Close Enough for Comfort?
Geographic Proximity to Gaming and Support for Indian Gaming Initiatives

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January 16, 2007

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Abstract

We seek to extend the existing research on vote choice in state initiative elections by considering the importance of spatial context in ballot initiative elections. Specifically, we argue that spatial context serves as an important cue in initiative elections with geographically based policy implications. In this study, we analyze aggregate-level vote choice on three California Indian Gaming initiatives included on the ballot in 1998 and 2000. We utilize geographic information systems (GIS) to measure exposure to Indian nations and existing tribal gaming operations. Generally speaking, the findings indicate that voters located near Indian nations without gaming were less supporting of expansion, whereas those with exposure to existing tribal gaming were more likely to vote in favor of its expansion. Theoretically, these results suggest that spatial location serves as a source of information that voters' rely on when voting on geographically linked ballot initiatives.

Introduction

Direct democracy, through ballot initiative and referendum elections, provides citizens with agenda setting and decision making power. The increasing popularity of this policy-making tool has heightened scholarly interest in voting behavior in ballot initiative elections (Magelby 1984, Cronin 1989, Bowler, Donovan and Tolbert 1998, Bowler and Donovan 1998, 1994; Branton 2003). Yet one of the important concerns that have emerged in this literature is whether voters are informed enough to cast intelligent votes on potentially complex policy proposals. There is widespread evidence that voters are not replete with encyclopedic information about the content of specific ballot initiatives (see, e.g., Bowler and Donovan 1998, Lupia 1994), which are often complex and require advanced reading skills to process (Cronin 1989).

Yet, as many scholars note, all is not lost. Voters typically rely on a number of generally available cues when deciding whether to support specific ballot measures. One such cue is elite endorsements of initiatives, which can be informative if voters know how elite preferences align with their own (Lupia 1992, 1994; Karp 1998). In addition to, or in the absence of, such endorsements, scholars have also found that voters rely on a variety of environmental factors, including economic performance (Bowler and Donovan 1998; Alvarez and Butterfield 2000), racial/ethnic context (Branton 2004; Citrin 1990; Hero 1998; Tolbert and Hero 1998) and information about the legislature's response to the electoral strength of a measure's proponents (Boehmke and Patty N.d.).

We seek to extend the existing research by proposing an additional, and we contend vital, approach that considers the importance of geo-political context in ballot initiative elections. Specifically, we argue that spatial context serves as an important cue in initiative elections with geographically based policy implications, particularly for policies with geographically dispersed

costs and benefits. Examples of policies with geographically-specific components include environmental proposals such as California's Proposition 128 in 1990 – known as "Big Green" – which would have funded a variety of specific environmental projects around the state; proposals to establish commercial casinos in specific locations, such as Florida's Amendment 4 in 2004; and economic proposals, such as New York's Transportation Bond Act of 2000, which would have issued almost 4 billion dollars in state bonds to improve the transportation infrastructure primary in New York City and surrounding suburbs. Ballot measures such as these have disparate costs and benefits for voters based on their geographic location; further, voters may have greater levels of information about the measure if they are located near one of the affected communities.

In this study, we analyze aggregate-level vote choice on three California initiatives that sought to expand Indian gaming. Because gaming operations are limited to tribal lands, all of these proposals had strong geographic components: there are both costs and benefits that accrue for communities located near casinos. In addition, due to the presence of a small number of tribal gaming operations prior to these proposals and expanded gaming after the passage of the first initiative, voters proximal to tribal gaming establishments potentially had greater information about these costs and benefits of Indian gaming. In order to understand whether geographic proximity to the loci of policy change influences voters' choices on ballot initiatives, we utilize geographic information systems (GIS) to measure exposure to Indian nations and existing tribal gaming operations at the census-tract level. These measures are included in a model of census tract-level voting on three California Indian gaming initiatives. Generally speaking, the findings indicate that voters located near Indian nations without gaming were less supporting of expansion; whereas, those with exposure to existing tribal gaming were more likely to vote in

favor of its expansion. Theoretically, these results suggest that spatial location serves as a source of information that voters' rely on when deciding whether to support or oppose geographically linked ballot initiatives.

The Role of Information and Environmental Context in Initiative Elections

Ballot initiative elections differ substantially from candidate elections due primarily to a lack of traditional voting cues. Most notably, in candidate elections common vote cues like party identification and incumbency provide convenient rules of thumb to reduce information costs to voters (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960, Key 1966, Fiorina 1991, Popkin 1991, Jacobson 2004). Absent these cues, in ballot initiative elections voters seek other sources of information to make informed voting decisions. While state governments provide ballot initiative pamphlets to inform voters of the specific provisions of the initiatives, the effort required to understand a voter guide is often prohibitive for most voters. Instead, voters often identify groups or individuals who support (or oppose) the initiative and base their voting decision on this cue. Lupia (1994), for example, finds that voters with low levels of information on five California insurance reform propositions performed nearly as well as well-informed voters when they were aware of the insurance industry or a consumer group's positions on these measures. Other research suggests that political elite and candidate endorsements also serve as a convenient cue that reduces information costs (Magelby 1984, Bowler and Donovan 1998; Karp 1998; Alvarez and Butterfield 2000). More specifically, elite endorsements provide voters with enough information to vote in a manner that is consistent with their personal preferences (Banducci 1998; Donovan and Snipp 1994; Karp 1998; Zaller 1992). In general, these findings suggest that there is a limited amount of information regarding ballot initiatives readily available to the electorate.

