

# Change and Cuban American Politics

Lisa García Bedolla  
*University of California, Berkeley*

November 2013

# Changing Population: Foreign Born

- ⊗ About 59% of Cubans in the United States are foreign born
- ⊗ 48% of those entered the United States before 1990
- ⊗ **33%** have entered the U.S since 2000
  - ⊗ 2002-2011: 327,008 Cubans became legal permanent residents
    - ⊗ More than in any other decade since 1960
  - ⊗ Have different early socialization experiences
  - ⊗ Different attitudes towards relations with the island
  - ⊗ Unclear what will happen now that travel restrictions have been lifted

# Changing Population and Voting

- ⊗ Post-Mariel immigrants have lower levels of citizenship and voting
- ⊗ Newer immigrants even less likely to participate, given citizenship and SES status
- ⊗ Voters now disproportionately from earlier waves
- ⊗ Likely to change over time
- ⊗ Likely to change partisan/issue framing of participation

# Post-Mariel v. Pre-Mariel Attitudes

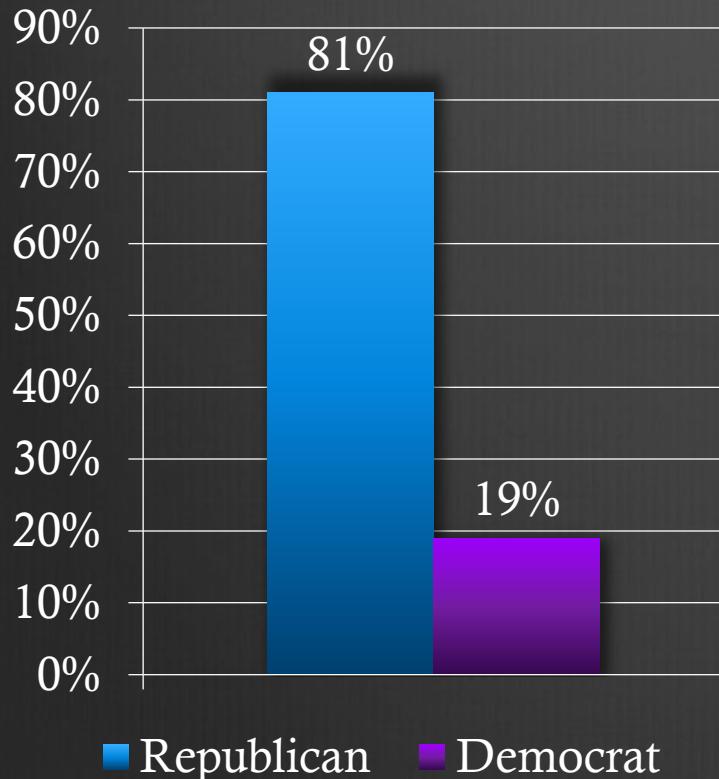
- ⊗ Post-Mariel Cubans almost twice as likely to support lifting the embargo
- ⊗ Post-Mariel Cubans twenty percentage points more in support of lifting the travel ban
- ⊗ Post-Mariel Cubans more two and a half times as likely to identify as “strong Democrat”
- ⊗ Differences remain after controlling for education and income

# Changing Attitudes: U.S. Born

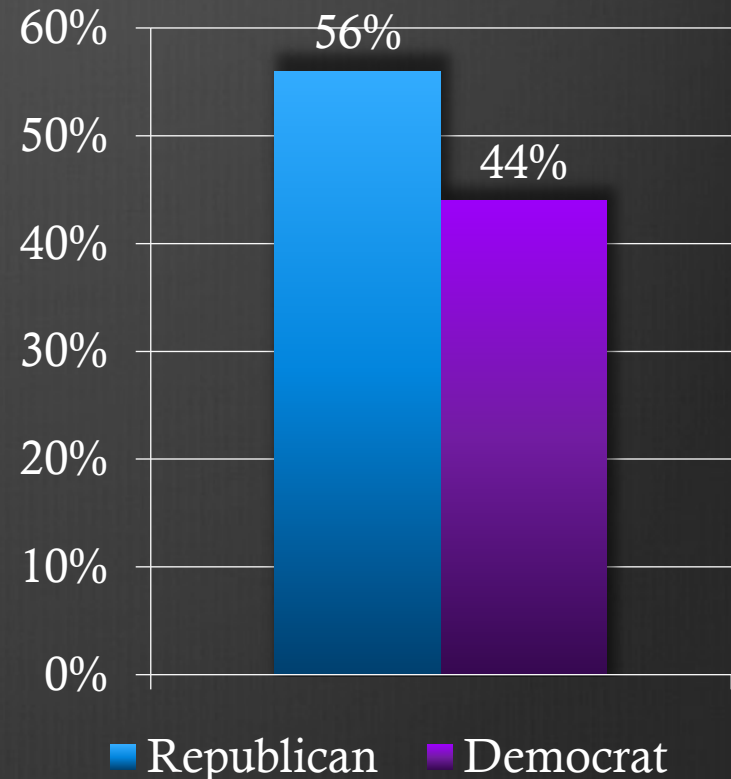
- ⊗ Second generation Cuban Americans less Republican and more supportive of normalized relations with Cuba than their parents (or grandparents)
  - ⊗ About seven percentage points more supportive of lifting the embargo and the travel ban
  - ⊗ About three percentage points more likely to identify as “strong Democrat”
- ⊗ Different from their parents, but differences not as great as between pre and post-Mariel

# Context and Party Identification

## Florida Cubans



## Non-Florida Cubans



# Political Ideology and Party Identification

- ⊗ Cuban political attitudes do not map neatly onto Republican party platform
- ⊗ Believe in strong government, including welfare provision
  - ⊗ Estimate Cuban/Haitian entrants received \$322 million in federal/state support in 2008
- ⊗ Only pro-choice Latino group
- ⊗ Religiosity lower, as measured by times attending services per week

# Changes on the Island

- ⊗ Travel restrictions lifted (with limitations) in Jan 2013
  - ⊗ Changes ability of Cubans to leave
  - ⊗ Makes it easier for those who left to return, for visits or to stay
- ⊗ Economic changes continuing, in fits and starts
- ⊗ Raúl leaving presidency in 2018
  - ⊗ New generation will be taking power
- ⊗ Unclear what that will mean for on the island, in the short and long terms
  - ⊗ Will also mean changes for U.S. community



# Future of Cuban American Politics

- ⊗ Exile was a unique experience, not to be repeated
  - ⊗ Led to common enemy, collective purpose
- ⊗ Changes on the island will lead to changes in Miami
  - ⊗ Migration patterns changing
  - ⊗ Issue focus changing
  - ⊗ Community's demographic make-up changing
- ⊗ All likely will shift Cuban American politics
  - ⊗ Towards what remains to be seen

# Geographic Dispersion

	Florida	California	New Jersey	New York	Texas	United States
<b>Population</b>	<b>1,213,438</b>	<b>88,607</b>	<b>83,362</b>	<b>70,803</b>	<b>46,541</b>	<b>1,785,547</b>
<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>100%</b>