2021

The Elderly Voter as Collateral Damage: The Consequences of Voter Restriction on Elderly American Voter Turnout

Mia Warshofsky
University of Central Florida

THE ELDERLY VOTER AS COLLATERAL DAMAGE: THE CONSEQUENCES OF VOTER RESTRICTION ON ELDERLY AMERICAN VOTER TURNOUT

by

MIA R. WARSHOFSKY
B.A. University of Central Florida, 2017

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
in the School of Politics, Security, and International Affairs
in the College of Sciences
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Fall Term
2021

Major Professor: Kelsey Larsen

ABSTRACT

Voting is an indispensable feature of American democracy. Voting amplifies the voice of the electorate. Not voting disempowers individuals and communities. Despite protective legislation such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965, many Americans experience electoral difficulties today. Following record-breaking turnout in the 2020 presidential election and under the guise of election security, some Republican lawmakers have introduced and supported legislation that restricts the ability of many Americans to vote. Research on communities of color, low-income communities, and disabled communities demonstrates the inhibitive effect of these measures. In contrast, conventional wisdom claims that older voters are more likely to vote than younger voters. One theory to explain this disparity is that older voters face fewer obstacles to voting. This thesis investigates the validity of that claim by comparing voter turnout, reasons for not voting, and reported difficulty voting in the 2020 American presidential election. Using an intersectional approach, this thesis hypothesizes that elderly Americans face additional challenges voting as the effects of age compound the marginalization of other identities. In a series of logistic regressions conducted using data from the American National Election Studies and the Cooperative Election Study in 2020, this thesis finds that elderly voters are more likely to have participated in the 2020 presidential election. This thesis also finds that young nonvoters report not voting due to psychological reasons at higher rates than older nonvoters, while older nonvoters report not voting due to institutional barriers. Finally, this thesis finds that voters who report poor health report have an increased probability of reporting difficulties voting. Despite not finding widespread support, this thesis concludes by arguing that the electoral rights of elderly Americans remain a salient issue for researchers, organizers, and policymakers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Kelsey Larsen, for her endless patience and enthusiasm. It was a joy to work with you and I appreciate all the insight, knowledge, and support you shared with me. The quantitative skills I have developed through your guidance are invaluable. Thank you.

Second, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Kenicia Wright and Dr. Jonathan Knuckey. Dr. Wright, your support throughout my graduate student career has been unparalleled. Thank you for signing on to this project so readily and for your continued mentorship. Your expert advice helped me develop the theoretical underpinnings of my hypotheses and for that I am the most appreciative. I would not be here without your advice and encouragement.

Dr. Knuckey, your support for this project was immediate and steadfast. Your insightful feedback shaped the data and methods of this paper. Thank you for encouraging me to select the CES and to disaggregate the models. I learned a lot working with you and am grateful for the experience.

I would also like to thank the School of Politics, Security, and International Affairs at the University of Central Florida for providing me with so many opportunities and so much support. I would like to thank Dr. Thomas Dolan for continuing to mentor me through my educational and professional career, Dr. Güneş Tezcür for his quick wit and pragmatism, Dr. Peter Jacques for the most enlightening conversations and for being so understanding, and, finally, Kyrie Ottaviani for her patience even though I am a bureaucratic nightmare who always turns forms in late.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Existing research suggests that elderly individuals vote more often and vote more conservatively than younger voters (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, 47; Blais 2000, 52; Schur, Shields, Kruse and Schriner 2002, 167; Shields 2012; Bentele and O'Brien 2013, 1094; Darrah-Okike, Rita and Logan 2020, 13). Leighley and Nagler (2014) find that turnout in the oldest age group, 76- to 84-year-olds, has been increasing over the past several elections, while the second-oldest age group, 61- to 75-year-olds, has remained consistently high (76). In 2016, the turnout rate for voters 65 and older was the highest among all voters at 70.9% (File 2017). In 2016 and 2018, older voters made up just over half of the entire electorate, while they were 44% of the electorate in 2020 (Igielnik, Keeter, and Hartig 2021). In 2020, older voters preferred former President Trump to President Biden, with a marginal difference for voters under 75 and a clear preference for those between 75 and 92 (Igielnik, Keeter, and Hartig 2021).

This thesis challenges conventional wisdom by arguing that the assumption that elderly voter participation is consistently high mischaracterizes the electorate as a single voting bloc. While they may share similar experiences or face similar challenges based on age, elderly Americans are a conglomeration of cross-cutting identities who experience life differently due to differences in identities such as race, socioeconomic status, level of education, and disability. By viewing older Americans as a diverse community, this research aims to investigate to what extent seniors' multitudinous identities influence their political participation. Specifically, this thesis argues that older voters are less likely to have voted in the 2020 American presidential election when accounting for other identities.

Voting is foundational to democracy because it enables citizens to select leaders, influence policy, and exercise their political desires (Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson 2017, 363). Individuals and groups absent from political life cannot express their preferences to political elites. When people are systematically excluded from the electorate, the system fails to reach its full democratic potential (Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, and Schriner 2002, 168). Therefore, efforts to control who is eligible to vote stifles the wills of some citizens while magnifying the desires of others.

Electoral participation matters. The American presidential election in 2000 was determined by a few hundred Floridian voters when an election recount was triggered (Wang 2012, 75). As a consequence of the increased scrutiny on voters in Florida in 2000, many laws that determined voter registration and electoral processes became stricter (Daniels 2000, 30). There are more recent examples of why electoral participation matters. In 2018, a tied Virginia House of Delegates seat was determined by drawing a candidate's name from a bowl (McCammon 2018). In 2020, the failure of any candidate to reach more than 50% of the vote share triggered a special runoff election for both U.S. Senate seats from Georgia (Phillips 2021). Ultimately, both Democratic candidates won, which meant the Democrats gained majority in the U.S. Senate (Phillips 2021). The 2020 presidential election was called for Joseph R. Biden days after election day due to contentious races with thin margins in states such as Georgia, Arizona, Nevada, and Pennsylvania (Moore 2020). Increasingly close races and electoral scrutiny demonstrate the importance of voter turnout.

Beyond the intrinsic value of caring about the elderly population, ensuring that older Americans have equitable access to voting is a form of insurance. Barring unforeseen tragedy,

every American will become elderly (and/or experience a form of disability) in their future. Protecting the rights of today's elderly population may help protect future rights for everyone.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research argues that the decision to vote hinges on a rational-actor model, in which voting is a marginal action with differing costs for each person (Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, and Schriner 2002, 168). The more an individual feels their vote matters, the more likely they are to overcome the cost and cast their ballot (Blais 2000, 81). Many individuals feel that voting is not only a right, but also a civic duty (Blais 2000, 112-113). This minimizes the costs of voting, as political participation becomes a moral obligation that must be fulfilled as a member of a democracy, regardless of cost. Those who feel voting is a duty are also more likely to be regular voters (Blais 2000, 112). Habitual behavior, such as when individuals vote in repeated elections, may also contribute to fewer perceived voting costs and increased turnout (Ruxton and Saunders 2016, 2).

Because voting in the American system is voluntary, an individual must analyze the costs and benefits to determine the extent to which they will participate politically (Ellis 2009, 1032). Voting incurs costs, from payments made directly to the government for the ability to vote, such as those associated with obtaining documents in order to receive the correct identification card, to the lost time and energy spent registering, thinking about the issues, obtaining transportation and childcare, and the act of voting itself (Ellis 2009, 1032-33). During the COVID-19 pandemic, voters—especially the elderly, who are particularly vulnerable to the virus—also had to weigh the risks versus the rewards of voting in person and potentially exposing themselves to illness, voting by mail, or not voting at all (Scheller 2021, 180).

Blais (2000) finds that differences in political environment, such as socioeconomic development, literacy, compulsory voting, and electoral system all affect voter turnout (43). Individual influences, such as the financial or temporal cost—or the perceived benefit—one

gains from voting helps determine which people participate, while political influences such as social networks and strategic mobilization efforts help determine when they participate (Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, and Schriner 2002, 169). Individuals who do not value voting above other activities will choose not to vote, effectively excluding them from the democratic process (Ellis 2009, 1036). The easier the voting process is, the fewer costs a potential voter is likely to perceive (Blais 2000, 89). Voter restriction makes the cost of voting steeper, which further discourages vulnerable individuals from participating politically (Ellis 2009, 1036).

Wolfinger and Rosenstone's seminal 1980 book *Who Votes?* found that that, all else equal, older Americans vote at higher rates than younger Americans (47). They find that turnout for voters over 60 declines based on differences in education, marital status, and gender (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, 47). However, their analysis does not include race, which has been shown to be a highly influential factor in voter turnout because of concerted efforts to stymie the votes of people of color (Bentele and O'Brien 2013, 1089).

Subsequent research also finds that elderly Americans turn out at higher rates than their younger counterparts, although factors such as isolation or failing to possess the correct form of identification mitigate the effect somewhat (Blais 2000, 52; Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, Shriner 2002, 169; Shields 2012; Bentele and O'Brien 2013, 1094; Leighley and Nagler 2014, 32; Darrah-Okike, Rita and Logan 2020, 13). Other studies find that lower turnout is concentrated among seniors with disabilities (Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, and Schriner 2002, 167). Daniels (2020) discusses specific cases in which elderly Black Americans faced bureaucratic nightmares while attempting to procure appropriate voter identification cards (71-79; 97-92).

Many scientific studies control for age and report the findings, but they do not elaborate on its importance. In other words, age is included in the analysis, but its incorporation is not

theoretically justified. Sometimes researchers offer theories to explain their results, but they rarely delve into the effect of age to its fullest extent. This thesis aims to be a further investigation as it examines the effects of multiple identities on the relationship between age and voter turnout.

According to the United States Administration on Aging, there were 54.1 million Americans aged 65 and older in 2019 ("2020 Profile of Older Americans" 2021, 4). Seniors represent 16% of the total population, or one in every seven Americans ("2020 Profile" 2021, 4). Between 2009 and 2019, the percentage of older Americans increased by 36% (14.4 million) compared to an increase of 3% for those under 65 ("2020 Profile" 2021, 4). 41% of Baby Boomers are now older than 65; as they age, the number of elderly people in America is expected to increase to 80.8 million by 2040 and 94.7 million by 2060 ("2020 Profile" 2021, 5). 24% of people aged 65 and older identify as racial or ethnic minorities, which is expected to grow to 40% by 2050 (Belt 2016, 1495; "2020 Profile" 2021, 7).

Disabled people represent one of the largest minority groups in the United States (Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, and Schriner 2002, 168). It is estimated that, in the next 25 years, one-third of all voters will need some form of accommodation or assistance with voting (Belt 2016, 1493). In 2012, 30.1% of disabled voters reported difficulty voting at a polling place, compared to 8.4% of non-disabled voters (Schur, Adya, and Kruse 2013, 2). 20% of the voting-age population has a disability and 36% of the elderly population is disabled (Belt 2016, 1495). Disabled people face significant physical, social, and psychological barriers to voting and are up to 20 percentage points less likely to vote than their non-disabled peers (Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, and Schriner 2002, 167). This lower rate of participation for disabled Americans endangers the community as it

means they are not proportionately expressing their needs and desires, which can enable elected officials to ignore their concerns.