Another variant of ballot initiative research considers the electoral implications of racial/ethnic context. Numerous works suggest that racial and/or ethnic context influences voting on racially or ethnically tinged ballot initiatives (Branton 2004; Citrin and Green 1990; Gamble 1997; Hero 1998; Hero and Tolbert 1996). For example, county-level analysis of voting on English-only initiatives and California's 1994 illegal immigrant initiative suggest homogeneous counties and counties with a large Latino population exhibit higher levels of support for the initiatives than more heterogeneous counties (Citrin et al 1990; Hero 1998; Tolbert and Hero 1996).

Finally, a few studies explore the importance of socio-economic context in initiative elections. Bowler and Donovan (1994 and 1998) suggest that a state's general economic conditions influence the level of support for ballot propositions. They find that lower levels of state income growth and higher levels of unemployment depress support for economic ballot propositions, as voters are leery of policy changes in an unfriendly economic environment. Further, Alvarez and Butterfield (2000) find that voters who believe the economy is performing poorly are more likely to support proposition 187, which aimed to limit government benefits for illegal immigrants in California.

Despite the scholarly attention given to voting in ballot elections, some uncertainty remains regarding the type of information voters use in their decision-making strategy. We contend that geo-spatial context provides important information to voters in certain ballot initiative elections. In particular, we propose that spatial location influences voting behavior on ballot initiatives that hold geographically based implications.[1] There are a wide range of ballot initiatives for which spatial context maybe important. For example, voting on immigration

[1] We are not suggesting that all policy areas are appropriate for this research model, only that a substantial number of recent initiatives are appropriate. Given the large number of potential topics, we believe this approach can be utilized extensively to measure local concern for policy changes.

related initiatives may vary based on spatial proximity to another country's border, support for riverboat gambling may vary based on spatial distance to the body of water, or voting on a toxic waste initiative may vary based on distance to the proposed dump site. Herein, we focus on a series of California Indian gaming initiatives that appeared on the 1998 and 2000 ballots. These initiatives were selected because casino-style gaming has localized consequences for communities located spatially proximate to Indian nations. Further, the large number of tribes in California and the geographic dispersion of these tribes leads to significant variation in voters' exposure to both existing and potential tribal gaming operations.

Indian Gaming in California

Indian gaming in California began in 1980 when the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians opened a "card room." California's Indian gaming expanded in 1983 when the Cabazon Band and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians opened "high stakes" bingo halls. In response, the state of California argued that the Indian gaming operations were inconsistent with state regulations and attempted to enforce state regulations on the tribal gaming operations. The Cabazon and Morongo bands sued the state of California claiming that they operated under tribal ordinances that were approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The state of California counter-sued claiming that Public Law 280 provided the state with criminal jurisdiction over tribal governments. In 1987, the Supreme Court ruled in California v. Cabazon Band that tribal nations could run gaming operations without state regulation in states where gaming was legal for any purpose.

In 1988, Congress passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, which provided a compromise solution between tribal sovereignty and states' rights to oversee gaming activity within state borders (Mason 2000, McCulloch 1994). Following the passage of IGRA,

California's Governor, Pete Wilson, and a small number of tribes signed compacts—referred to as the Pala compacts—allowing limited forms of gaming. However, a vast majority of California's 108 Indian nations were unsatisfied with the compacts and sought recourse via the initiative process.

In November 1998, Proposition 5 passed with over 62% of the vote, requiring the governor to approve gaming compacts that significantly expanded tribal gaming. The California Supreme Court ruled that the initiative was unconstitutional because it was a statutory measure and was in violation of the state constitution's ban on forms of gambling other than lotteries, card rooms, and pari-mutuel wagering. Following the court's ruling, the Governor of California and over 50 Indian tribes negotiated new compacts, greatly expanding existing gaming operations. However, the legal standing of these compacts was contingent on successful modification of the state's constitution through Proposition 1A, which passed with 64.5% of the vote in March 2000.[2] In addition, the March 2000 ballot also included Proposition 29, a referendum on the ratification of the original Pala compacts. Proposition 29 only mattered if Proposition 1A failed to pass, so although it passed with 53% of the vote, the policy was never implemented due to the passage of Proposition 1A. During this long battle over gaming compacts, many tribes operated casino-style gaming operations. Thus, we argue that exposure to tribes, both gaming and non-gaming, influenced voting on these initiatives.

From an informational standpoint, these propositions were not terribly complex. In contrast to other proposals, like the case of insurance reform in 1988 which involved five competing proposals that were fairly complex (Lupia 1994), the Indian gaming initiatives were relatively straightforward. Yet, this does not mean that the decision process was simple. Voters

[2] This initiative amended California's Constitution to authorize the Governor and tribes to negotiate compacts, subject to ratification by the legislature, for the operation of slot machines, lottery games, and banking card games on tribal lands.

likely had to balance two different sentiments: their feelings towards casino-style gaming and their feelings towards Native Americans and Indian nations in California. The former allows them to draw on their sense of morality and personal feelings towards gaming; whereas, the latter presented the electorate with an opportunity to support tribal sovereignty and economic self-sufficiency, issues that tribes featured heavily in the campaign advertising. In the next section, we discuss how proximity to Indian nations may have shaped the relative weight given to those two sentiments.

