Defining Racially Polarized Voting

‣ Racially polarized voting exists when voters of different racial or ethnic groups exhibit very different candidate preferences in an election.

‣ It means simply that voters of different groups are voting in opposite directions, rather than in a coalition.

‣ RPV does not mean voters are racist, it only measures the outcomes of voting patterns and determines whether patterns exist based on race/ethnicity

Analysis by: Professor Matt A. Barreto, University of Washington

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Defining Racially Polarized Voting

‣ Bottom line: minority voters are voting one way, and non-minority voters are voting another way

‣ But because White voters are more numerous in the at-large system, minority voters systematically lose.

‣ The analysis is about the individual voters within a jurisdiction. It does not imply that the governing body or appointed officials are acting in a racially discriminatory fashion. Even if a governing body is well intentioned, the individual voters across the county may behave in a way that blocks minority representation.

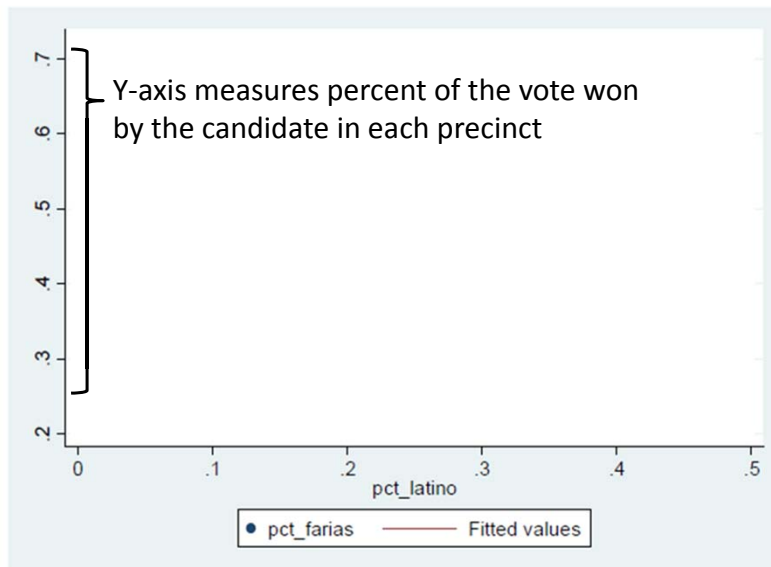Analysis by: Professor Matt A. Barreto, University of Washington

2

Defining Racially Polarized Voting

▸ RPV can vary in degree of intensity, and it can be easily measured and quantified using statistical analysis that has been accepted by the courts.

▸ We now have very good data collection methods that can tell us electoral preferences precinct by precinct. And because we also have very detailed demographic data that goes precinct by precinct, we can determine with confidence how certain constituencies are voting.

▸ Harvard Prof. Gary King has developed a technique called "Ecological Inference" which has been accepted by state and federal courts as a reliable method