Disability is a multifaceted identity and many formal measures of disability only capture severe impairments. However, the entire community, including those with less pronounced disabilities, face difficulty voting. Belt (2016) identifies physical access barriers, including transportation issues, as well as technological difficulties and uneducated election officials as the main challenges disabled people face when exercising their right to vote. Challenges of particular significance to elderly voters are ballot access and interference for those who live in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and retirement communities; a lack of appropriate identification; very long lines at polling locations which they cannot wait in; and issues receiving or casting absentee ballots (Belt 2016, 1506-1511). Additionally, elderly voters may struggle to use new electronic voting technology or to fill out a ballet due to visual or dexterity-related disabilities (Belt 2016, 1512). Beyond the polling center, disabled voters may face physical resource constraints (time, money, and civic skills), psychological constraints (a lack of political interest and efficacy), and social constraints (isolation from recruitment tactics) when it comes to voting (Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, and Schriner 2002, 169). The right to vote for intellectually and developmentally disabled adults—including those with dementia—may be withdrawn through guardianship laws that vary state-by-state (Brescia 2010, 946). Many disabled voters must overcome a litany of physical, psychological, and social challenges in order to fully participate in elections.

Voting rights are a salient political issue. Across 49 states, more than 425 bills with provisions that restrict voting access were introduced during the 2021 regular legislative session ("Voting Rights Roundup" 2021). As of October 4, 2021, 33 of these laws had passed in 19

states ("Voting Rights Roundup" 2021). These laws are multidimensional. Among other tactics, they target early and absentee voting, impose stricter voter ID requirements, and increase scrutiny on electoral rolls ("Voting Rights Roundup" 2021). While many states also expanded voting access in the same legislative session, the decentralized nature of the electoral system means that this progress does little to ameliorate the severity of restrictive legislation in states where it was already more difficult to vote.

Federal voter protection legislation is currently stalled in Congress (Hulse 2021). In the Senate, the Freedom to Vote Act aims to protect voting, ensure fair redistricting, and reform campaign finance ("Voting Rights Roundup" 2021). The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, its complement in the House, seeks to prevent discriminatory changes to voting rules based on race or minority language while also restoring the ability for voters to legally challenge discriminatory voting laws ("Voting Rights Roundup" 2021). However, due to opposition from some Republican members of Congress—whether for specific provisions or the bills in their entirety—this legislation has yet to progress in the legislature (Hulse 2021).

The 2020 general election observed record-breaking voter turnout when 66% of eligible voters cast ballots, either in person or by mail (Igielnik, Keeter, and Harting 2021). In response, some Republican lawmakers sought to challenge the results and prevent similar turnout in future elections by introducing measures that seek to limit voter access ("Voting Rights Roundup" 2021). These measures are justified by some as protecting against election irregularities and promoting election security, while others argue that these tactics merely serve to limit the political participation of minority voters ("Voting Rights Roundup" 2021).

The evidence for widespread voter fraud is virtually non-existent (Belt 2016; Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson 2017; Daniels 2020). Rather, restrictive measures such as strict voter ID

laws are argued by some critics to be partisan tools designed to marginalize Democratic voters and "shape the electorate in favor of state Republican legislatures facing competitive elections" (Barreto et al. 2019, 246). This marginalization disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities and those of lower socioeconomic status (Ellis 2009, 1026; Haygood 2012, 1019; (Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson 2017, 364; Barreto et al. 2019, 239; Kuk, Hajnal and Lajevardi 2020, 1). This thesis argues that it also negatively affects elderly voters, although they are not the primary target of such legislation. Therefore, elderly voters become a sort of collateral damage in the larger voter restriction movement.

Voter restriction (and its more blatant counterpart, voter suppression) has a historical precedent which extends beyond the founding of the United States and the ratification of the Constitution (Glenn and Kreider 2020, 9). Throughout American history, suffrage was at times denied to: those without a certain amount of property or wealth, those who could not pay poll taxes, those who could not pass literacy or "understanding" tests, those whose grandfathers did not have the right to vote, those under 21, women, Native Americans, enslaved or free Blacks, nonnaturalized immigrants, servants, the poor, disabled people, people of mixed-race heritage, religious minorities such as Catholics and Jews, and felons (Glenn and Kreider 2020). The origin of many of today's voter restriction tactics come from efforts to disenfranchise Black voters in the South during Reconstruction and Jim Crow.

Even after the 1870 passing of the Fifteenth Amendment, which prohibited disenfranchisement based on "race, color, or previous condition of servitude," many groups were still prohibited from voting—especially Southern, Black voters. Through great effort, the Voting Rights Act (VRA) was signed in 1965. This legislation targets Southern jurisdictions with a history of discriminating against Black Americans by forcing them to obtain federal permission

to change electoral laws (Bullock III, Gaddie, and Wert 2016, 18). The VRA has been renewed and expanded many times, although recent challenges to the legislation (notably *Shelby County v. Holder* in 2013) have stripped it of power (Bullock III, Gaddie, and Wert 2016).

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects the rights of disabled people to participate in and benefit from societal institutions (Schur, Sheilds, Kruse, and Schriner 2002, 168). However, even with legislation protecting the rights of disabled people to vote, the actual turnout rate remains low. In 1993, the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) required states to provide the opportunity to register to vote when individuals apply for and renew motor vehicle licenses (Hale 2016, 194). The NVRA also required states to provide individuals the opportunity to register to vote when applying for public services, which sought to increase the reach of this legislation to disabled voters (Hale 2016, 194). However, implementation varies from state to state, which minimizes the effectiveness of the act in some situations (Hale 2016, 194).

The 2002 Help America Vote Act (HAVA) mandated that every state create a unified voter registration list and replace outdated voting technology using federal funding (Glenn and Kreider 2020, 345). HAVA encouraged states to establish opportunities to vote early, both in person and by mail, although suppressive measures such as limiting the number of polling locations to increase lines in Black neighborhoods and purging voter rolls diminished HAVA's efficacy (Glenn and Kreider 2020, 108 and 113).

While extant literature finds that older voters turn out at higher rates than younger voters, most research does not comprehensively analyze the effect of age nor does it consider the intersections of other identities such as race, socioeconomic status, or disability. In particular, the relationship between age and disability is understudied, as a higher percentage of the elderly community experiences some form of disability and the disabled community faces multiple

barriers to voting despite protective legislation. Due to this gap in the literature, this thesis seeks to investigate the true nature of the relationship between age, voter turnout, and other identities.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

This research argues that voter restriction negatively impacts older voters although they are not the main targets of such measures. Even if older voters are restricted primarily because of other marginalized identities, it is expected that the difficulties they face will be exacerbated by challenges associated with advanced age. Because this argument hinges on the complex relationship between age and other identities, this thesis builds on existing research while applying an intersectional framework to ground its analyses.

Credited as coining the term intersectionality, Kimberlé Crenshaw examined the experiences of Black women in the U.S. that resulted from their race, gender, and class (1989, 141). Intersectional theory has since grown into a social science juggernaut (Jordan-Zachary 2007, 255). Hancock (2007) identifies intersectionality as a "body of normative theory and empirical research" that can help us better conceptualize research designs and data collection "through its attentiveness to causal complexity" (251). Intersectionality helps researchers understand differences between and within groups (Jordan-Zachary 2007, 256).

According to Hancock (2007), intersectional analysis assumes that multiple identities play a role in studies of complex political problems and processes, as the relationship between categories is more than the sum of their parts, cannot be analyzed independently, and are the product of individual and institutional factors (251). Jordan-Zachary (2007) describes intersectionality as an "analytical tool [that is] valuable in the analyses of differences" (255). The goal of intersectional research is to critically examine the relationship between many individual and institutional factors (Hancock 2007, 251). As such, framing this research through an intersectional lens is appropriate as it investigates the relationship between age, race, political participation, and other identities.

The first hypothesis examines the relationship between voter turnout and age. Although previous research shows that older voters vote at higher rates than their younger counterparts, it is anticipated that they will be less likely to vote than their younger counterparts when accounting for differences in race, health, income, and education. People of color, those in poorer health, and those with less income and lower levels of education are expected to experience lower rates of voter turnout overall. These effects will then be amplified for seniors.

The second hypothesis investigates what reasons nonvoters of different ages claim stopped them from voting in 2020. It is expected that younger individuals are more likely to report psychological challenges to voting, such as political disinterest and feelings of inefficacy, as these groups are more likely to feel disempowered politically. Older individuals are expected to face institutional or health-related barriers to voting, such as failing to possess the correct form of identification or fearing exposure to the coronavirus.

The third hypothesis investigates the amount of difficulty that voters faced when attempting to cast their ballot in 2020. It is expected that older voters, disabled voters, and voters of color are more likely to report high rates of difficulty because they are more likely to feel the negative effects of any sort of voter restriction, while younger voters are more likely to report no difficulty because potential barriers incur fewer costs to overcome.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Quantitatively measuring differences in voter turnout between groups is challenging because it attempts to capture the absence of a behavior for nonvoters. Researchers typically study voting because it is a measurable behavior. An individual might not vote for a multitude of reasons, which makes their inaction difficult to categorize. Self-reporting biases are a noted limitation presented by survey data. Clark (2018) challenges the validity of asking respondents why they did not vote because individual decisions lie at the intersection of many factors that cannot be collapsed into a singular cause (11). Requesting an explanation for why an individual did not vote also provides an opportunity for the introduction of post-hoc biases that may neglect to mention the predominant reason a voter fails to cast their ballot (Clark 2018, 12).

To account for some of these limitations, this study relies on data from two publicly available election datasets. The American National Election Studies (ANES) time series survey data from the 2020 election is used to test hypotheses one and three. The Congressional Election Study (CES) from 2020, which has a much larger sample size than the ANES, is used to test hypothesis one in depth, as well as hypothesis two. Using two datasets cannot completely mitigate the challenges of relying on survey data, but they provide a larger sample size with which to test the hypotheses.

The ANES is a collection of time series data covering public opinion and voting behavior in U.S. presidential elections since 1948. The most recent version, in 2020, conducted 8,280 interviews before the November general election and followed up with 7,449 post-election re-interviews (American National Election Studies 2021, 1). It contains variables that record voter turnout and difficulties reported while voting (American National Election Studies 2021, 381-391). The 2020 CES includes a sample size of over 60,000 individuals (Ansolabehere, Schaffner,

and Luks 2021, 6). The CES contains variables that record voter turnout and self-reported barriers to casting a ballot (Ansolabehere, Schaffner, and Luks 2021, 82).

The first hypothesis, which posits that older voters will turn out at lower rates than younger voters when accounting for differences in race, health, education, and income, will be tested using a series of disaggregated logistic regressions in which the dependent variable, voter turnout, is categorized as 0 for not voting and 1 for voting. Interaction terms are not used because of concerns about the conflation of hypothesis testing and testing for intersectionality (Bauer et al. 2021, 2).