The Consequences of Gaming and Proximity to Indian Nations

The study of Indian gaming and the politics surrounding it have only recently begun to receive attention in political science (Boehmke and Witmer 2004; Light and Rand 2005; Mason 2000). Yet there are bodies of research emerging in other fields which we can use in determining how voters might react to expanded Indian gaming operations. In general, Indian gaming is an example of a policy that has narrowly focused benefits and more widely dispersed costs. Voters therefore must weigh the benefits to the tribe against the potential costs and benefits to the local community. We expect that these considerations were salient to most voters since they were frequently primed by proponents and opponents during the campaigns. A coalition of Indian nations framed support for the propositions as support for tribal sovereignty and self-sufficiency; whereas, opponents played up the moral and social consequences of gambling.

What are these costs and benefits and how do they vary with geographic proximity to tribes? In terms of benefits, the vast majority accrue directly to members of the tribe via gaming revenue that are spent on improving the general health, education, and welfare of tribes and their members or as disbursements to individual members (National Gambling Impact Study Commission 1999). The value of these benefits should not be understated due to the relative lack

of economic opportunity on Indian reservations and widely documented disparities in tribal health outcomes. A recent study by Kearney (2005) puts total casino-gaming revenue in California at $4.2 billion in 2003 (and commercial casinos are banned there). Recent studies have shown that tribes with gaming have witnessed improvements in employment rates and health outcomes (Evans and Topeleski 2002; Taylor and Kalt 2005); and increased wages and salaries for workers (Gazel 1998). In addition to economic benefits, casino gaming is also part of the federal government's efforts to increase tribal self-determination by providing the means of self-sufficiency.

While the state as a whole often sees much of the benefits through reduced demand for welfare services and increased revenue[3] (Anders 1998, 2000), the consequences for the local community beyond tribal members tend to be mostly negative. Research finds that gaming can increase social and criminal costs. Evans and Topoleski (2002) find that within four years of a casino opening, local communities experience increases in violent crime, auto theft, and personal bankruptcy rates. Grinols and Mustard (2004) estimate that counties with casino gaming witness a steady increase in crime rates, resulting in an increase of about 8% in the crime rate in casino counties in 1996 at a cost of $75 per adult. Further, they also find evidence that these costs may spread to bordering counties as well. In terms of the social impact, Anders (1998, 2000) finds increases in gambling and alcohol addiction, spousal abuse, child neglect, and employment problems (Anders 1998, 2000). Hopes that these costs would be offset by increased revenue for local businesses have not been borne out: "there thus appear to be few, if any, positive economic spillovers to the local hotel or restaurant industry" (Kearney, p.286, see also National Gambling Impact Study Commission 1999).

[3] Tribal casinos are not required to pay state income tax, though they often generate considerable revenue through income taxes paid by non-Indian workers and Indians living off reservation. In addition, many tribal casinos contribute payments in lieu of taxes (pilots) to non-Indian governments to aid local communities.

Voters therefore face a difficult decision when voting whether or not to expand Indian gaming. There are clear benefits to tribal members, but clear costs for non-members in local communities. The relative weight that voters place on these costs and benefits will vary with their sympathies for the status of Indian nations and their perceptions about the seriousness of the local costs of casinos. But how might these weights vary with geographic location and exposure to Indian nations and Indian gaming?

First, there is likely to be a "not in my back yard" (NIMBY) resistance (Kraft and Clary 1991; Mazmanian and Morell 1990) to Indian gaming based on the social and economic costs to local communities. Proximity to Indian reservations that might build or expand casinos should therefore decrease support for Indian gaming initiatives. Alternatively, this opposition could be mitigated to the extent that voters understand the clear benefits to tribal members. Proximity to Indian nations could have a countervailing effect, then, since voters close to reservations are most likely to be aware of the difficulties facing many tribes and may therefore be more likely to support policies like Indian gaming that could offer tribes a way to improve the status of their members. Existing research shows that the level of local interaction with minority groups shapes non-group members' perceptions of that minority (Branton and Jones 2005; Hero 1998; Jackman and Crane 1986; Kinder and Mendelberg 1995; Tolbert and Hero 1996, 1998). On balance, then, we cannot make a clear prediction about whether exposure to tribes will increase or decrease support for Indian gaming. However, given the potentially large costs associated with casinos, our expectation is that proximity will tend to decrease support more than it increases it.

Second, voters with greater experience with the policy in question may have different information about its consequences and therefore a different reaction to its expansion. If a nearby tribe has operated a gaming establishment for many years, voters in nearby communities may be

more likely to observe the benefits that accrue to tribes with gaming. Further, they may also have witnessed the economic and social consequences for the local community. Thus, we expect that due to reductions in uncertainty associated with a local expansion of gaming, voters with more information about gaming respond differently than voters with less information.

Because we are unsure how voters' experiences with nearby gaming compare to their expectations about those experiences, we cannot state whether experience increases or decreases support for Indian gaming. This will depend on whether the actual economic, social, and tribal consequences of gaming are greater or smaller than expected. If opponents overstate the negative consequences, then experience with gaming may reduce concerns about these consequences. Further, evidence of the tangible benefits to tribal members may weigh more heavily in their minds than abstract appeals to sovereignty and self-sufficiency.

Third, we believe that there may be an interactive effect of exposure to gaming and non-gaming tribes. Voters may respond differently to proposed expansions of gaming if they have more exposure to tribes that already have gaming. For example, if gaming opponents overstate the negative consequences of gaming for local communities, then voters with more experience with gaming may be less swayed by opponents' protestations and may be more likely to support gaming opportunities for non-gaming tribes. The same outcome would occur if voters exposed to gaming learn that the benefits to tribes are greater than anticipated. Our expectation is that exposure to gaming may mitigate the effects of proximity to non-gaming tribes.