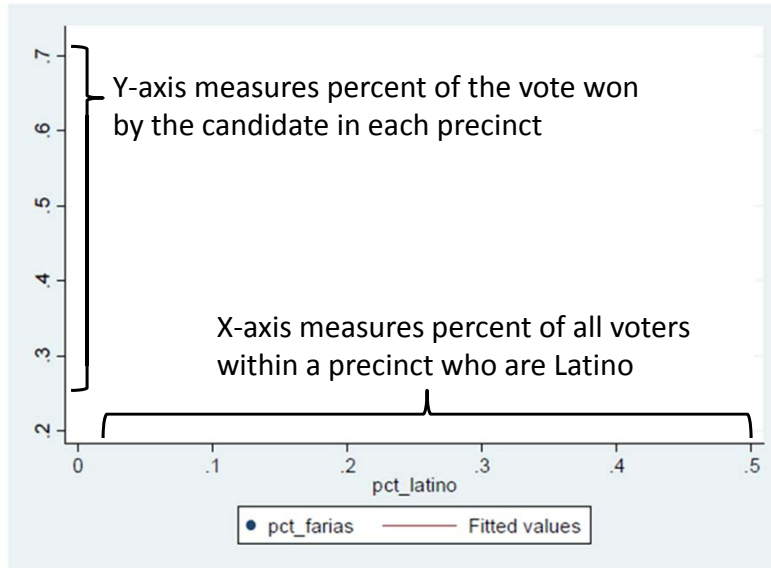Analysis by: Professor Matt A. Barreto, University of Washington
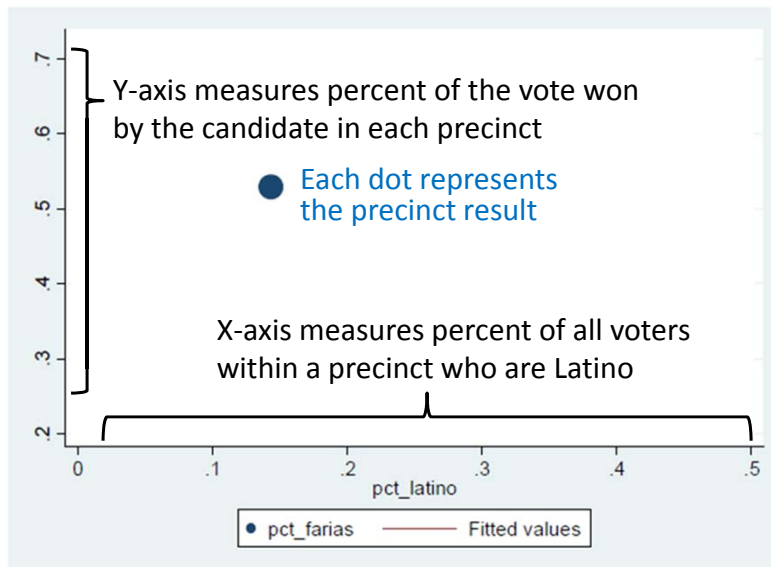
3