The independent variables of interest in hypothesis one are respondent age, race, self-reported health, highest level of education achieved, and family income. In both the ANES and CES, age has been divided into seven categories. Race was divided into three dummy variables for those identifying as white, Black, or Latino. Although other race categories were identified in the initial datasets, they were not distinguished in this thesis to avoid overcrowding the model. Health outcomes are recorded in each dataset as a 5-point scale ranging from excellent to poor. In the ANES, education is recorded on a 5-point scale ranging from less than a high school education to a graduate degree, while in the CES it is a 6-point scale that includes an associate degree. In the disaggregated model, education is recoded as 0 for those who have not achieved a college degree and as 1 for those who have at least one. In the ANES, family income categories range from less than $9,999 to higher than $250 in 22 consecutive categories, while income categories range from less than $10,000 to greater than $500,00 across 16 categories in the CES. A table presents the descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables below.

Table 1: ANES Descriptive Statistics, Dependent and Independent Variables

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
Voted in 2020 election						
Did not vote	1,039	.861	.346	1	0	1
Voted	6,450					
Total	7,489					
Age						
18 to 24	408					
25 to 34	1,228					
35 to 44	1,378					
45 to 54	1,202	4.213	1.74	4	1	7
55 to 64	1,474					
65 to 74	1,449					
75 and over	793					
Total	7,932					
Race						
White	2,215	.729	.444	1	0	1
Black	726	.089	.284	0	0	1
Latino	762	.093	.291	0	0	1
Total	8,178					
Health						
Excellent	1,114					
Very good	2,720					
Good	2,796	2.622	1.018	3	1	5
Fair	1,240					
Poor	307					
Total	8,177					
Family income						
10th percentile	288					
25th percentile	345					
50th percentile	195	11.733	6.744	12	1	22
75th percentile	355					
95th percentile	465					
Total	7,980					
Level of education						
Less than high school	376					
High school	1,336					
Some college	2,790	3.387	1.11	3	1	5
Bachelor’s degree	2,055					
Graduate degree	1,592					
Total	8,149					

Source: American National Election Studies 2020

Table 2: CES Descriptive Statistics, Dependent and Independent Variables

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
Voted in 2020 election						
Did not vote	2,802	.942	.233	1	0	1
Voted	45,660					
Total	48,462					
Age						
18 to 24	2,462					
25 to 34	7,295					
35 to 44	8,659					
45 to 54	7,996	.4.222	1.657	4	1	7
55 to 64	12,323					
65 to 74	8,708					
75 and over	4,108					
Total	51,551					
Race						
White	44,128	.723	.447	1	0	1
Black	6,952	.114	.318	0	0	1
Hispanic	5,180	.085	.279	0	0	1
Total	61,000					
Health						
Excellent	6,562					
Very good	20,037					
Good	22,201	2.692	.986	3	1	5
Fair	9,971					
Poor	2,198					
Total	60,969					
Family income						
10th percentile	4,634					
25th percentile	5,859					
50th percentile	4,890	6.388	3.52	6	1	16
75th percentile	5,029					
95th percentile	2,508					
Total	54,906					
Level of education						
Less than high school	1,983					
High school	16,618					
Some college	13,330	3.646	1.502	3	1	6
Associate degree	6,539					
Bachelor’s degree	14,152					
Graduate degree	8,378					
Total	61,000					

Source: Congressional Election Study 2020

Control variables include a 7-point scale that measures self-reported political ideology from very liberal to very conservative (CES) or extremely liberal to extremely conservative (ANES). The 7-point political party self-identification variable in both datasets begins at Strong Democrat and ends with Strong Republican. In the disaggregated models, party identification is split into three control variables: Democrat (strong, not strong, and lean), true independent, and Republican (strong, not strong, and lean). Marital status is recoded to 0 for people who are not currently married and 1 for those who are married or in a domestic partnership. Gender is measured as 0 for men and 1 for women. People with children are categorized as 1, while those with no children achieve a 0. The ANES contains a variable which asks respondents to rank whether they view voting as a duty or a choice, which is transformed into a 7-point scale ranging from very strongly a duty to very strongly a choice. The CES has no analog. Control variables for each dataset are represented in the table on the following pages.

Table 3: ANES Descriptive Statistics, Control Variables

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
Ideology						
Extremely liberal	369					
Liberal	1,210					
Slightly liberal	918					
Moderate	1,818	4.097	1.669	4	1	7
Slightly conservative	821					
Conservative	1,492					
Extremely conservative	428					
Total	7,056					
Party identification						
Strong Democrat	1,961					
Not Strong Democrat	900					
Lean Democrat	975					
Independent	968	3.888	2.254	4	1	7
Lean Republican	879					
Not Strong Republican	832					
Strong Republican	1,730					
Total	8,245					
Marital status						
Not married	3,902	.526	.499	1	0	1
Married	4,322					
Total	8,224					
Gender						
Male	3,763	.542	.498	1	0	1
Female	4,450					
Total	8,213					
Children						
No children	5,623	.316	.465	0	0	1
Has children	2,596					
Total	8,219					
Voting as a choice or a duty						
Very strongly a duty	3,359					
Moderately a duty	1,147					
Weakly a duty	218					
Neither duty nor choice	795	3.265	2.395	2	1	7
Weakly a choice	327					
Moderately a choice	1,049					
Very strongly a choice	1,364					
Total	8,259					

Source: American National Election Studies 2020

Table 4: CES Descriptive Statistics, Control Variables

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
Ideology						
Very liberal	7,833					
Liberal	8,523					
Somewhat liberal	5,937					
Moderate	15,238	3.892	1.9	4	1	7
Somewhat conservative	5,265					
Conservative	7,684					
Very conservative	6,554					
Total	57,034					
Party identification						
Strong Democrat	16,012					
Not Strong Democrat	6,732					
Lean Democrat	6,611					
Independent	8,862	3.62	2.21	3	1	7
Lean Republican	5,192					
Not Strong Republican	5,002					
Strong Republican	10,220					
Total	58,631					
Marital status						
Not married	28,710	.529	.499	1	0	1
Married	32,259					
Total	60,969					
Gender						
Male	22,129	.571	.495	1	0	1
Female	29,422					
Total	51,551					
Children						
No children	18,529	.639	.48	1	0	1
Has children	32,745					
Total	51,274					

Source: Congressional Election Study 2020

The second hypothesis, which argues that older individuals will report not voting in 2020 due to institutional or health-related reasons while younger individuals will cite psychological reasons for not voting, uses a variable from the CES to conduct a chi^2 analysis with the age category variable.

Table 5: CES Descriptive Statistics, Hypothesis Two

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
Psychological						
Forgot	76					
Not interested	752					
Too busy	202	.332	.471	0	0	1
Disliked candidates	777					
Felt lacked knowledge	57					
Total	1,864					
Institutional						
Not registered						
Lacked identification	1,314					
Not allowed	119	.312	.463	0	0	1
Did not receive absentee ballot	97					
Did not know where to vote	66					
Total	157					
Issues on the day of the election	1,753					
Out of town	131					
Lacked transportation	129	.052	.222	0	0	1
Could not wait in long lines	32					
Total	292					
Health concerns						
Sick or disabled	327	.108	.310	0	0	1
Afraid of Covid-19	278					
Total	605					
Other						
Other	382	.196	.397	0	0	1
Don’t know	716					
Total	1,098					

Source: Congressional Election Study 2020

The third hypothesis investigates the amount of difficulty that voters reported facing when attempting to cast their ballot in 2020. It relies on a categorical measure of difficulty from the ANES, which then becomes the dependent variable in an ordered logistic regression using the independent and control variables from hypothesis one. It is expected that older voters, voters of poor health, and voters of color are more likely to report difficulty than younger voters, voters in good health, and white voters.

Table 6: ANES Descriptive Statistics, Hypothesis Three

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
Reported difficulty voting						
Not difficult at all	5,671					
A little difficult	449					
Moderately difficult	179	1.181	.586	1	1	5
Very difficult	56					
Extremely difficult	46					
Total	6,401					

Source: American National Election Studies 2020

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis investigates the relationship between voter turnout and demographic variables such as age, race, health, family income, and level of education. It argues that older voters will be less likely to vote than younger voters when accounting for these differences. Table 7 displays the results for logistic regressions conducted using ANES and CES 2020 data.

Table 7: Hypothesis One, ANES and CES

	Model 1: ANES			Model 2: CES		
Variable	b (se)	z	margins	b (se)	z	margins
Age						
25-34	-.428 (.245)	-1.75	.7864	.169 (.184)	0.92	.9305
35-44	-.055 (.251)	-0.22	.8425	.827 (.192)***	4.31	.9628
45-54	-.057 (.261)	-0.22	.8423	1.353 (.213)***	6.37	.9777
55-64	.471 (.287)	1.64	.9005	1.432 (.209)***	6.84	.9793
65-74	.579 (.318)	1.82	.9097	2.317 (.24)***	9.66	.9914
75+	1.37 (.359)***	3.82	.957	2.536 (.307)***	8.25	.993
Race						
Black	-.232 (.227)	-1.02	.8416	-.375 (.144)*	-2.59	.9765
Latino	-.592 (.181)**	-3.28	.7953	-.494 (.155)**	-3.19	.9662
Health	-.13 (.064)*	-2.04		-.156 (.047)**	-3.28	
Income	.064 (.011)***	5.57		.146 (.018)***	8.11	
Education	.311 (.064)***	4.83		.308 (.036)***	8.58	
Ideology	.086 (.052)	1.66		-.036 (.040)	-0.90	
Party identification	-.083 (.04)*	-2.10		-.047 (.034)	-1.38	
Marital status	.25 (.145)	1.72	.8802	.271 (.11)*	2.47	.9782
Gender	.25 (.123)*	2.08	.8818	-.133 (.098)	-1.35	.9739
Children	-.186 (.145)	-1.28	.8536	-.385 (.124)**	-3.10	.9717
Voting as a choice	-.258 (.023)***	-11.11				
Constant	.92 (.411)*	2.24	.8678	1.297 (.27)***	4.81	.9755
n		5,910			33,760	
Wald chi^2		357.76			536.76	
Prob > chi^2		0.0000			0.0000	
Pseudo R^2		0.1850			0.1399	

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$
Source: American National Election Studies 2020 and Congressional Election Study 2020
Post-election weight variable applied

The relationship between voter turnout and advanced age is positive, although the overall fit of each model is indicated through a high Wald chi^2 and corresponding p value of less than

0.001. The ANES 2020 data finds a pseudo R^2 of 0.1850, which corroborates this goodness of fit although it is not directly interpretable. The pseudo R^2 is lower in the CES model, although at 0.1399 it also indicates a good fit.

In the ANES model, only the oldest age category is statistically significant. For respondents ages 75 and above, there is a .957 increase in the probability of turning out to vote in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Although the relationship between the age cohorts younger than 54 and voter turnout is negative, these findings fail to reach the threshold for statistical significance. Similarly, although two age groups of 55- to 64-year-olds and 65- to 74-year-olds find a positive relationship with voter turnout, they fail to reach statistical significance.

The relationship between identifying as Latino and voter turnout is negative and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01, while the relationship between identifying as Black and voter turnout is also negative but not statistically significant. This indicates that identifying as Latino decreases an individual's probability of having voted in the 2020 election by .7953, all else equal.

There is a negative and statistically significant relationship between voter turnout and poor health, which indicates that those who experience poor health have a decreased probability of voting in the 2020 election.