In sum, there is reason to expect that exposure to non-gaming tribes may have a different effect than exposure to gaming tribes and that the effect of one is likely contingent upon the value of the other. In the analysis, we include the two types of exposure (gaming and non-gaming) separately and also include an interaction term between the two. Finally, we have

discussed different ways that exposure to non-gaming and gaming tribes might affect voter decision making. But because these considerations often have opposite effects on vote choice, we do not have a clear hypothesis about the direction of the overall effects of exposure; however, we have suggested which effects we believe may dominate the overall relationship between exposure and vote choice.

Measures of Proximity to Tribes and Tribal Gaming

In order to determine how proximity to Indian nations affects voter decision-making, we use GIS (Geographic Information Systems), which is a computer technology designed for the purpose of integrating spatial data (or where things are) and attribute data (characteristics of a geographic area). GIS serves as a useful tool for evaluating local concern for public policy as it eases the examination of the role of spatial attributes on voting behavior at various levels of geographic aggregation.[4] Herein, GIS is used to construct several measures regarding the spatial location of federally recognized Indian nations relative to every census tract in California.[5] First, we identified the longitudinal and latitudinal center of each census tract and the longitudinal and latitudinal center of each Indian nation. Next, we calculated the distance (in miles) from the center of each census tract to the center of each Indian nation. This information is then used to construct our measures of exposure to gaming and non-gaming tribes.

There are a number of possible ways to measure tract-level exposure to Indian nations and Indian gaming. Good measures should account for the proximity of tribes and place greater weight on tribes that are nearby without ignoring tribes that are further removed. Ultimately, we created measures that weight each gaming or non-gaming tribe by the inverse of their distance to

[4] See Berry and Baybeck (2005) for a recent application of GIS to study state policy diffusion.
[5] The census tract is generally similar to a city block as it is limited to an area with set boundaries, yet it allows for a large enough population that individual voters cannot be identified. Census tracts also include larger rural areas.

the tract.[6] Thus, our measure of exposure to gaming for each tract, *i*, is constructed by taking the sum of one over the distance, d_{ij}, to each tribe, *j*, from that tract:

$$GamingExposure_{it} = \sum_{j=1}^{98} g_{jt} / d_{ij} ,$$

where g_{jt} is an indicator for whether tribe *j* has a compact in year *t*. *Non-gaming Exposure*$_{it}$ is constructed the same way, but by replacing g_{ij} with $(1 - g_{ij})$ in order to include only non-gaming tribes.

There are two extensions that we make to this basic measure. First, the basic measure unnecessarily fixes the relative importance of close and distant tribes. Since we have no a priori theoretical reason to presume a specific relative importance based on distance, this seems an arbitrary decision. Thus, we generalize the basic measure by raising it to possibly non-unity powers. Second, because many tracts are extremely close to a tribe (the closest is .004 miles), we add a constant to the distance variable. This eliminates situations in which the values of our exposure variables for a given tract are dependent almost entirely on the distance to one tribe. Adding in these two pieces results in our final measures:

$$GamingExposure_{it} = \sum_{j=1}^{98} \left(g_{jt} / (1 + d_{ij}) \right)^r .$$

As *r* gets larger, more weight is placed on nearby tribes relative to more distant tribes. We constructed values of these measures for many different values of *r* and report results based on

[6] Alternative measures considered include the distances to the nearest gaming and nongaming tribes and the number of tribes within radii of 50 or 100 miles. While these variables have different interpretations, running the analyses with these alternate measures generally lead to similar conclusions. We chose our exposure measure over these since it better reflects distance to all gaming or non-gaming tribes while imposing fewer assumptions on how close a tribe has to be to influence voter behavior.

three of them: 0.25, 0.5, and 1.[7] The modified exposure measure is also used to generate a measure of exposure to non-gaming tribes by replacing g_{ij} with $(1 - g_{ij})$.

[Figure 1 Here.]

Figure 1 conveys the construction of our exposure variables. The solid lines represent the contribution of a single tribe to the exposure measure for a given tract – the final value is determined by summing up the contributions of all tribes for that tract. The graph illustrates how changes in *r* affect the relative influence of close and distant tribes. When *r* is one, only nearby tribes have a meaningful contribution to exposure, as evidence by the sharp decrease from the value of one at a distance of zero to a value of 0.10 for tribes only 9 miles away. When *r* is 0.5, a tribe nine miles away contributes 0.32 to exposure and when *r* is 0.10 it contributes 0.79. As the kernel density estimate illustrates, the average distance from a tract to tribes is fairly large, with two modes arising from geographic clustering of tribes. This suggests that the relative weight put on more distant tribes may have a great impact on the value of the exposure variable.

Figure 2 presents a histogram of the exposure variables for 1998 and 2000 when *r* equals 0.5. Consider first the results for 1998, when Proposition 5 was on the ballot. Because very few tribes had gaming compacts with the state at the time, exposure to gaming tribes is very low, with an average value of 1.02. At the same time, this means that exposure to non-gaming tribes must be very large, which it is, with a mean value of 5.93. In 2000, the two variables move closer together and cross due to the increase in gaming tribes after the passage of Proposition 5. Recall that we consider tribes that negotiated compacts under Proposition 5 to be gaming tribes in 2000 since many of them were open for business by then. Exposure to gaming tribes increases to a

[7] The entire set of values of *r* considered is: 0.05, 0.1, 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, 1, and 2. We found that values larger than one lead to increasing amounts of skewness in the measures and produced a greater number of outliers for tracts with tribes very nearby.

mean value of 4.25 while non-gaming exposure decreases to 2.69.[8] Note the hint of the longer tail on the right for all four measures – as we noted before, this tail increases and the spread decreases as *r* gets larger.

