institutions and the characteristics of the groups themselves to shape the potential for and reality of democratic inclusion. For example, Costain argues that social movements must be understood primarily in terms of who uses them as vehicles for attaining political influence—the disempowered and excluded—rather than by the tactics they use, as is the case in recent work on contentious politics. Such a reorientation of the literature (in many ways a return to traditional approaches to movements) focuses attention on the ways in which social movements as unique institutions shape and mediate group demands

on the political system, and gives greater urgency to questions of how and why movements succeed and fail.

As Frymer points out in his chapter, political science generally has held that political parties, in their pursuit of broad electoral coalitions, socialize and mobilize disadvantaged social groups to the benefit of the cause of democratic inclusion. This view, however, neglects the ways in which institutional structure—majoritarian elections, minority-protecting institutions (e.g., design of the Senate, supermajority requirements in legislatures), and the two-party system—create (in many cases, purposively) disincentives for the representation of the interests of racial minorities. Indeed, several chapters highlight the institutional incentives that lead strategic political parties to fail to (1) include race on the campaign agenda (Frymer), (2) facilitate the election of minority candidates (Kittilson and Tate), and (3) provide voter mobilization for racial minorities, the very groups that most benefit from such efforts (Leighley). Finally, Andersen and Cohen suggest how political institutions (such as federalism) and the structure and nature of civic and interest (mediating) institutions, along with the characteristics of the groups themselves, interact to shape democratic inclusion for immigrant groups. Moving beyond the traditional focus on political parties as the mechanisms for immigrant incorporation, they inquire into the role played by other mediating institutions, such as labor unions, religious organizations, and civic groups (see also Jones-Correa on this same point).

### *Governing Institutions*

How can we understand the ways in which governing institutions in the United States have (or more characteristically, have not) provided for democratic inclusion of disadvantaged groups? Together, the chapters in this section examine an uncommonly broad collection of American governing institutions ranging from school boards to the presidency. While diverse in scope and power, each of these institutions has a potentially central role to play in democratic inclusion. In some cases, this contribution is obvious, such as the capacity of Congress to legislate nationally on issues of great importance to disadvantaged groups. But such underexamined institutions as school boards are also critical; as Meier notes, the education system is the source of the necessary skills for effective political participation by underprivileged groups. As a result, access to educational opportunities has its greatest effect on the prospects for democratic inclusion of the most disadvantaged members of society.

What is clear from each chapter is that democratic inclusion is not simply a function of the goodwill of those individuals who happen to occupy various elected and appointed offices, but is determined in large part by the incentives and opportunities afforded by specific institutional arrangements. At the local level, Clarke claims political institutions are characterized by what she terms *splintering*, an increasing fragmentation and “unbundling” of political authority coupled with a growing separation between residents and local political power as a result of both economic and political change. These developments are so profound that our previous assumptions about democratic

inclusion processes at the local level may be inadequate in the present context. Both Meier and Clarke illustrate that local political institutions are clearly central to democratic inclusion but have implications we do not yet fully understand; institutional choices seemingly unrelated to democratic inclusion (federalism, state and local relationships, school district structures and processes) can have significant consequences for the representation of minority interests.

At the national level, the representation of minority interests is similarly mediated by the particular shape and character of those institutions. Canon's thorough survey of the congressional literature highlights the ways in which rules and structures (e.g., reapportionment, voting rights, reelection demands, campaign finance reform, single-member districts) shape the politics of democratic inclusion in American legislatures. Conley similarly notes the institutional constraints on and opportunities for democratic inclusion that presidents face. The president's role as "nation-maintainer," for example, may push presidents toward policies that privilege domestic tranquility over racial justice; whereas "saving the Union" might have led Lincoln to do more for blacks than he would have otherwise, the same unifying impetus might lead other presidents to downplay racial discrimination in the name of national peace and order (e.g., every president from Reconstruction through at least the middle of the twentieth century). By virtue of their much-vaunted independence, we might expect the courts to be the most free to facilitate the inclusion of the disadvantaged groups; the characterization of courts as countermajoritarian mechanisms for progressive change is a dearly held American belief. Lovell and McCann challenge this depiction, focusing on the need to understand the judicial system in terms not of its independence but of its institutionally constructed interdependence within the separation of powers system. As a result, courts have functioned largely to replicate and reinforce the prevailing wisdom, rather than as unique instigators or supporters of disadvantaged populations.