The relationship between income and voter turnout is positive and highly statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001, which indicates that those with higher income have a higher probability of turning out to vote in 2020. Likewise, those with higher levels of education have a higher probability of turning out to vote in 2020, a finding which is also statistically significant at a p value of less than 0.001.

The relationship between conservative self-identification and voter turnout is positive but not statistically significant, while the relationship between Republican self-identification is negative and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. This indicates that the more strongly one identifies as a Republican, the less likely they are to have voted in the 2020 election, all else equal. The discrepancy between ideology and party identification may be due to differences in how respondents self-identify, as they are more likely to report being strongly partisan without identifying as equally polarized ideologically.

Being married and having children do not achieve statistical significance in this model, while gender does. There is a positive relationship between being female and voter turnout in 2020, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. Identifying as a woman increases an individual's probability of voting in 2020 by .8818.

The relationship between viewing voting as a choice and voter turnout is negative and highly statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001, which indicates that those who view voting as a choice have a decreased probability of voting in 2020. In the ANES model, the constant is positive and significant with a p value of less than 0.05.

According to the first CES model, the oldest five age categories are statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001 for each. The relationship between advancing age and probability of voter turnout in 2020 is positive, indicating an increased probability of voting in 2020 for older individuals. When holding the other variables at their means, there is a .9628 increased probability of voter turnout for 35- to 44-year-olds, a .9777 increased probability of voter turnout for 45- to 54-year-olds, a .9793 increased probability of voting for 55- to 64-year-olds, a .9914 increased probability of voting for 65- to 74-year-olds, and a .993 increase in probability of voting for those 75 years of age and over.

The relationship between identifying as Black and voting in 2020 is negative and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05, indicating that Black individuals have a .9765 decreased probability of voting in 2020. The relationship between identifying as Latino and voter turnout in 2020 is also negative and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. This indicates that, individuals who identify as Latino have a .9662 decreased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal.

There is a negative relationship between poor health and voter turnout in 2020, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. This indicates that individuals who report experiencing poorer health are less likely to have voted in the 2020 general election. The relationship between income, education, and voter turnout is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001 in the CES model. Those with higher income, and/or those who have achieved higher levels of education, have an increased probability of having voted in the 2020 election than their less wealthy or educated counterparts, all else equal.

In the CES model, neither ideology nor party identification achieve statistical significance at the p value of less than 0.05 threshold. Unlike in the ANES model, the relationships between voter turnout and both conservative ideology and Republican identification are negative. However, the lack of statistical significance diminishes the impact of this finding.

The relationship between marital status and voting in the 2020 election is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05 in the CES model. This indicates that married individuals have a .9782 increased probability of voting in 2020 than their unmarried counterparts. The relationship between gender and voter turnout in the CES model is negative and not statistically significant. In contrast, the relationship between having children and voting in 2020 is negative and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01 in the CES model,

indicating that those who have children have a .9717 decreased probability of turning out to vote in 2020 than those who do not. In the CES model, the constant is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001.

Twelve disaggregated models were conducted to investigate more nuanced relationships between voter turnout in 2020 and other identities. First, the results of three models distinguished by race are discussed, beginning with a white-only version and moving on to Black-only and Latino-only models. Party identification is discussed next, displaying a model each for independent, Democrat, and Republican respondents. Following party identification, a model each for those with college degrees and those without degrees are discussed. Two models, one for women and one for men, are discussed next, followed by a set of models for those who are married and those who are not. The results of these models better isolate the effect of various demographic identities on voter turnout and find support for the first hypothesis.

Table 8: Hypothesis One, Racial Disaggregation

	Model 3: White Only			Model 4: Black Only		
Variable	b (se)	z	margins	b (se)	z	margins
Age						
25-34	.173 (.229)	0.76	.9429	-.18 (.523)	-0.34	.8815
35-44	.733 (.232)**	3.16	.9666	.794 (.546)	1.45	.9517
45-54	1.291 (.25)***	5.17	.9806	1.026 (.581)	1.77	.9613
55-64	1.544 (.244)***	6.34	.9849	.691 (.617)	1.12	.9467
65-74	2.3 (.273)***	8.44	.9928	1.792 (.709)*	2.53	.9816
75+	2.392 (.353)***	6.79	.9935	1.713 (.906)	1.89	.9801
Health	-.222 (.062)***	-3.60		-.185 (.123)	-1.50	
Income	.138 (.022)***	6.19		.099 (.049)*	2.03	
Education	.299 (.041)***	7.26		.28 (.092)**	3.05	
Ideology	.066 (.049)	1.34		-.068 (.085)	-0.80	
Party identification	-.116 (.038)**	-3.04		-.167 (.082)*	-2.05	
Marital status	.397 (.121)**	3.27	.9837	.279 (.266)	1.05	.9578
Gender	-.184 (.106)	-1.74	.9791	-.287 (.295)	-0.97	.9438
Children	-.387 (.133)**	-2.92	.978	-.462 (.365)	-1.27	.9401
Constant	1.444 (.339)***	4.26	.9809	2.122 (.54)***	3.93	.95
n		26,397			3,034	
Wald chi^2		423.00			57.97	
Prob > chi^2		0.0000			0.0000	
Pseudo R^2		0.1350			0.1022	

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Congressional Election Study 2020
Post-election weight variable applied

When the model is limited to white respondents only, the overall fitness is assured by a high Wald chi^2 statistic of 423.00 and low corresponding p value of less than 0.001. The pseudo R^2, while not directly interpretable, corroborates this finding although it is slightly lower than the more inclusive model at 0.1350. The relationship between voter turnout and age remains positive. For respondents ages 35-44, this finding is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. For the age categories of 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, and 75 and above, the findings are statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001. This indicates that older white individuals maintain a higher probability of having voted in the 2020 election. When all variables are held at their mean values, there is a .9666 increase in the probability of 35- to 44-year-olds voting in 2020, a .9806 increase in the probability of 45- to 54-year-olds voting, a

.9849 increase in the probability of 55- to 64-year-olds voting, a .9928 increase in the probability of 65- to 74-year-olds voting, and a .9935 increase in those over 75 years of age voting in 2020. This fails to find support for hypothesis one, as it argued that those with advanced age would see a decrease in the probability of voting.

The relationship between poor self-reported health and voter turnout is negative and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001 for the white-only model, indicating that white individuals who assess their health poorly have a decreased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal. Among white individuals, the relationship between income and voter turnout is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001, which indicates that white individuals with higher income have an increased probability of voting in 2020 compared to their lower-income counterparts. Likewise, the relationship between higher levels of education and voter turnout is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001, indicating that better-educated white individuals have an increased probability of turning out to vote in 2020 compared to their less-educated counterparts.

For white individuals, the relationship between identifying as a conservative and turning out to vote is positive although it is not statistically significant. However, the more strongly a white individual identifies as Republican, the less likely they are to have voted in the 2020 election, all else equal. This finding is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01.

There is a positive and statistically significant relationship between white individuals being married and the probability of turning out to vote in 2020, in which married, white individuals have a .9837 increase in the probability of voting. This finding is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. The relationship between identifying as a white woman and voting in 2020 is negative, although this finding is not statistically significant.

However, white individuals with children find a negative and statistically significant relationship with voter turnout in 2020. White parents have a .978 decreased probability of voting in 2020 with a p value of 0.01 for statistical significance, all things equal. The constant is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001 in the white-only model.

The results for the model limited to Black respondents are less robust than those previously discussed, perhaps owing to the decrease in sample size at only 3,034 individuals. The relationship between the Wald chi^2 statistic of 57.97 and corresponding low p value of less than 0.001 indicate that the model is appropriate, and the pseudo R^2 corroborates that finding although it decreases further to .1022.

The only age group in the Black-limited model that achieves statistical significance is those ages 65 to 74. For this cohort, the relationship between age and voter turnout is positive, and indicates a .9816 increase in the probability of turning out to vote in 2020. This finding fails to find support for the first hypothesis, as it argued that the older age cohorts would see a decrease in voter turnout when accounting for other demographic factors such as race.

The relationship between poor health and voter turnout is negative in the Black-only model, although this finding is not statistically significant. The relationship between higher levels of family income and voter turnout are positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05 in the Black-only model, indicating that wealthier Black individuals have an increased probability of voting than their less affluent counterparts. Similarly, the relationship between higher levels of education and voter turnout is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01, indicating that the more well-educated a Black individual is, the increased probability they have of voting in the 2020 election.

The relationship increasing conservative ideology and stronger Republican identification have with voter turnout is negative, although only the findings for party identification are statistically significant. The stronger a Black individual identifies with the Republican Party, the less likely they are to have voted in 2020 with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance.

For Black individuals, the relationship between being married and voting in 2020 is positive, although this finding is not statistically significant. The relationship between Black womanhood and voting in 2020 is negative, although this finding is also not statistically significant. Likewise, the relationship between Black parenthood and voter turnout is negative, but not statistically significant. In the model limited to only Black respondents, the constant is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001.

Table 9: Hypothesis One, Racial and Political Disaggregation

	Model 5: Latino Only			Model 6: Independents		
Variable	b (se)	z	margins	b (se)	z	margins
Age						
25-34	.452 (.492)	0.92	.9118	-.032 (.372)	-0.09	.8584
35-44	1.237 (.62)*	2.00	.9577	.468 (.387)	1.21	.9091
45-54	1.665 (.693)*	2.40	.972	1.111 (.418)**	2.66	.9501
55-64	1.624 (.594)**	2.73	.9709	1.148 (.39)**	2.94	.9518
65-74	3.928 (.897)***	4.38	.997	1.697 (.496)**	3.42	9716
75+	(empty)			2.752 (.698)***	3.95	.9899
Race						
Black				-.613 (.269)*	-2.28	.8937
Latino				-.365 (.357)	-1.02	.912
Health	.184 (.132)	1.40		-.064 (.101)	-0.63	
Income	.303 (.056)***	5.43		.116 (.033)***	3.55	
Education	.438 (.123)***	3.56		.424 (.076)***	5.56	
Ideology	-.18 (.1)	-1.81		-.059 (.059)	-1.01	
Party identification	-.02 (.083)	-0.25				
Marital status	-.115 (.403)	-0.29	.9612	-.015 (.24)	-0.06	.9348
Gender	.017 (.32)	0.05	.9635	-.503 (.191)**	-2.63	.9155
Children	-.446 (.48)	-0.93	.9564	-.067 (.263)	-0.25	.9336
Constant	-.894 (.825)	-1.08	.9633	.281 (.567)	0.50	.9353
n		2,102			3,788	
Wald chi^2		80.86			159.91	
Prob > chi^2		0.0000			0.0000	
Pseudo R^2		0.2081			0.1613	

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Congressional Election Study 2020
Post-election weight variable applied

Limiting this model to only respondents who identify as Latino further drops the sample size to 2,102. A high Wald chi^2 statistic of 80.86 and a low corresponding p value of less than 0.001 indicates that this model is a good fit, which is supported by the pseudo R^2 of 0.2081. The relationship between increasing age and voter turnout is positive and largely statistically significant, although there is a limitation in the CES data for Latino respondents who are aged 75 and above. For Latinos ages 35 to 44, there is a .9577 increase in the probability of voting while holding all other variables at their means. This finding is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. For Latinos who fall in the 45 to 54 age cohort, there is a .972 increase in the

probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, which is significant with a p value of less than 0.05. The 55- to 64-year-old cohort sees a .9709 increase in the probability of voter turnout among Latinos, all else equal, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. Finally, the 65- to 74-year-old cohort finds a .997 increase in the probability of voting in 2020 among Latinos, all else equal, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001. Overall, this model fails to find support for hypothesis one, as it argued that the intersection of advancing age and minority identity would result in a decrease in voter turnout.