[Figure 2 Here.]

Tribal Proximity and Voter Choices

In this section, we utilize our measures of exposure to study the effect of proximity to gaming and non-gaming tribes on tract-level voting behavior on Indian gaming initiatives. As discussed earlier, extant theories suggest that exposure could have either positive or negative effects on voting, so we have no definitive hypothesis about the direction of the influence of exposure on vote choice. Yet our expectation is that voters may place greater weight on the potential costs of gaming to the local community relative to their identification with tribal members. Importantly, both may increase with proximity. Further, we expect that this negative effect will be moderated by exposure to tribes that already have gaming in place, which will give voters more information about the costs and benefits of gaming for local communities and tribal members. The direction of this moderation will correspond with the effect of exposure to gaming tribes in general, about which we have no specific expectation. To account for this proposed moderating relationship, the model includes an interaction between Gaming Exposure and Non-gaming Exposure (*Exposure Interaction)*. In order to determine how proximity to tribes influenced voting on these three Indian gaming propositions, we conduct regression analysis.[9]

[8] Because the number and location of tribes does not change, the sum of gaming and non-gaming exposure measures are constant for each tract. The values only change as tribes acquire gaming and switch the two measures to which they contribute.

[9] All models are estimated in Stata 9 using OLS, with robust standard errors. We also weight each tract by its total population from the 2000 Census report. Since tracts are relatively similar in size, this does not affect the results very much.

In addition to our exposure variables, we also include controls to account for other relevant factors that may influence support for Indian gaming propositions. After considering a number of demographic and political variables, we ultimately employ only two: the *Percent Native American* population for each census tract and the *Republican Presidential Vote,* using the fractions of the vote for Dole in 1996 for Proposition 5 and the vote for Bush in 2000 for Propositions 1A and 29. While at first blush this might appear to be an overly sparse model of vote choice, we found that it performed just as well as models with additional, often highly collinear, demographic controls, so we favor the more succinct specification.[10]

[Table 1 Here.]

The results for all three propositions using the different values of exposure generating by setting *r* equal to 0.25, 0.5 and 1 are presented in Table 1. In order to make the coefficients for exposure more comparable, we normalized each of the exposure variables (prior to interacting them) so that they range from zero to ten.[11] Overall, the results are quite similar across propositions, though the model does a much poorer job of explaining support for Proposition 29 according to the R^2 values. We speculate on the reasons for this later.

The exposure measures demonstrate strong effects on support for all three propositions. The coefficients for the constitutive terms for exposure to gaming tribes are all positive and are significant at the .01 level or better for all values of *r* for Propositions 5 and 1A, but not for Proposition 29. The analogous coefficients for non-gaming exposure are all negative and significant at the .01 level for all three ballot measures and for all values of *r*; and the

[10] We also estimated the models including measures of *Percent College Education*, *Median Age* and *Median Age Squared*, *Percent Urban*, and *Percent White.* The R-squared values did not improve when we added these variables. Further, if we omit the Republican vote share variable, the the R-squared values drop from around 0.75 to 0.5. The inclusion of these demographic control variables did not have a substantive or statistical impact on the relationship of interest, i.e. proximity to gaming and non-gaming Indian tribes. These estimates are available upon request.
[11] Note that Figure 2 was constructed using the raw values, not the normalized ones.

coefficients for the interaction variables are all positive, with six of nine significant at the .10 level or better. Of course, the assessment of the effect of exposure on gaming must account for the combined effects, so we use the coefficients to generate the predicted marginal effects of gaming (non-gaming) exposure at different values of non-gaming (gaming) exposure.

[Figure 3 Here.]

These results are reported graphically in Figure 3. The top row shows the marginal effect of exposure to non-gaming tribes given exposure to gaming tribes; the bottom row shows the opposite relationship. Five patterns emerge from this figure. First, the effect of exposure is almost always significant over the range of the modifying term, with the exceptions occurring at the extremes for Proposition 29, where the dashed lines corresponding to the 95% confidence interval cross zero. Second, consistent with our expectation, the effect of non-gaming exposure is always negative, averaging about -3% for Proposition 5, -4% for Proposition 1A and -1% for Proposition 29. Third, the marginal effect of gaming exposure is always positive, averaging almost 5% for Proposition 5, 3% for Proposition 1A and 0.5% for Proposition 29. Fourth, the modifying effects are positive, consistent with our expectation that exposure to gaming tribes reduces the negative effect of exposure to non-gaming tribes; the effect appears to be greatest for Proposition 1, smaller for Proposition 5 and virtually nonexistent for Proposition 29. This conclusion is not surprising given the magnitude and significance of the interaction terms reported in Table 1. Fifth, the effects are generally much smaller for Proposition 29 than for the other two measures.

So what do these results mean substantively? First, voters with greater exposure to non-gaming tribes are less likely to vote in favor of these three Indian gaming initiatives. This finding is consistent with a preference against nearby gaming operations as opposed to greater

familiarity with nearby tribes generating support for gaming as means of tribal advancement. At the same time, this opposition is reduced as exposure to gaming tribes increases, suggesting that familiarity with gaming in general may reduce voters' concerns about its possible consequences for their community. Second, greater exposure to gaming tribes increases support for these gaming propositions. This finding is consistent with voters viewing gaming favorably once they have seen the potential consequences it can have for nearby tribes. Further, the effect becomes even larger as exposure to non-gaming tribes increases, suggesting that voters may wish to see these benefits accruing more broadly to other tribes in the area.