Measuring Polarized Voting

Y-axis measures percent of the vote won by the candidate in each precinct

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Measuring Polarized Voting

Y-axis measures percent of the vote won by the candidate in each precinct

X-axis measures percent of all voters within a precinct who are Latino

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Measuring Polarized Voting

Y-axis measures percent of the vote won by the candidate in each precinct

Each dot represents the precinct result

X-axis measures percent of all voters within a precinct who are Latino

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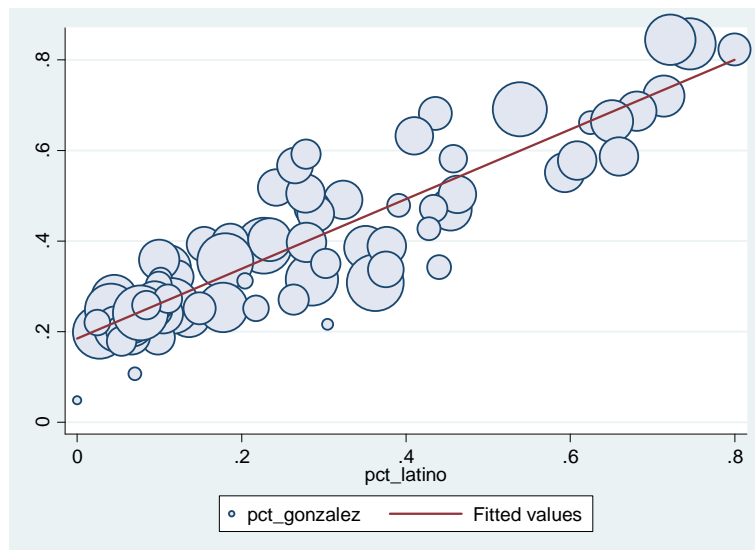## Yakima County Commission 2008
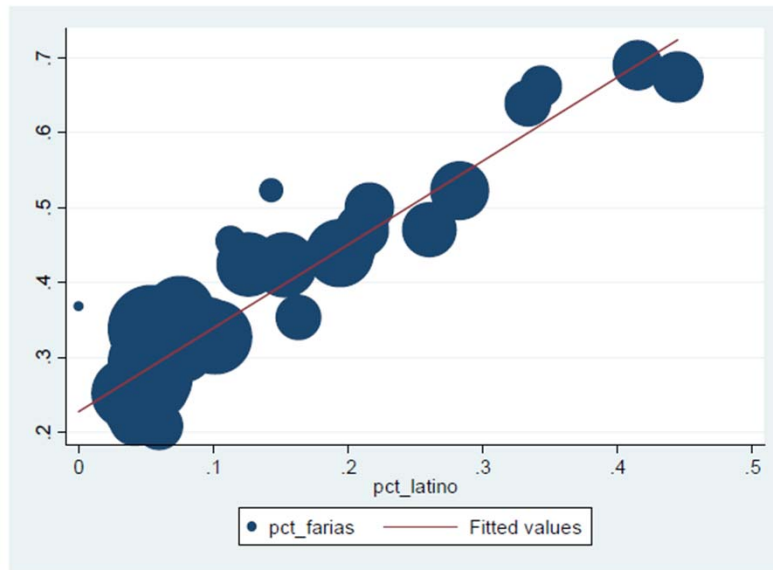
Analysis by: Professor Matt A. Barreto, University of Washington
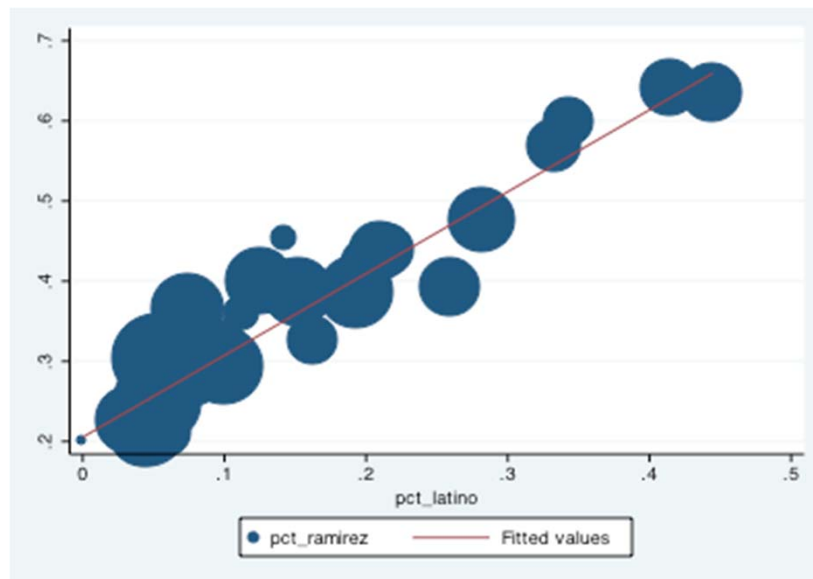
WA 14th LD 2008

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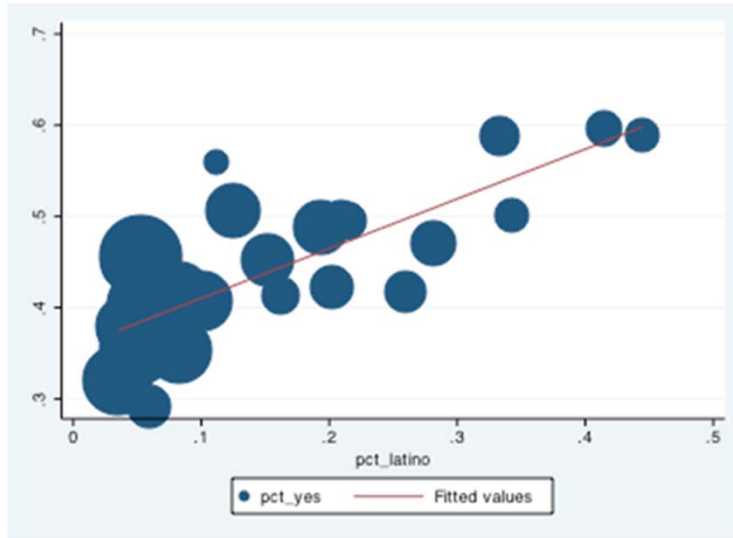
WA 14ᵗʰ LD 2008
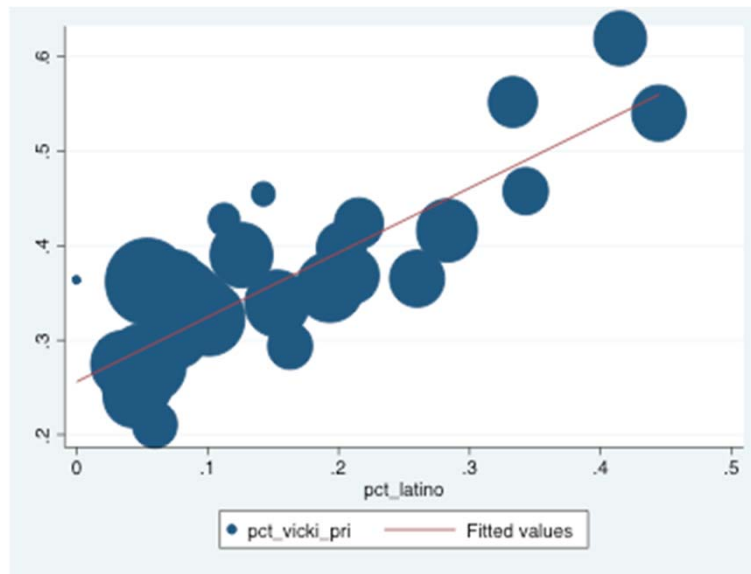
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WA 15ᵗʰ LD 2012 General