Among Latinos, the relationship between poorer self-reported health and voting in 2020 is positive, although this finding is not statistically significant. There is a strong positive relationship between higher income and the probability of voting in 2020, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001. Similarly, the relationship between higher levels of education and turning out to vote in 2020 is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001. This indicates that there is a greater probability of voting in 2020 for Latinos of higher income and for Latinos who have completed more education, all else equal.

The relationship between conservative self-identification and turning out to vote in 2020 among Latinos is negative, although this finding is not statistically significant. Likewise, the relationship between stronger Republican self-identification among Latinos and the probability of turning out to vote in 2020 is negative but not statistically significant. The relationship between marriage and voting in 2020 is also negative and not statistically significant. While the relationship between identifying as Latina and voting in 2020 is positive, this finding is also not statistically significant. Latino parenthood finds a negative relationship with turning out to vote in 2020, although this finding is not statistically significant as well. When the model is limited to Latinos, the constant is positive and not statistically significant.

The high Wald chi^2 statistic of 159.91 and the low corresponding p value of less than 0.001 indicates that the model limited to respondents who politically identify as independent is a good fit. This is supported by the pseudo R^2 of 0.1613, although it is not directly interpretable. Among independents, the four oldest age categories are positive and statistically significant. Independents in the 45- to 54-year-old cohort find a .9501 increased probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. Independents who fall into the 55 to 64 cohort have a .9518 increase in the probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. Those in the next age category, 65- to 74-year-olds, have a .9716 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistically significance. The 75-and-over age group have a .9899 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. This finding fails to find support for hypothesis one, as it argued that there would be a decrease in voter turnout among older voters of different identities.

There is a decreased probability of voting in 2020 for Black independents, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. While the relationship between voter turnout and Latino identity among independents is also negative, this finding fails to reach statistical significance. The relationship between poorer self-reported health and voter turnout in 2020 is also negative among independents, although this finding also fails to reach statistical significance.

Among independents, the relationship between higher family income and the probability of voting in 2020 is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001, which indicates that wealthier independents were more likely to have voted in 2020 than their poorer

counterparts. Likewise, independents who report higher levels of education have a higher probability of voting in the 2020 election, with a relationship that is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001.

The relationship between ideology and voter turnout is negative for political independents who identify as more ideologically conservative, although this finding is not statistically significant. Married independents also see a decrease in voter turnout that is not statistically significant.

Independent women have a decreased probability of voting in 2020, a finding which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. Although this finding is not statistically significant, independents with children also have a decreased probability of voter turnout in 2020. In the independent-only model, the constant is positive and not statistically significant.

Table 10: Hypothesis One, Political Disaggregation

		Model 7: Democrats			Model 8: Republicans		
Variable		b (se)	z	margins	b (se)	z	margins
Age							
	25-34	.324 (.284)	1.14	.9595	.192 (.339)	0.57	.9268
	35-44	.844 (.292)**	2.89	.9755	1.104 (.337)**	3.28	.9693
	45-54	1.31 (.358)***	3.66	.9845	1.519 (.348)***	4.36	.9795
	55-64	1.187 (.335)***	3.55	.9825	1.795 (.343)***	5.24	.9844
	65-74	2.344 (.391)***	6.00	.9944	2.445 (.379)***	6.45	.9918
	75+	2.395 (.27)***	5.10	.9947	2.384 (.483)***	4.94	.9913
Race							
	Black	-.058 (.211)	-0.27	.9816	-.341 (.325)	-1.05	.9733
	Latino	-.428 (.207)*	-2.07	.9731	-.364 (.272)	-1.34	.9729
Health		-.1 (.068)	-1.47		-.274 (.087)**	-3.15	
Income		.164 (.03)***	5.45		.108 (.029)***	3.72	
Education		.3 (.06)***	5.00		.221 (.056)***	3.93	
Ideology		-.287 (.051)***	-5.61		.371 (.059)***	6.33	
Marital status		.3 (.171)	1.76	.9841	.401 (.164)*	2.44	.9833
Gender		-.197 (.172)	-1.14	.9799	.004 (.154)	0.03	.9807
Children		-.356 (.208)	-1.71	.9782	-.334 (.187)	-1.78	.9789
Constant		1.835 (.37)***	4.97	.9815	-.625 (.571)	-1.10	.9807
n			17,829			12,143	
Wald chi^2			244.71			288.53	
Prob > chi^2			0.0000			0.0000	
Pseudo R^2			0.1594			0.1633	

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Congressional Election Study 2020
Post-election weight variable applied

The high Wald chi^2 statistic of 244.71 and low corresponding p value of less than 0.001 indicate that the Democrat-only model is a good fit. This is supported by the pseudo R^2 of 0.1594, although it is not directly interpretable. Among Democrats, the oldest five age categories have a positive and statistically significant relationship with voting in the 2020 election. Democrats who are between 35 and 44 years of age have a .9755 increase in the probability of voting, all else equal. This is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. Democrats between 45 and 54 years old have a .9845 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001. Democrats in the next age category, those 55 to 64, have a .9825 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else

equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Democrats who are between 65 and 74 years of age have a .9944 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Finally, Democrats who are 75 and above have an .9947 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. These findings fail to find support for the first hypothesis, which argues that older voters will have a decreased probability of voting when taking other identities into account.

Although it is not statistically significant, the relationship between Black Democrats and voter turnout is negative. Democratic Latinos have a .9731 decrease in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05.

The relationship between poorer health and voter turnout is negative for Democrats, although this finding is not statistically significant. Democrats who have higher incomes see an increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Likewise, better-educated Democrats have an increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance.

There is a negative relationship between Democrats who identify as more conservative and voting in 2020. This finding is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001. The relationship between married Democrats and voting in 2020 is positive but not statistically significant, while Democratic women and Democrats with children have a negative and not statistically significant relationship with voting in 2020. In the Democrat-only model, the constant is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001.

At 288.53, the Wald chi^2 statistic is high in the Republican-only model. This finding, along with a low p value of less than 0.001 and a pseudo R^2 of 0.1633, indicates a good fit for the

Republican-only model. As with the Democrat-only model, the five oldest age categories are positive and statistically significant in the Republican-only model, which indicates an increase in the probability of voting in 2020 for Republicans as they age. Republicans between the ages of 35 and 44 have a .9693 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. Republicans between the ages of 45 and 54 have a .9795 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Republicans between the ages of 55 and 64 have a .9854 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Republicans between the ages of 65 and 74 have a .9918 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Finally, Republicans who are 75 years of age and older have a .9913 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. This positive and statistically significant relationship between age and voting in 2020 among Republicans fails to find support for the first hypothesis, which argued that older individuals would see a decrease in voter turnout when accounting for other factors.

The relationships between voter turnout and either Black or Latino self-identification for Republicans is negative and not statistically significant. However, unlike in the Democrat-only model, a poorer self-assessment of health has a negative and statistically significant relationship with voter turnout. Republicans who view their health poorly have a decreased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance.

Republicans who report a higher level of family income have an increased probability of voting in 2020, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001. Likewise, better-educated Republicans have an increased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with

a p value of 0.001 for statistical significance. In other words, Republicans who have higher incomes and/or who have reached higher levels of education have an increased probability of voting in 2020.

Republicans who identify as increasingly conservative have an increased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Married Republicans have a .9833 increased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance. Although not statistically significant, the relationship between Republican women and voting in 2020 is positive. In contrast, although it is also not statistically significant, there is a negative relationship between Republicans who have children and voter turnout in 2020. In the Republican-only model, the constant is negative and not statistically significant.

Table 11: Hypothesis One, Educational Disaggregation

	Model 9: With Degrees			Model 10: Without Degrees		
Variable	b (se)	z	margins	b (se)	z	margins
Age						
25-34	-.03 (.366)	-0.08	.9567	.249 (.218)	1.14	.882
35-44	.614 (.382)	1.60	.9768	.894 (.227)***	3.93	.9344
45-54	1.305 (.407)**	3.21	.9883	1.326 (.254)***	5.22	.9564
55-64	1.406 (.392)***	3.59	.9894	1.384 (.248)***	5.59	.9588
65-74	2.491 (.45)***	5.54	.9964	2.216 (.278)***	7.98	.9816
75+	1.884 (.536)***	3.52	.9934	2.647 (.368)***	7.19	.988
Race						
Black	-.804 (.255)**	-3.15	.9712	-.239 (.17)	-1.14	.9458
Latino	-.281 (.247)	-1.14	.9816	-.582 (.186)**	-3.12	.927
Health	-.147 (.075)*	-1.97		-.165 (.058)**	-2.86	
Income	.124 (.026)***	4.71		.184 (.024)***	7.75	
Ideology	.046 (.07)	0.65		-.067 (.048)	-1.38	
Party identification	-.15 (.06)*	-2.49		-.025 (.04)	-0.62	
Marital status	.142 (.174)	0.81	.9866	.316 (.036)*	2.33	.9616
Gender	.116 (.153)	0.76	.9865	-.215 (.123)	-1.75	.9508
Children	-.425 (.176)*	-2.42	.9831	-.392 (.157)*	-2.49	.9493
Constant	3.09 (.429)***	7.20	.9858	1.923 (.29)***	6.64	.9555
n		18,498			15,262	
Wald chi^2		197.32			280.11	
Prob > chi^2		0.0000			0.0000	
Pseudo R^2		0.0879			0.1170	

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Congressional Election Study 2020
Post-election weight variable applied

With a Wald chi^2 statistic of 197.32 and a low corresponding p value of less than 0.001, the model that is limited to those who have achieved at least a 2-year degree is a good fit. The pseudo R^2 of 0.0879, while not directly interpretable, supports this finding. In the college-educated model, the relationship between voter turnout and the four oldest age groups is positive and statistically significant. For college graduates between the ages of 45 and 54, there is a .9883 increase in the likelihood of voter turnout, all else equal, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. College graduates between the ages of 55 and 64 have a .9894 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. College graduates between the ages of 65 and 74 have a .9964 increase in the

probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Finally, college graduates who are 75 years of age and older have a .9934 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Overall, the positive and statistically significant relationship between age and voter turnout in 2020 fails to find support for hypothesis one, which argued that older individuals would see a decrease in voter turnout when taking other factors into account.

There is a negative and statistically significant relationship between Black college graduates and voter turnout, in which Black graduates have a .9712 decreased probability of voting in the 2020 election. This finding is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. Latinos who have college degrees also have a decreased probability of voting in the 2020 election, but this finding is not statistically significant. College graduates who report poorer health outcomes also have a negative and statistically significant relationship with voter turnout, in which graduates who report experiencing poor health have a decreased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance.