Finally, our control variables produce fairly consistent findings. Tracts with a greater proportion of votes for the Republican presidential candidates are less likely to vote for Indian gaming. And while the magnitudes of the coefficients are fairly similar for Propositions 5 and 1A, they are about one fifth this size in the case of Proposition 29. The results for percent Native American are slightly more mixed: five of the six coefficients for the first two propositions are positive and significant, but all three are negative for Proposition 29, with one significant and the others weakly insignificant.

Before moving on to a discussion of the findings and the potential implications, we would briefly like to address the Proposition 29 results. As noted, it appeared on the 2000 ballot with Proposition 1A and would only be valid if Proposition 1A failed. Further, unlike Proposition 1A and Proposition 5, Proposition 29 received markedly less attention. In fact, the campaign surrounding Proposition 29 only cost 44 thousand dollars compared to the 23 million spent on Proposition 1A or the 92 million spent on Proposition 5. The findings, or rather non-significant results, regarding voting on Proposition 29 may be a result of the lower level of

information pertaining to the initiative *and* the prominence of Proposition 1A in the 2000 election.

Conclusion

Our findings suggest that spatial proximity can be an important consideration when describing support for geographically based ballot initiatives. Voter's decisions on three Indian gaming propositions in California are found to be influenced to a great degree by exposure to both gaming and non-gaming tribes. Overall, our results suggest that voters with little exposure to gaming are less likely to vote for expansions of Indian gaming, but as voters are exposed to more gaming tribes, they become more likely to vote for expanded gaming opportunities.

Extrapolated over time, this suggests that support for gaming should increase as the number of Indian nations with gaming operations grows. Yet we also suspect that this trend may not hold up in the long run, as expanded gaming may produce a backlash among voters. In 2004, for example, Propositions 76 and 78, sponsored by a coalition of tribes and Nevada casino owners, respectively, both failed, consistent with a possible backlash. To explore this possibility, future work could examine more recent Indian gaming initiatives, which have not all fared as well as the ones we study. Further, while these data are not easily available, we think it would be profitable to consider the status and size of gaming operations in the analysis. This could be accounted for by considering whether a compacting tribe has established a casino and by counting the number or type of slot machine or table games that it operates.

Our results are noteworthy for the literature on voter decision-making on ballot initiatives since they add an additional consideration that voters may make when deciding how to cast their ballots. While voters are generally thought to be poorly informed about the content of many

initiatives, our results show that they respond in a systematic way to information that is relevant for their decision. While we cannot say whether the use of this information increased voters' ability to reach the "correct" (i.e., fully informed) decision, it is clear that their decisions varied with respect to the magnitude of the potential consequences of gaming for their communities.

Further, we believe the findings reported here are relevant for the class of policies with geographic-specific implications. Indeed, the number of public policy issues in this class is numerous, including environmental, urban/rural, land and water use, numerous taxation issues, stadium citing, and border issues. For example, recent research by Branton, Dillingham, Dunaway, and Miller (N.D.) finds that voting on nativist ballot initiatives varies with distance to the Mexican border. Ballot initiatives (and public policy generally) that propose to distribute the costs and benefits based on geography are likely to garner opposition in areas which will bear the cost and support in areas that will receive the rewards.

At the same time, while we find that exposure is an important factor to consider when evaluating support for initiatives with geographic-specific consequences, we are unable to separate the processes that make it an important factor. This is partly a result of our use of aggregated data, which makes it difficult to determine variation in individual voter's responses to exposure. Thus, we believe that additional research is needed to cull out these different processes. One option is to use individual-level data and specify how the response to exposure might vary with individual-level characteristics. A second option would be to gather survey data that specifically asked voters about their perceptions of the local consequences of the policy in question and their perceptions and sympathies about the consequences for the winners and losers.

