Appendix

I.   Note on Data Sources

In *Unequal Voices, Part I*, the primary sources of data for our analysis were the Voter and Civic Engagement supplements of the Current Population Survey (CPS). As one of the oldest and largest surveys in the United States, the CPS is a critical tool for researchers because of its large sample size and consistency over time. These supplements ask respondents questions about voting behavior as well as civic engagement. Below, we outline the advantages and disadvantages of using data from the CPS and show how our survey discussed in *Unequal Voices, Part II* will help address some of the limitations.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Current Population Survey

The CPS has advantages that make it an excellent tool for answering questions about political behavior in the United States. One of those advantages is sample size. The CPS uses a probability selected sample of about 60,000 occupied households, which results in a large, nationally representative sample of the United States. The large sample allows researchers to go beyond exploring differences in behavior between racial groups or gender groups and begin to account for characteristics like educational attainment, income, and homeownership simultaneously, using regression techniques.

This was especially important for *Unequal Voices, Part I*, because we wanted to explore how individuals from different racial/ethnic groups face barriers to political and civic participation. The CPS has a large enough sample for us to look at individual groups like Asian Americans and Latinos while holding certain demographic characteristics constant. Many other nationally representative surveys do not have a large enough sample of these minority groups to allow researchers to conduct these types of analyses.

At the same time, the CPS is unable to address several important issues. Although the CPS sample size is large, the fact that it is nationally representative presents some challenges for looking at individual states. In *Unequal Voices, Part I*, we had to group (or pool) several years of CPS data together in order to reach a large enough sample size to run our detailed analyses. While pooling survey years is common practice it is not ideal, as data is collected at different time periods, which masks differences across years and produces imprecise estimates for the most recently available data.

Additionally, we were unable to unpack the differences among Asian Americans by disaggregating the data into detailed origin groups such as Chinese American, Filipino American, and the like. This is especially important for California, which has the largest population of Asian Americans in the country. As a racial group, Asian Americans are quite heterogeneous with respect to socioeconomic outcomes, with Asian Indians having among the highest levels of educational attainment and annual income of any group in the United States, and groups like Hmong who have among the lowest levels of education and income in the United States. Unfortunately, the CPS data does not have a large enough sample to separate

out these groups, which masks important variation in key characteristics between Asian Americans.

Finally, the Volunteerism and Civic Engagement supplements that are critical for helping us understand differences in political participation and civic participation are fielded infrequently, and do not feature consistent survey instruments. For instance, in *Unequal Voices, Part I*, there were several acts of participation that were included in the CPS Civic Engagement Supplement in 2008 but were not repeated in subsequent years. In addition, these questions are asked across surveys, making it difficult to analyze their relationship to each other. Lastly, the CPS does not include important questions about political attitudes and outreach that past research has shown to be essential to predicting participation.

Our Survey

In *Unequal Voices, Part II*, we use a survey that is designed to overcome many of these obstacles and complement the strengths of the first report and of the CPS data. Our survey design allows us to mimic the strengths of the CPS by having sizable samples of racial groups in California while addressing three important limitations. First, all of the data in our survey was fielded during the same time period, which helps us ensure standardization across our measurements. Second, our survey features an oversample of Asian Americans, which allows us to disaggregate Asian Americans into their respective ethnic groups. This is especially important for helping us understand the diversity in political participation among Asian Americans. Third, our survey includes questions that are especially relevant to helping us understand the differences and barriers that individuals face, with particular attention to factors like political interest, efficacy, and mobilization.

The analysis in this report is based on the Fall 2016 National Asian American Survey (Ramakrishnan et al., 2016). The Fall 2016 NAAS is a telephone survey conducted between August 10 and October 27, 2016. The survey instrument included questions about civic and political issues, extent of civic and political involvement, party affiliation, voting behavior, and a range of other topics. Demographic information included age, race, language, gender, country of birth, religion, marital status, educational level, employment status, citizenship status, household income, and size of household. The overall length of the interview was approximately 25 minutes.

The study included adults in the United States who identify as Asian American (any family background from countries in Asia), Pacific Islander, White, Black/African American, and Hispanic/Latino. The primary sampling strategy was to interview individuals drawn from a random selection of respondents in a listed sample stratified by race and national origin. Listed samples available from Catalist using registered voter and commercial vendor samples and classified for race and ethnicity by name, listed race where applicable, and tract-level ethnic concentration. Interviews were conducted by ISA (Interviewing Services of America), located in Van Nuys, CA.

II.   Regression Analysis of Factors Predicting Political Empowerment

Table 1 includes standardized coefficients of an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression predicting political empowerment, which is an additive scale of 7 political activities that include: contacting elected officials, making campaign contributions, attending public meetings, participating in protests, engaging in consumer activism, signing petitions, and participating in electronic petition activity.

Table 1. Nested Models Predicting Political Empowerment

	(I)	(II)	(III)	(IV)
White	--	--	--	--
Asian Am	-0.44	-0.33	-0.22	-0.11
NHPI	-0.08	-0.06	-0.05	-0.03
Black	-0.08	-0.05	-0.05	-0.06
Latino	-0.20	-0.12	-0.10	-0.07
Female		-0.01	0.03	0.01
Education		0.17	0.16	0.03
Income		0.18	0.15	0.10
(income missing)		-0.02	-0.03	-0.03
Political Interest			-0.06	-0.05
Internal political efficacy			-0.10	-0.03
External political efficacy			0.04	0.02
English proficiency			0.05	0.00
Discuss Politics				0.11
Posted Online				0.31
Worked to solve Community Problem				0.22
Involved in Community Organization				0.07
Contacted by political parties				0.09

Note: Standardized coefficients, whites as reference category for race. Values in bold are significant at the 0.10 level.