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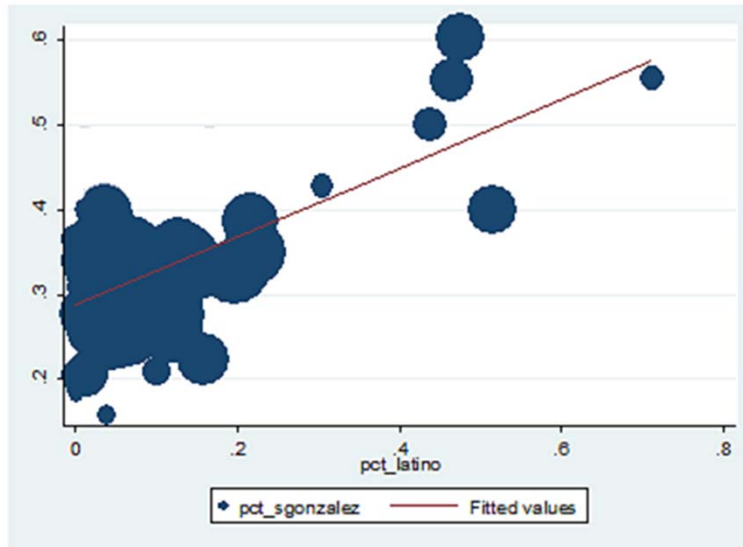
Yakima Prop 1 Vote 2011

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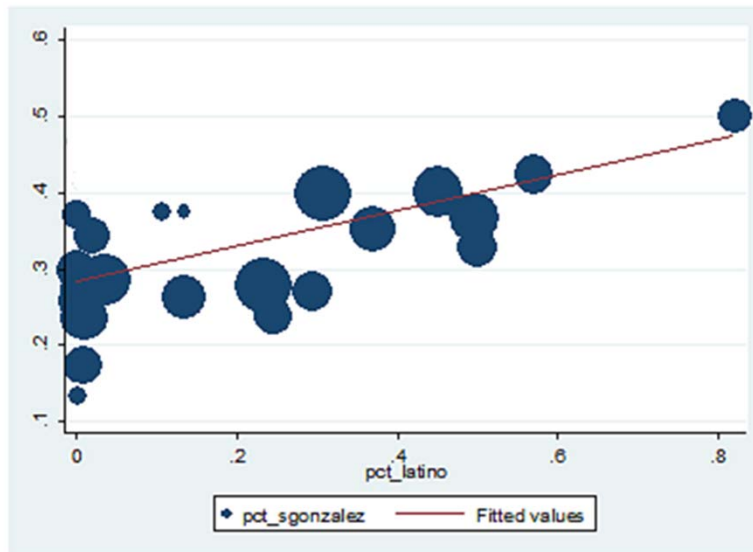
Examples beyond Yakima
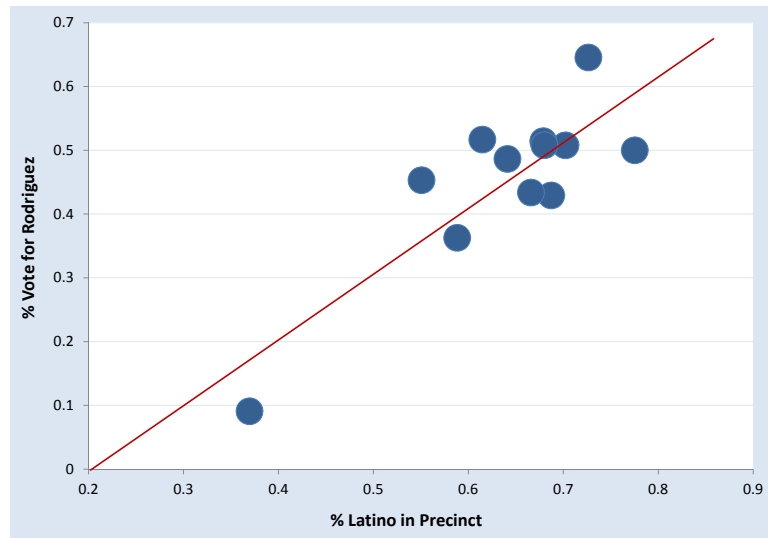
Grant County Sup Ct Primary 2012