We will let readers draw their own conclusions from the arguments and evidence presented by our contributors. Suffice it to say, as a whole, the chapters in this volume paint a picture of democratic inclusion in the United States as a difficult, complex, and contested process. Opportunities for inclusion exist and real progress can be identified. Yet the barriers and disincentives are also quite real, and many of them stem not from a lack of good will (although certainly that is a factor as well) but from the incentive structures created by the institutions of American government, which often function to exclude more than to include. Understanding these dynamics can help us achieve a more thorough picture of the prospects for a full and equal American democracy.

## NOTES

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the Program in American Democracy (<http://www.nd.edu/~amdemoc/>), established by the College of Arts and Letters and faculty of the Department of Political Science to further the understanding of democratic politics and policy making in the United States. We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of Notre Dame's Dean of the College of Arts and Letters, Department of Political Science, Henkels Lecture Series, African and African American Studies Program, Gender Studies Program, Institute for Latino Studies, and John W. Gullivan Program in Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy. The conference was organized by Peri E. Arnold, Rodney E. Hero, Alvin B. Tillery, and Christina Wolbrecht, all of whom also served as editors for this volume. Ericka Benavides provided invaluable editorial assistance. We thank the anonymous reviewers for their careful and excellent feedback, and our editors at Temple, Peter Wissoker and Alex Holzman, for the enthusiasm, attention, and guidance they provided this project.

1. The focus of the papers in this volume on race, ethnicity, and immigrant status should not be taken to suggest that other groups, such as women or the poor, have faced any less of a struggle in their pursuit of democratic inclusion.

2. Some critics (e.g., Linda Chavez or Thomas Sowell) would suggest that this order is incorrect, indeed probably reversed. That is, they would argue that empirically the most "successful" racial/ethnic groups have focused on economic and social achievement first, and that political influence then followed. And these writers often insist that this is how it *should* be. They also argue that once the former is achieved the latter is less pressing. Moreover, such writers often claim that individuals should think of themselves as individuals, and not as members of groups, particularly racial/ethnic groups.

3. Examples include both monographs (Dawson 1994, 2001; Hochschild 1995; Kinder and Sanders 1996; de la Garza et al. 1992; Lien 2001; Tate 1993, 2003) and edited volumes (Peterson 1995; Sears, Sidanius, and Bobo 2000).

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# I. DIVERSITY WITHIN AND ACROSS GROUPS

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HERO AND WOLBRECHT write in the introduction to this volume that “an important first step to understanding the politics of democratic inclusion is to think theoretically and critically about diversity both within and between excluded groups” (9). The chapters in this first section of the volume successfully respond to this call in myriad ways. All three chapters raise important (and long overdue) questions about the constitutive elements of group membership. Indeed, while reaching their conclusions using a variety of approaches, the voices presented in this section speak with unanimity in proclaiming that political scientists must pay closer attention to the relevant differences between groups (e.g., how and when they were constructed) when building theories about the process of democratic inclusion. At the same time, these chapters highlight the importance of grappling with intra-group distinctions when thinking about the pathways that lead to democratic inclusion. In other words, all of the authors share a belief that variation within groups is so significant that scholars must begin to think about the breakdown of the ascriptive hierarchies that signify exclusion as a process that occurs in multiple stages. Finally, in keeping with the overarching theme of this volume, the chapters in this section all identify the central role that both formal and informal institutions play in shaping the relevant distinctions within and across groups. The following passages explore these connections more thoroughly and establish links to other sections of this volume.

Michael Jones-Correa’s chapter follows in the tradition of a prominent group of scholars associated with the University of Chicago’s sociology department in the 1920s. Like the central figures of this circle, who gave us the first systematic studies of the experiences of new immigrants (Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1925; Wirth 1928), Jones-Correa is at the forefront of a new movement in political

science to identify the factors promoting the incorporation of the twenty-five million immigrants who have arrived in the United States since 1970. At the same time, Jones-Correa's chapter represents a distinct break with the legacy of the Chicago sociologists.