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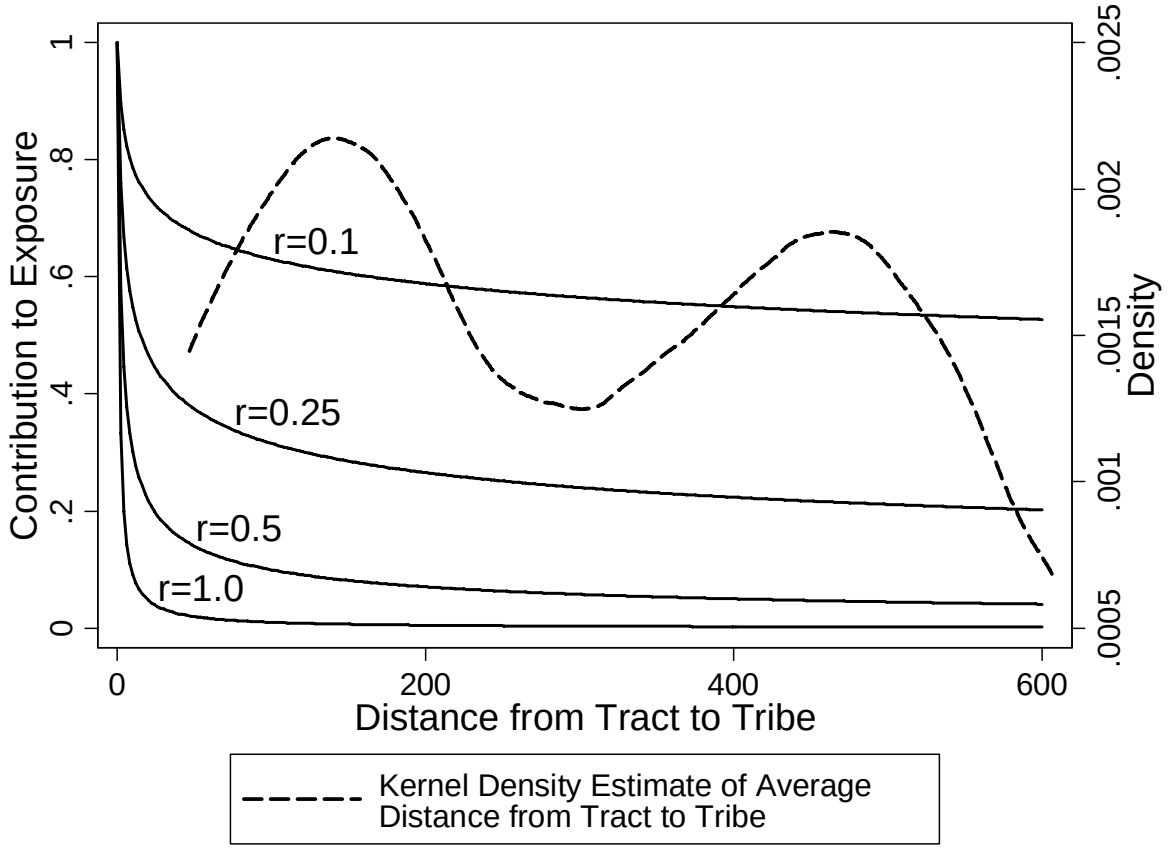
Table 1.
Regression Analysis of Tract-Level Vote Share for Indian Gaming Propositions

	Proposition 5			**Proposition 1A**			**Proposition 29**		
	r=0.25	*r=0.5*	*r=1.0*	*r=0.25*	*r=0.5*	*r=1.0*	*r=0.25*	*r=0.5*	*r=1.0*
Republican Presidential Vote	-0.417**	-0.416**	-0.412**	-0.322**	-0.325**	-0.328**	-0.075**	-0.074**	-0.072**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
Percent Native American	0.440**	0.347**	-0.09	0.807**	0.751**	0.409**	-0.134*	-0.109	-0.126
	(0.047)	(0.063)	(0.181)	(0.178)	(0.178)	(0.151)	(0.079)	(0.080)	(0.089)
Gaming Exposure	3.882**	4.390**	3.781**	1.582**	1.802**	2.846**	0.091	0.248	0.231
	(0.172)	(0.185)	(0.324)	(0.296)	(0.255)	(0.295)	(0.230)	(0.197)	(0.172)
Non-gaming Exposure	-2.973**	-3.225**	-1.340**	-3.785**	-5.035**	-5.636**	-0.755**	-0.968**	-1.802**
	(0.145)	(0.141)	(0.189)	(0.340)	(0.304)	(0.659)	(0.267)	(0.223)	(0.261)
Exposure Interaction	0.073*	0.097**	0.003	0.216**	0.395**	0.589**	0.047	0.037	0.198**
	(0.038)	(0.043)	(0.087)	(0.082)	(0.087)	(0.196)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.096)
Constant	75.836**	77.423**	78.302**	82.202**	82.929**	80.817**	58.787**	58.527**	58.315**
	(0.629)	(0.454)	(0.312)	(1.061)	(0.634)	(0.332)	(0.919)	(0.589)	(0.353)
R-squared	0.75	0.70	0.58	0.51	0.51	0.44	0.06	0.06	0.06
Observations		6904			6973			6950	

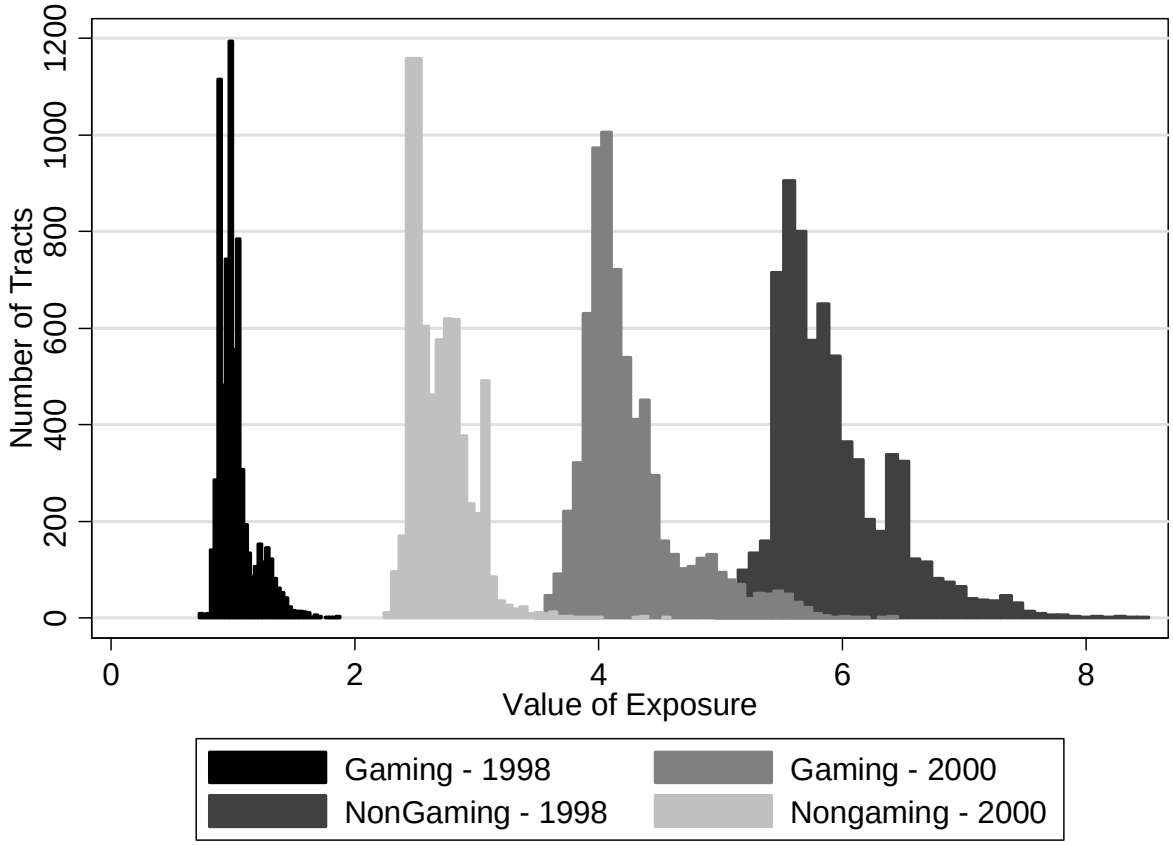
Notes: Robust standard errors in brackets (clustered on FIPS code); * $p \leq .10$; ** $p \leq .05$.