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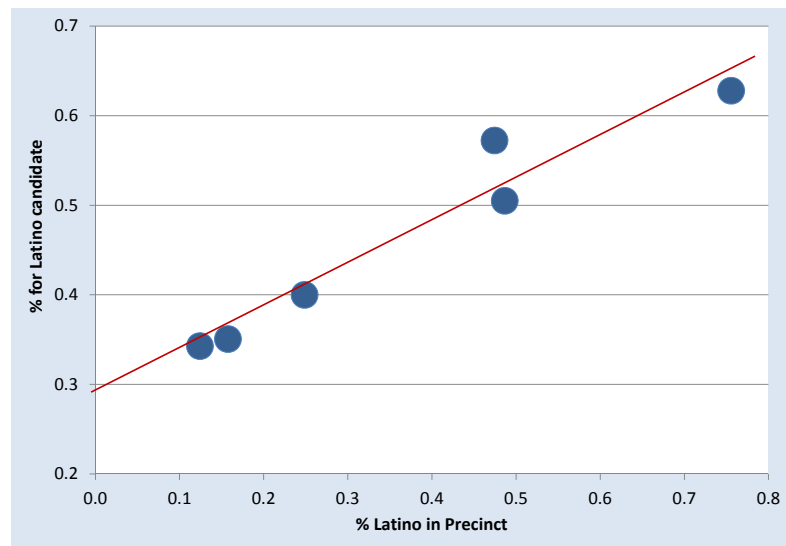

Adams County Sup Ct Primary 2012

Analysis by: Professor Matt A. Barreto, University of Washington
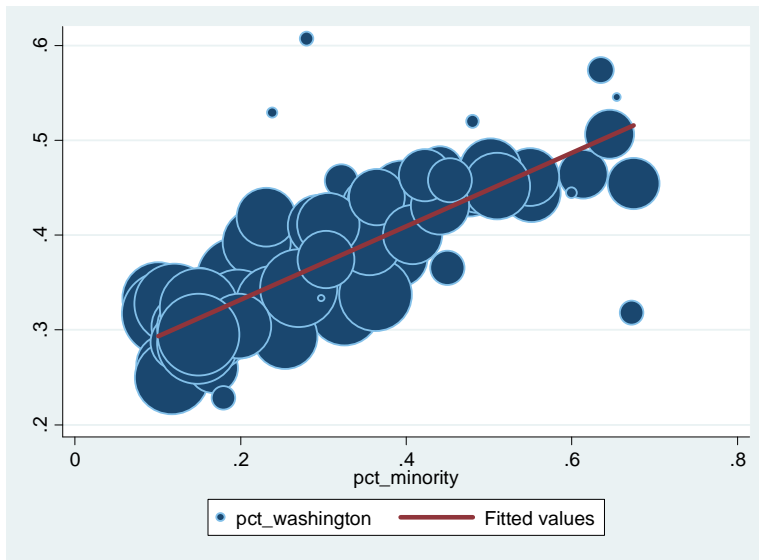
Othello School Board, 2003

Analysis by: Professor Matt A. Barreto, University of Washington

Quincy & Wahluke local elections, 2011

Analysis by: Professor Matt A. Barreto, University of Washington

Tacoma School Board 2011

Analysis by: Professor Matt A. Barreto, University of Washington