For college graduates, those with higher income have an increased probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Although there is a positive relationship between graduates who identify as politically conservative and voter turnout in 2020, this finding is not statistically significant. There is a negative relationship between graduates who more strongly identify as Republican and voter turnout in 2020, which indicates that Republican graduates have an increased probability of voting, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance.

For college graduates, the relationship between marriage and voter turnout is positive albeit not statistically significant. The relationship between college graduates who identify as

women and voting in 2020 is also positive but not statistically significant. There is a negative and statistically significant relationship between parenthood and voter turnout for college graduates, in which graduates with children have a .9831 decreased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.05. For the college educated model, the constant is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001.

With a high Wald chi^2 of 280.11 and a low corresponding p value of less than 0.001, the model that is limited to only those who have less than a 2-year degree is a good fit. The pseudo R^2, while not directly interpretable, supports this finding. The relationship between advancing age and voter turnout in 2020 among people without university degrees is largely positive and statistically significant. For those without a college degree who are between 35 and 44, there is a .9344 increase in the probability of voter turnout, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. For individuals without a college degree who are in the 45 to 54 age cohort, there is a .9564 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Those without degrees in the next age group, who are between 55 and 64, have a .9588 increase in the probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. There is a .9816 increase in the probability of those without a college degree between the ages of 65 and 74 voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Individuals who have not earned a college degree in the 75 and over age category have a .988 increase in the probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. This model fails to find support for hypothesis one, as it argued that older people would have a decreased probability of voting in 2020 when taking other demographic factors, such as level of education, into account.

The relationship between Black individuals who have not earned a college degree and voter turnout in 2020 is negative but not statistically significant. Latinos without college degrees have a .927 decreased probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. Individuals who have poorer self-reported health statuses have a negative and statistically significant relationship with voter turnout in 2020, which indicates that for those without degrees who also report poor health have a decreased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance.

There is an increased probability of voting in 2020 for individuals who do not have degrees and report a high family income compared to those with lower incomes. This finding has a p value of 0.001 for statistical significance. Although the relationship between conservative self-identification among those without college degrees and voter turnout in 2020 is negative, this finding is not statistically significant. Likewise, the relationship between those without college degrees who identify more strongly as Republicans and voter turnout in 2020 is also negative and not statistically significant.

Married individuals without college degrees have a .9616 increase in the probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance. There is a negative relationship between women who do not have a college degree and voter turnout in 2020, although this finding is not statistically significant. There is a .9493 decrease in the probability of voting in the 2020 election for parents who do not have a college degree, which is statistically significant with a p value of 0.05. The constant for the model limited to those without a college degree is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001.

Table 12: Hypothesis One, Gender Disaggregation

		Model 11: Women			Model 12: Men		
Variable		b (se)	z	margins	b (se)	z	margins
Age							
	25-34	.065 (.225)	0.29	.9257	.287 (.304)	0.94	.9378
	35-44	.795 (.24)**	3.32	.9628	.836 (.298)**	2.80	.9631
	45-54	1.292 (.261)***	4.95	.977	1.405 (.351)***	4.00	.9788
	55-64	1.266 (.268)***	4.73	.9764	1.59 (.322)***	4.94	.9823
	65-74	2.388 (.291)***	8.21	.9922	2.147 (.405)***	5.31	.9898
	75+	2.717 (.333)***	8.17	.9944	2.236 (.542)***	4.12	.9906
Race							
	Black	-.326 (.173)	-1.89	.9675	-.411 (.363)	-1.63	.9653
	Latino	-.36 (.171)*	-2.11	.966	-.648 (.266)*	-2.44	.9567
Health		-.19 (.05)***	-3.80		-.118 (.087)	-1.36	
Income		.175 (.02)***	8.93		.114 (.03)***	3.86	
Education		.339 (.045)***	7.48		.263 (.056)***	4.67	
Ideology		-.036 (.044)	-0.81		-.028 (.077)	-0.37	
Party identification		-.031 (.039)	-0.78		-.077 (.064)	-1.19	
Marital status		.27 (.115)*	2.34	.9782	.235 (.212)	1.11	.978
Children		-.464 (.152)**	-3.05	.9712	-.194 (.226)	-0.86	.9737
Constant		1.071 (.32)**	3.35	.9753	1.468 (.438)**	3.35	.9757
n			18,573			15,187	
Wald chi^2			480.71			166.74	
Prob > chi^2			0.0000			0.0000	
Pseudo R^2			0.1614			0.1178	

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Congressional Election Study 2020
Post-election weight variable applied

The high Wald chi^2 statistic of 480.71 and the low corresponding p value of less than 0.001 indicate that the model limited to only women respondents is a good fit. The pseudo R^2 of 0.1614, while not directly interpretable, supports this finding. The overall relationship between age, women, and voting in the 2020 election is positive and statistically significant. For women between the ages of 35 and 44, there is a .9628 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. Women between the ages of 45 and 54 have a .977 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Women between the ages of 55 and 64 have a .9764 increase in the probability of voter turnout in 2020, all else equal, which is statistically

significant with a p value of less than 0.001. Women in the 65- to 74-year-old age cohort have a .9922 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Women who are 75 years of age and older have a .9944 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. The positive and significant relationship between age and voter turnout for women fails to find support for hypothesis one, as it argued that older age groups would see a decrease in the probability of voter turnout when accounting for other demographic factors.

Black women have a negative albeit not statistically significant relationship with voter turnout in 2020, while Latinas have a .966 decreased probability of voting in 2020 with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance. Women who report experiencing poorer health have a negative and statistically significant relationship with voting in 2020, in which women of poorer health have a decreased probability of voting, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance.

Women who report higher family income have an increased probability of voting in 2020 with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Likewise, women who report having completed more education have an increased probability in voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. The relationship between women who identify as more conservative and voter turnout is negative but not statistically significant. Likewise, the relationship between women who identify as more strongly Republican and voter turnout is negative and not statistically significant.

Married women have a .9782 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance. However, women with children have a .9712 decrease in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01

for statistical significance. The constant in the women-only model is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01.

The high Wald chi^2 statistic of 166.74 and the low corresponding p value of less than 0.001 indicates a good fit for the men-only model. The pseudo R^2, while not directly interpretable, supports this finding. The relationship between men, aging, and voter turnout is positive and largely statistically significant. For men in the 35 to 44 age cohort, there is a .9631 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. Men who are between 45 and 54 years of age have a .9788 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Men between the ages of 55 and 64 have a .9823 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Men in the subsequent age category, who are between 65 and 74 years of age, have a .9898 increase in the probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Men who are 75 years of age or older have a .9906 increase in the probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. This positive and significant relationship between age and voter turnout among men fails to find support for hypothesis one, as it argued that there would be a decrease in voter turnout when accounting for various demographic variables.

There is a negative relationship between identifying as a Black man and voting in the 2020 general election, although this finding is not statistically significant. For men who identify as Latino, there is a .9567 decrease in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance. Although the relationship between voter

turnout and men who report poorer health experiences is negative, as it is in the women-only model, this finding is not statistically significant.

The relationship between voter turnout and men who report higher family incomes is positive and statistically significant. Wealthier men have an increased probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Likewise, better-educated men have an increased probability of voting in the 2020 election, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance.

As with the women-only model, the relationship between conservative self-identification and voter turnout among men is negative but not statistically significant. Likewise, the relationship between men who identify more strongly as Republican and voter turnout in 2020 is negative but not statistically significant. While the relationship between marriage and voter turnout is positive for men, this finding is not statistically significant. The negative relationship between fatherhood and voter turnout is negative albeit not statistically significant. The constant in the men-only model is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01.

Table 13: Hypothesis One, Marital Disaggregation

	Model 13: Married			Model 14: Not Married		
Variable	b (se)	z	margins	b (se)	z	margins
Age						
25-34	.647 (.366)	1.77	.951	.110 (.216)	0.51	.9049
35-44	1.301 (.384)**	3.39	.9739	.728 (.223)**	3.27	.9464
45-54	1.838 (.388)***	4.74	.9846	1.231 (.264)***	4.66	.9669
55-64	1.972 (.382)***	5.16	.9865	1.271 (.261)***	4.88	.9681
65-74	2.889 (.435)***	6.64	.9946	2.149 (.296)***	7.27	.9865
75+	2.605 (.543)***	4.80	.9928	2.781 (.336)***	8.28	.9928
Race						
Black	-.558 (.232)*	-2.40	.9752	-.323 (.175)	-1.84	.9473
Latino	-.632 (.216)**	-2.92	.9735	-.345 (.22)	-1.57	.9449
Health	.01 (.074)	0.13		-.237 (.06)***	-3.93	
Income	.204 (.024)***	8.35		.099 (.024)***	4.20	
Education	.239 (.048)***	4.94		.356 (05)***	7.13	
Ideology	.112 (.061)	1.84		-.116 (.049)**	-2.36	
Party identification	-.107 (.051)*	-2.07		-.018 (.042)	-0.43	
Gender	-.026 (.139)	-0.19	.9848	-.176 (.135)	-1.30	.956
Children	-.278 (.185)	-1.50	.9841	.404 (.163)*	-2.48	.9489
Constant	.03 (.508)	0.06	.985	1.867 (.327)***	5.71	.9592
n	19,781			13,979		
Wald chi^2	292.56			252.98		
Prob > chi^2	0.0000			0.0000		
Pseudo R^2	0.1554			0.1157		

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Congressional Election Study 2020
Post-election weight variable applied

With a high Wald chi^2 of 292.56 and a low corresponding p value of less than 0.001, the model which focuses on married individuals is a good fit. The pseudo R^2 of 0.1554, while not directly interpretable, concurs with this finding. The relationship between marriage, aging, and voter turnout in 2020 is largely positive and statistically significant. For married individuals between the ages of 35 and 44, there is a .9739 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. For married individuals between the ages of 45 and 54, there is a .9846 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. For those between the ages of 55 and 64 who are married, there is a .9865 increase in the probability of voting in 2020,

all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Among 65- to 74-year-olds who are married, there is a .9946 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. In the oldest age cohort, those who are 75 and above, there is a .9928 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. This positive and statistically significant relationship between age and voter turnout for married individuals fails to find support for hypothesis one, as it argued that older individuals would see a decrease in voter turnout when accounting for other factors.

For married individuals who identify as Black, there is a .9752 decrease in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance. Likewise, for married individuals who identify as Latino, there is a .9735 decrease in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. Although the relationship between married individuals who report experiencing poorer health and voter turnout is positive, this finding is not statistically significant.

Married individuals who report higher levels of family income have an increased probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001. Similarly, married individuals with more formal education have an increased probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Married individuals who identify more conservatively have a positive relationship with voter turnout, although this finding is not statistically significant. Married individuals who identify more strongly as Republicans have a negative and statistically significant relationship with voter turnout, indicating that married Republicans have an increased probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance.

There is a negative albeit not statistically significant relationship between married women and voter turnout. The relationship between married people with children and voter turnout is likewise negative and not statistically significant. In the married-only model, the constant is positive and not statistically significant.