The studies produced by the Chicago scholars uniformly viewed the experience of their subjects through the lens of "Americanization" (Park 1950). In other words, as Mary Waters (1990) writes, "the belief that assimilation should occur as a function of length of residence in the United States [abounds in these studies]" (4). A generation of political scientists (Merton 1957; Dahl 1961; Wolfinger 1972) influenced by the Chicago school argued that the competitive party system was the lynchpin of this Americanization process. While Jones-Correa still sees a role for political parties, he rejects the view that they remain the primary force shaping the experience of new immigrants. He joins Andersen and Cohen (in the section entitled *Mediating Institutions*) in a call for the discipline to pay closer attention to the role other institutions (particularly immigration laws and other rules of the game) play in the incorporation of new immigrants. Moreover, by identifying a "paradox of contemporary immigrant political incorporation" (75), which he defines as a political reality that leaves new immigrants "simultaneously more and less incorporated than perhaps ever before" (75), Jones-Correa echoes the warnings contained in Paul Frymer's chapter about how the normal functioning of the system can sometimes work against democratic inclusion. Finally, Jones-Correa's contention that we must be sensitive to the fact that racial and ethnic diversity (including the existence of multiple identities) within the ranks of the new immigrants generates distinct processes of democratic inclusion connects very well with themes raised by the other two chapters in this section.

The chapter by Dennis Chong and Reuel Rogers, for example, joins Jones-Correa in challenging orthodoxy. A series of important studies (Verba and Nie 1972; Miller et al. 1981; Shingles 1981) in the late 1960s and 1970s found that African Americans who exhibited a strong group consciousness were more likely to participate in politics. This view was the dominant approach to understanding the foundations of African American political behavior in the 1980s. During the last decade, a number of researchers (Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Tate 1993; Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995) initiated a paradigm shift by arguing that group consciousness has only a marginal effect (if any) on African American political behavior. Through a reanalysis of data from the 1984 National Black Election Study, Chong and Rogers argue that group consciousness does play a significant role in motivating African Americans to participate in politics. It is important to note, however, that their findings do not simply represent a return to the view of group consciousness articulated in earlier studies. On the contrary, they present



a far more nuanced account of group consciousness—one that recognizes its multi-dimensionality and why it matters—than do the classic works in the field.

Another important contribution of Chong and Rogers' chapter is found in their cautionary tale about exporting frameworks used to study the African American experience to Latinos and Asian Americans. Indeed, Chong and Rogers join Paul Frymer (in Part II) and David T. Canon (in Part III) in suggesting that the African American experience is somewhat exceptional. Finally, in calling for more research into the foundations of group consciousness among distinct subgroups within the Latino and Asian American communities, Chong and Rogers echo themes extant in Jones-Correa's chapter.

Like W.E.B. Du Bois (1903), who identified the "color-line" as "the problem of the twentieth century" (3), Jennifer Hochschild is fundamentally concerned with the link between skin color and the production of ascriptive hierarchies. Du Bois would likely take comfort in Hochschild's assertion that "conventional racial and ethnic categories no longer do as much work analytically, politically, or normatively as they used to" (19). However, he would be equally likely to find disheartening Hochschild's claim that a "skin-color hierarchy," with lighter-skinned people at the top and darker-skinned people on the bottom, remains a predictor of life chances for Americans.

In arguing for a unique heuristic for understanding the process of democratic inclusion regardless of differences across group boundaries, Hochschild's chapter is distinct. At the same time, however, her focus on the role of institutions in shaping the universe of choices for persons living the realities of America's "skin-color hierarchy" ties her to the other authors in this volume. Indeed, to some extent her emphasis on the role the U.S. Census plays in generating identity and shaping our understanding of outcomes links her to Andersen and Cohen's chapter in Part II. Moreover, Hochschild's concern for the varied experiences of persons who share ascriptive categories but reside on different locations within the "skin-color hierarchy" echoes themes raised by the other two chapters in this section about the impact of diversity within groups.

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