Figure 1.
Contribution of Indian Nations to Tract-Level Exposure Variable for Different Values of *r*



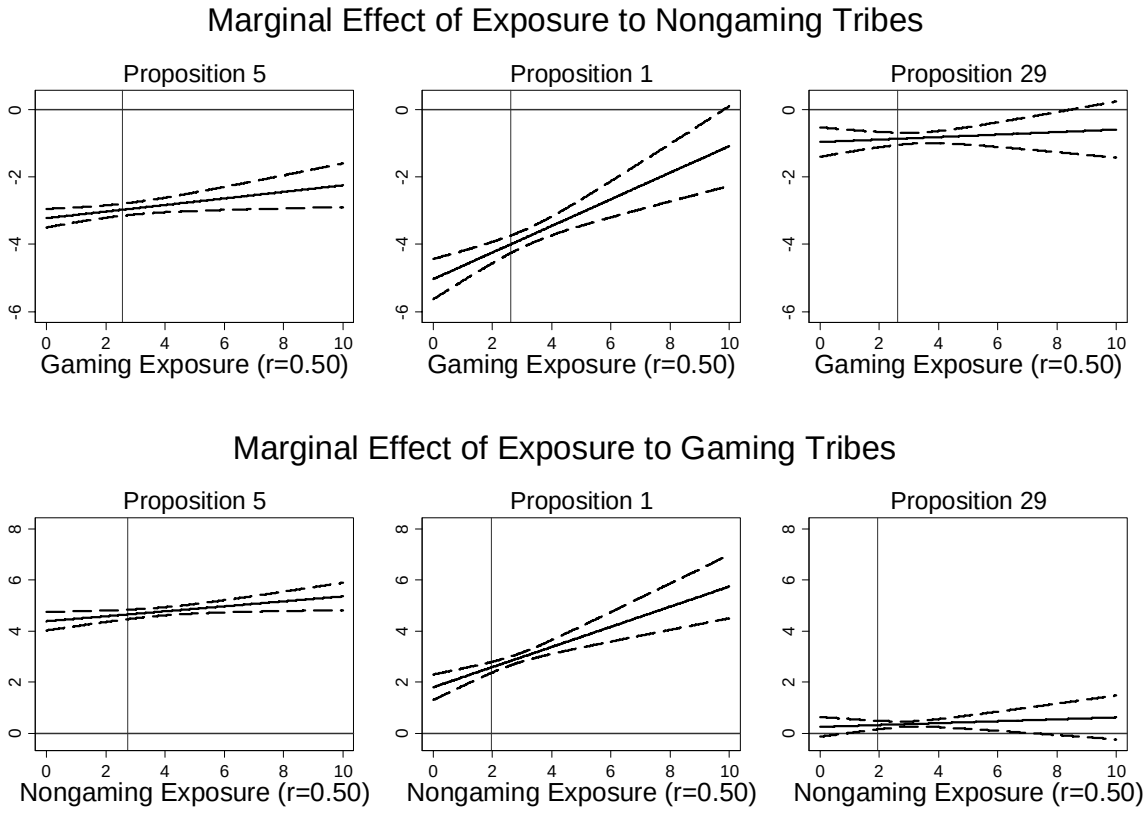
Notes: The solid lines represent the contribution of a tribe at each distance to the exposure variable – the final value sums the contributions of the distances from all 96 tribes from a tract. See text for formula converting distance measure to exposure measure. The dashed line represents a kernel density estimate of the distribution of the distance of tribes relative to tracts; because these distances are different for each tract, we used the average distances of the closest tribe, the second-closest tribe, etc., across all tracts and then generated the kernel density estimate.

Figure 2.
Histograms of Exposure Variables (r=0.5) by Year



Source: Authors data on tribal gaming compacts; GIS (Distance to reservations).

Figure 3.
Marginal Effect of Exposure to Gaming (Non-gaming) Tribes Given Exposure to Non-gaming (Gaming) Tribes



Notes: Graphs generated in Stata using regression results from Table 1. Dashed lines give 95% confidence intervals; horizontal lines indicate the mean of the modifying variable.