The model which captures the probability of voter turnout for individuals who are single, widowed, divorced, or separated has a high Wald chi^2 of 252.98 and a low corresponding p value of less than 0.001. This indicates that the model is a good fit. The pseudo R^2 of 0.1157 supports this finding, although it is not directly interpretable.

The relationship between age and voter turnout for unmarried individuals is largely positive and statistically significant. For unmarried individuals between the ages of 35 to 44, there is a .9464 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. For unmarried individuals in the next age cohort of 45 to 54, there is a .9669 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Unmarried individuals between 55 and 64 have a .9681 increase in the probability of voter turnout, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Unmarried individuals between 65 and 74 years of age have a .9865 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. The oldest age cohort, those who are 75 and above, have a .9928 increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001. This finding fails to find support for hypothesis one, which argued that older individuals would experience a decrease in voter turnout when accounting for other demographic factors.

The relationship between voter turnout and identifying as Black is negative but not statistically significant for the unmarried cohort. Similarly, the relationship between voter

turnout and identifying as Latino is negative but not statistically significant for the unmarried cohort. The relationship between reporting poorer health experiences in the unmarried cohort and voter turnout is negative and statistically significant; unmarried individuals who report experiencing poorer health have a decreased probability of voting in the 2020 election, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance.

The relationship between higher reported family income and voter turnout among unmarried individuals is positive and statistically significant, indicating that wealthier unmarried individuals have an increase in the probability of voting in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance. Similarly, better-educated unmarried individuals see an increase in the probability of voter turnout in 2020, all else equal, with a p value of less than 0.001 for statistical significance.

There is a negative and statistically significant relationship between voter turnout and increasing conservative self-identification for the unmarried cohort. More conservative and unmarried individuals have a decreased probability of voting in the 2020 election, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.01 for statistical significance. The relationship between voter turnout and stronger Republican self-identification is also negative, although this finding is not statistically significant.

The relationship between unmarried women and voter turnout is negative and not statistically significant. Unmarried parents have a .9489 decreased probability of voting in 2020, all things equal, with a p value of less than 0.05 for statistical significance. The constant in the unmarried model is positive and statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.001.

Disaggregating the voter turnout model using CES data does not find support for hypothesis one. Although several identities decrease the probability of an individual voting in

2020, increasing age is found to maintain a positive and statistically significant relationship with voter turnout across multiple models.

Hypothesis two delves into the reasons nonvoters claim stopped them from voting in the 2020 election. It does this by conducting a chi^2 analysis of the distribution of the different excuse types by age cohort. The second hypothesis expects that younger nonvoters are more likely to cite psychological reasons for not voting due to disempowerment, while older individuals are more likely to report institutional or health-related reasons for not voting because they are less able to overcome institutional barriers and are more cautious.

Table 14: Hypothesis Two

Variable	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	Over 75	Total
Psychological	205 38.90	507 37.14	412 33.91	284 34.51	297 28.81	128 25.10	31 21.99	1,864 33.21
Institutional	157 29.79	403 29.52	367 30.21	232 28.19	337 32.69	204 40.00	53 37.59	1,753 31.24
Election day issues	42 7.97	77 5.64	61 5.02	31 3.77	52 5.04	20 3.92	9 6.38	292 5.20
Health	44 8.35	137 10.04	114 9.38	102 12.39	135 13.09	57 11.18	16 11.35	605 10.78
Other/don’t know	79 14.99	241 17.66	261 21.48	174 21.14	210 20.37	101 19.80	32 22.70	1,098 19.57
Total	527 100.00	1,365 100.00	1,215 100.00	823 100.00	1,031 100.00	510 100.00	141 100.00	5,612 100.00
Pearson chi^2 pr						92.3232 0.000		

Source: Congressional Election Study 2020

According to Table 14, younger voters are more likely to report psychological reasons for not voting. 38.9% of the 18 to 24 cohort reported psychological issues, 37.14% of the 25 and 34 cohort reported psychological issues, and 33.91% of the 35 and 44 cohort reported psychological issues. In comparison, 34.51% of nonvoters ages 45 to 54 reported psychological challenges, 28.81% of 55- to 64-year-olds reported psychological reasons for not voting, 25.1% of 65- to 74-year-olds cited psychological reasons, and 21.99% of those over 75 reported psychological barriers to voting. This finds support for hypothesis two, which argues that younger voters were more likely to report psychological constraints to voting.

The oldest two age cohorts, those ages 65 to 74 and those 75 and above, are proportionately more likely to report not voting because of institutional challenges they faced. 40% of nonvoters ages 65 to 74 reported institutional barriers while 37.59% of nonvoters ages 75 and over reported institutional barriers. In comparison, only 29.79% of 18- to 24-year-olds reported institutional barriers, 29.52% of 25- to 34-year-olds, 30.1% of 35- to 44-year-olds, 28.19% of 45- to 54-year-olds, and 32.69% of 55- to 64-year-olds reported institutional barriers to voting. This finding also indicates support for hypothesis two, which argues that older voters are more likely to report institutional challenges to voting.

The middle-aged cohorts report health concerns at higher rates than the youngest and oldest cohorts. Only 8.35% of 18- to 24-year-olds reported health concerns, while 10.04% of 25- to 34-year-olds cited health concerns and 9.38% of 35- to 44-year-olds. 11.18% of 65- to 74-year-olds reported health concerns, while 11.35% of those 75 and older reported health concerns. In comparison, 12.39% of 45- to 54-year-olds and 13.09% of 55- to 64-year-olds claimed health concerns stopped them from voting in 2020. This finding fails to find support for hypothesis two.

Only 3.92% of the nonvoting 65- to 74-year-old cohort reported issues on election day, while 7.97% of nonvoters ages 18 to 24 reported election-day issues. 6.38% of nonvoters 75 and older reported election-day issues, while 5.64% of 25- to 34-year-olds, 5.02% of 35- to 44-year-olds, 3.77% of 45- to 54-year-olds, and 5.04% of 55- to 64-year-olds reported election day issues. There is no clear pattern to which age cohorts are more likely to cite election-day issues as to why they did not vote in 2020.

The older cohorts claim to not have voted for other or unknown reasons more than the younger cohorts. Only 14.99% of those ages 18 to 24 and 17.66% of 25- to 34-year-olds report other or unknown reasons for not voting, while 21.48% of 35- to 44-year-olds, 21.14% of 45- to 54-year-olds, 20.37% of 55- to 64-year-olds, 19.8% of 65- to 74-year-olds, and 22.7% of 75 and above reported other or unknown reasons for not voting. This indicates that younger voters are more aware of why they did not vote.

Overall, the results of Table 14 find support for the second hypothesis. Younger nonvoters report psychological barriers to voting in higher proportions while older nonvoters report institutional barriers. A greater percentage of older individuals also report other reasons for not voting, including not knowing why, than younger voters.

Hypothesis three argues that older and disabled voters, as well as voters of color, are more likely to report difficulty than younger, healthier, and white voters. This is because voters marginalized by age, ability, and race are more likely to experience the negative effects of at least one type of voter restriction, while their non-marginalized counterparts incur fewer costs of overcoming said challenges.

Table 15: Hypothesis Three

Variable	b (se)	z
Age		
25-34	.255 (.283)	0.90
35-44	-.067 (.282)	-0.24
45-54	-.663 (.29)*	-2.28
55-64	-.671 (.277)*	-2.42
65-74	-.754 (.295)**	-2.65
75+	-.637 (.305)*	-2.09
Race		
Black	.216 (.266)	0.81
Latino	.3 (.23)	1.30
Health	.141 (.062)*	2.27
Income	.007 (.013)	0.52
Education	.058 (.071)	0.82
Ideology	-.16 (.066)*	-2.44
Party identification	.064 (.049)	1.31
Marital status	-.193 (.147)	-1.31
Gender	-.073 (.129)	-0.56
Children	-.036 (.163)	-0.22
Voting as a choice	-.017 (.026)	-0.66
Cut1	1.854 (.443)	
Cut2	2.881 (.44)	
Cut3	4.058 (.446)	
Cut4	4.816 (.484)	
n		5,237
Wald chi^2		83.79
Prob > chi^2		0.0000
Pseudo R^2		0.0290

*$p < 0.05$ **$p < 0.01$ ***$p < 0.001$
Source: American National Election Studies 2020
Post-election weight variable applied

Table 15 has a high Wald chi^2 statistic of 83.79 and a low corresponding p value of less than 0.001, which indicate the model is a good fit. The pseudo R^2, while not directly interpretable, is low at 0.029, which indicates that the model is not a good fit.

The relationship between age and reporting difficulty voting is largely negative and statistically significant. There is a decreased probability that individuals between the ages of 45 and 54 will report difficulty voting, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. Individuals between the ages of 55 and 64 also see a decrease in the probability of reporting difficulty voting, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. Individuals between the ages of 65 and 74 have a decreased probability of reporting difficulty voting, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.01. Voters 75 and over have a decreased probability of reporting difficulty voting, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. This finding fails to find support for hypothesis three, which argued that older individuals would have an increased likelihood of reporting difficulty voting.

The relationship between Black individuals and reporting difficulty voting is positive, although this finding is not statistically significant. Likewise, the relationship between Latino individuals and reporting difficulty voting is positive but not statistically significant. This fails to find support for hypothesis three, as it argued that racial/ethnic minority voters would be more likely to report difficulty due to targeted voter restriction tactics.

There is a positive and statistically significant relationship between individuals who report experiencing poor health and those who report difficulty voting. Individuals who experience poor health have an increased probability of reporting difficulty voting, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. This result finds support for hypothesis three, which argued that disabled individuals would have an increased probability of reporting difficulty voting.

The relationship between higher levels of income and reported difficulty voting is positive but not statistically significant. Likewise, the relationship between higher levels of

education and reported difficulty voting is positive but not statistically significant. Individuals who identify as more conservative have a decreased probability of reporting difficulty voting, which is statistically significant with a p value of less than 0.05. The relationship between reported difficulty voting and stronger Republican identity is positive, although this finding is not statistically significant.

Married individuals have a decreased probability of reporting difficulty voting, although this finding is not statistically significant. Likewise, women have a decreased probability of reporting difficulty voting, which is also not statistically significant. People with children have a decreased probability of reporting difficulty voting, which is also not statistically significant. People who view voting as a choice rather than a duty also have a decreased probability in reporting difficulty voting, but this finding is not statistically significant.

Overall, the results of these quantitative analyses fail to find support for hypothesis one, while finding support for hypothesis two and limited support for hypothesis three. There are limitations to the data used which may interfere with the results found in this thesis. For example, although the CES 2020 sample includes over 61,000 individuals, white respondents vastly outweigh respondents of other races and ethnicities. Future research that draws from more diverse datasets or employs different models may find more support for the three hypotheses tested in this thesis.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Voting is an essential feature of democracy because it allows constituents to express their opinions and leverage their political power. An individual who does not vote fails to have their voice heard by their representatives in a democratic government. Historically, certain communities were disenfranchised to consolidate the power of other, more powerful groups. Even with protective legislation such as the 1965 Voting Rights Act, many of these same communities are marginalized today.

Some Republican legislators have targeted voting rights in several key states following historic voter turnout during the 2020 American presidential election. They cite non-existent voter fraud and election insecurity to justify passing these measures. It is well-documented that communities of color and low-income communities are those most affected by voter restriction measures. Although there is less focus on the disabled community, they, too, suffer under restrictive legislation.

Traditional research has found that older voters turn out in higher rates than younger voters. Using an intersectional framework, this thesis argues that voters over the age of 65 in the United States will be less likely to turn out to vote than their younger counterparts when considering other identities. Although not directly targeted by longer wait times, strict identification requirements, voter roll purges, and other tactics, elderly voters are still negatively affected by these measures. With the elderly population growing at an exponential rate in the United States, as Americans live longer and the last of the Baby Boomers become eligible for Medicare, this diverse community's right to vote is of paramount importance.

Combining a rational-choice and intersectional framework, three hypotheses were developed to investigate the relationship between age, race, ability, and electoral experiences.

The first hypothesis, which argued that older voters would experience a decrease in voter turnout, failed to find support. An increase in age increases an individual's probability of voting in 2020, according to data from both the American National Election Studies and the Cooperative Election Study. This finding was consistent among models disaggregated for race, party identification, education, gender, and marital status. This indicates that age is a powerful and positive predictor of voter turnout among a diverse sample of American voters.

The second hypothesis, which argued that older individuals would be more likely to report institutional barriers to voting while younger individuals would be more likely to report psychological barriers to voting, found support. A greater percentage of younger voters report not voting due to psychological reasons, while a greater percentage of older voters report not voting due to institutional barriers. This diversity of opinion indicates that nonvoters of different ages face different challenges when deciding when and how to vote. By identifying the specific challenges that different age groups face, organizers and policymakers can help reduce the limiting effect of these challenges in the future. Hypothesis two is a potentially fruitful area for further study, especially in more complex models that account for differences in identities such as race and party identification.

The third hypothesis argued that older, disabled, and minority voters would be more likely to report difficulties voting than their younger, able-bodied, and white counterparts. Limited support was found for hypothesis three, as individuals who report experiencing poorer health outcomes have an increase in the probability of reporting difficulty voting. However, there was a decrease in the probability of older voters reporting difficulty. While the relationship between reporting difficulty is positive for both Black and Latino voters, it failed to find statistical significance to support hypothesis three. This indicates that disability is a powerful

predictor of reported difficulty voting, which can help focus the efforts of organizers and policymakers who are dedicated to increasing election equity and accessibility.

Failing to find support for hypothesis one does not dilute the importance of studying the political participation of elderly voters. As more states introduce restrictive tactics and the federal government fails to ensure voter protections, the behavior of elderly voters remains noteworthy. Understanding the relationship between age, race, and voter turnout when accounting for other identities enables researchers, organizers, and policymakers to ensure that this growing population is given the attention it deserves. Protecting the rights of today's senior citizens will help to ensure the democratic future of tomorrow.

APPENDIX: IRB DETERMINATION LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Institutional Review Board
FWA00000351
IRB00001138, IRB00012110
Office of Research
12201 Research Parkway
Orlando, FL 32826-3246

Memorandum

To: Mia Warshofsky

From: UCF Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Date: November 15, 2021

Re: Request for IRB Determination

The IRB reviewed the information related to your thesis titled: *THE ELDERLY VOTER AS COLLATERAL DAMAGE: THE CONSEQUENCES OF VOTER RESTRICTION ON ELDERLY AMERICAN VOTER TURNOUT*

As you know, the IRB cannot provide an official determination letter for your research because it was not submitted into our electronic submission system.

However, if you had completed a Huron submission, the IRB could make one of the following research determinations: "Not Human Subjects Research," "Exempt," "Expedited" or "Full Board".

Based on the information you provided, your research involved analysis of publicly available datasets. This study would have likely been issued an Not Human Subjects Research determination outcome letter had a request for a formal determination been submitted to the UCF IRB through Huron IRB system.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB irb@ucf.edu.

Sincerely,

Renea Carver
IRB Manager

REFERENCES

American National Election Studies. 2021. *ANES 2020 Time Series Study Full Release [dataset and documentation]*. July 19, 2021 version. https://electionstudies.org/data-center/2020-time-series-study/

Ansolabehere, Stephen, Brian F. Schaffner, and Sam Luks. 2021. *Cooperative Election Study, 2020: Common Content*. Release 2: August 4th, 2021. Harvard University. http://cces.gov.harvard.edu

Barreto, Matt A., Stephen Nuño, Gabriel R. Sanchez, and Hannah L. Walker. 2019. "The Racial Implications of Voter Identification Laws in America." *American Politics Research* 47 (2): 238-249.

Bauer, Greta R., Siobhan M. Churchill, Mayuri Mahendran, Chantel Walwyn, Daniel Lizotte, and Alma A. Villa-Rueda. 2021. "Intersectionality in quantitative research: A systematic review of its emergence and applications of theory and methods." *SSM – Population Health* 14: 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2021.100798

Belt, Rabia. 2016. "Contemporary Voting Rights Controversies Through the Lens of Disability." *Stanford Law Review* 68: 1493-1523.

Bentele, Keith G., and Erin E. O'Brien. 2013. "Jim Crow 2.0? Why States Consider and Adopt Restrictive Voter Access Policies." *Perspectives on Politics* 11 (4): 1088-1116.

Blais, André. 2000. *To Vote or Not to Vote? The Merits and Limits of Rational Choice Theory.* University of Pittsburgh Press.

Brescia, Nicholas F. 2010. "Modernizing State Voting Laws that Disenfranchise the Mentally Disabled with the Aid of Past Suffrage Movements." *Saint Louis University Law Journal* 54 (3): 943-966.

Bullock III, Charles S., Ronald K. Gaddie, and Justin J. Wert. 2016. *The Rise and Fall of The Voting Rights Act.* University of Oklahoma Press.

Clark, Joshua. 2018. "Widening the Lens on Voter Suppression: From Calculating Lost Votes to Fighting for Effective Voting Rights." *University of California Berkeley Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society*. http://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/postelection2016

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1989. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1 (8): 139-167.

Daniels, Gilda R. 2020. *Uncounted: The Crisis of Voter Suppression in America*. New York University Press.

Darrah-Okike, Jennifer, Nathalie Rita, and John R. Logan. 2020. "The Suppressive Impacts of Voter Identification Requirements." *Sociological Perspectives*: 1-27.

Ellis, Atiba R. 2009. "The Cost of the Vote: Poll Taxes, Voter Identification Laws, and the Price of Democracy." *Denver Law Review* 86 (4): 1023-1068. https://digitalcommons.du.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1397&context=dlr

File, Thom. 2017. "Voting in America: A Look at the 2016 Presidential Election." *United States Census Bureau*, May 10. https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2017/05/voting_in_america.html

Glenn, Richard A., and Kyle L. Kreider. 2020. *Voting Rights in America: A Reference Handbook.* ABC-CLIO.

Hajnal, Zoltan, Nazita Lajevardi, and Lindsay Nielson. 2017. "Voter Identification Laws and the Suppression of Minority Votes." *The Journal of Politics* 79 (2): 363-379. https://doi.org/10.1086/688343

Hale, Kathleen. 2016. “Who Will Vote? The Election Administration Landscape in 2016 and Beyond.” In *Why Don’t Americans Vote? Causes and Consequences*, eds. Bridgett A. King and Kathleen Hale, 194-205.

Hancock, Ange-Marie. 2007. “Intersectionality as a Normative and Empirical Paradigm.” *Politics & Gender* 3(2): 248-254.

Haygood, Ryan P. 2012. “The Past as Prologue: Defending Democracy Against Voter Suppression Tactics on the Eve of the 2012 Elections.” *Rutgers Law Review* 64 (4): 1019-1064.

Hulse, Carl. 2021. “Republicans Block a Second Voting Rights Bill in the Senate.” *The New York Times*, November 4. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/senate-republicans-voting-rights-act.html

Igielnik, Ruth, Scott Keeter, and Hannah Hartig. 2021. “Behind Biden’s 2020 Victory.” *Pew Research Center*, June 30. https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/06/30/behind-bidens-2020-victory/

Jordan-Zachary, Julia S. 2007. “Am I a Black Woman or a Woman Who Is Black? A Few Thoughts on the Meaning of Intersectionality.” *Politics & Gender* 3(2): 254-263.

Kuk, John, Zoltan Hajnal, and Nazita Lajevardi. 2020. “A disproportionate burden: strict voter identification laws and minority turnout.” *Politics, Groups, and Identities*: 1-9.

Leighley, Jan E. and Jonathan Nagler. 2014. *Who Votes Now? Demographics, Issues, Inequality, and Turnout in the United States.* Princeton University Press.

McCammon, Sarah. 2018. “Virginia Republican David Yancey Wins Tie-Breaking Drawing.” *NPR*, January 4. https://www.npr.org/2018/01/04/573504079/virginia-republican-david-yancey-wins-tie-breaking-drawing

Moore, Elena. 2020. “Biden Flips Coveted Georgia, The Last State To Be Called By The AP.” *NPR*, November 19. https://www.npr.org/sections/live-updates-2020-election-results/2020/11/19/934889071/biden-flips-coveted-georgia-the-last-state-to-be-called-by-the-ap

Phillips, Amber. 2020. “What you need to know about the Georgia Senate runoff elections.” *The Washington Post*, April 26. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/interactive/2020/georgia-senate-runoff-guide/

Ruxton, Megan M. and Kyle L. Saunders. 2016. “Declining Trust and Efficacy and Its Role in Political Participation.” In *Why Don’t Americans Vote? Causes and Consequences,* eds. Bridgett A. King and Kathleen Hale, 1-10.

Scheller, Daniel S. 2021. “Pandemic primary: the interactive effects of COVID-19 prevalence and age on voter turnout.” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 31(1): 180-190.

Schur, Lisa, Todd Shields, Douglas Kruse, and Kay Schriner. 2002. “Enabling Democracy: Disability and Voter Turnout.” *Political Research Quarterly* 55(1): 167-190.

Schur, Lisa, Meera Adya, and Douglas Kruse. 2013. “Disability, Voter Turnout, and Voting Difficulties in the 2012 Elections.” *Research Alliance for Accessible Voting*: 1-38.

Shields, Todd. 2012. “Shifting Support for Democratic Party Among American Elderly: Findings from the Blair-Rockefeller Poll.” *University of Arkansas Diane D. Blair Center of Southern Politics and Society*. https://blaircenter.uark.edu/polling-data-reports/2010-poll/shifting-support/

"Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2020." April 2021. *United States Census Bureau.* https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/p20-585.html

"Voting Laws Roundup: October 2021." October 2021. *Brennan Center for Justice*. https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-laws-roundup-october-2021

Wang, Tova A. 2012. *The Politics of Voter Suppression: Defending and Expanding Americans' Right to Vote.* Cornell University Press.

Wolfinger, Raymond E., and Steven J. Rosenstone. 1980. *Who Votes?* Yale University Press.

"2020 Profile of Older Americans." May 2021. *Administration on Aging.* https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/Aging%20and%20Disability%20in%20America/2020ProfileOlderAmericans.Final_.pdf