

# why were immigrants important to political machines

**why were immigrants important to political machines** is a question that delves into the intricate relationship between immigrant communities and political organizations in American urban history. Political machines thrived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, largely due to their ability to mobilize immigrant populations who were often marginalized in mainstream society. Immigrants provided political machines with a reliable voting bloc, helping to secure and maintain power for machine leaders. In return, political machines offered immigrants essential services, social support, and pathways to economic opportunity. This symbiotic relationship shaped the political landscape of many American cities during periods of rapid industrialization and urbanization. This article explores the reasons immigrants were crucial to political machines, the benefits both parties gained, and the broader social and political implications of this alliance.

- The Role of Immigrants in Political Machines
- Services Provided by Political Machines to Immigrants
- Political Influence and Voting Power
- Economic and Social Support for Immigrant Communities
- Criticism and Controversies Surrounding Political Machines

## The Role of Immigrants in Political Machines

Immigrants played a pivotal role in the success and longevity of political machines in American cities. These machines, often controlled by a local boss or a small group of political operatives, relied heavily on the support of immigrant communities to maintain political dominance. Immigrants, many of whom faced language barriers, poverty, and discrimination, found political machines to be a crucial source of assistance and representation in a new country. By delivering votes en masse, immigrants became a powerful constituency for machine politicians.

## Demographic Significance

The rapid influx of immigrants from Europe during the late 19th and early 20th centuries dramatically changed the demographic composition of cities like New York, Chicago, and Boston. Immigrant groups such as the Irish, Italians, Germans, and Eastern Europeans often settled in densely populated urban neighborhoods. Political machines capitalized on these demographics by targeting immigrant voters who were eager for social support and political inclusion but unfamiliar with the American political system.

## **Mutual Dependency**

The relationship between immigrants and political machines was one of mutual dependency. Immigrants needed assistance navigating the challenges of urban life, including finding employment, housing, and legal aid. Political machines, on the other hand, required a dependable base of voters to win elections and maintain their influence. This interdependence created a durable political alliance that shaped urban governance for decades.

## **Services Provided by Political Machines to Immigrants**

Political machines were adept at providing tangible services that directly addressed the needs of immigrant communities. These services fostered loyalty among immigrants and were instrumental in securing votes. By functioning as informal social service providers, political machines filled gaps left by inadequate government infrastructure and social programs.

### **Employment Assistance**

One of the most significant services political machines offered was help in securing jobs. Many immigrants struggled to find steady employment in unfamiliar and often hostile environments. Political machines used their connections with local businesses, public works projects, and municipal agencies to obtain jobs for immigrant supporters. This patronage system ensured economic stability for many immigrant families.

### **Housing and Legal Aid**

Political machines also assisted immigrants in finding affordable housing, often negotiating with landlords or providing access to city-owned housing. Additionally, they helped immigrants navigate the legal system, including issues related to immigration status, citizenship, and conflicts with law enforcement. These services were critical in building trust and dependence on the political machine.

### **Social and Community Support**

Beyond material assistance, political machines helped immigrants integrate socially. They organized cultural events, religious celebrations, and community gatherings that reinforced ethnic identity and community cohesion. This social support bolstered the immigrants' sense of belonging and loyalty to the political organization that promoted their interests.

## **Political Influence and Voting Power**

The cornerstone of the political machine's power was its ability to deliver votes reliably and in large numbers. Immigrants were essential to this because their concentrated populations and shared interests made them a predictable voting bloc. Political machines developed sophisticated methods to mobilize immigrant voters and maintain their allegiance.

## **Voter Mobilization Strategies**

Political machines employed various strategies to ensure immigrant voter turnout, including door-to-door canvassing, offering transportation to polling stations, and providing incentives such as food or small gifts. They also worked to naturalize immigrants to expand the electorate. These efforts maximized voting participation within immigrant communities.

## **Control Over Election Outcomes**

By harnessing the immigrant vote, political machines could sway close elections and influence city governance. This control enabled machine leaders to secure political appointments, allocate resources, and enact policies favorable to their base. The dependable immigrant vote was thus a critical asset in maintaining political power and shaping municipal decision-making.

## **Economic and Social Support for Immigrant Communities**

Political machines did more than just win votes; they actively contributed to the economic and social welfare of immigrant communities. This support was a key reason immigrants remained loyal to political machines despite criticisms of corruption and inefficiency.

## **Access to Public Resources**

Political machines facilitated immigrant access to public resources such as schools, hospitals, and welfare programs. By doing so, they helped immigrants improve their quality of life and gain upward mobility within American society. This assistance was particularly vital in an era when government services were limited or biased against immigrants.

## **Pathways to Political Participation**

Political machines also provided immigrants with opportunities to engage in politics beyond voting. Many immigrants found employment within the machines as precinct captains, ward leaders, or civil servants. This involvement empowered immigrants and helped them develop political skills and influence within their communities.

- Employment opportunities through patronage
- Access to essential social services and housing
- Legal assistance and protection
- Community integration and cultural support
- Political empowerment and leadership roles

# **Criticism and Controversies Surrounding Political Machines**

Despite their importance to immigrant communities, political machines were often criticized for corruption, nepotism, and undemocratic practices. The reliance on immigrants, while beneficial in many ways, also exposed these communities to exploitation and manipulation.

## **Corruption and Patronage**

Political machines frequently engaged in corrupt practices such as vote-buying, graft, and embezzlement. The patronage system, while providing jobs, also fostered inefficiency and favoritism. Critics argued that political machines prioritized maintaining power over good governance or the public interest.

## **Limitations on Political Freedom**

Immigrants, dependent on political machines for resources, sometimes faced pressure to vote in specific ways or support certain candidates. This dynamic limited political freedom and created an environment where dissent was discouraged. Moreover, political machines could suppress opposition, undermining democratic principles.

## **Reform Movements**

The excesses of political machines eventually triggered reform movements aimed at curbing corruption and promoting merit-based governance. These reforms sought to dismantle the patronage system and introduce civil service exams and other measures to ensure fairer political processes. Nonetheless, the historical role of immigrants in sustaining political machines remains a significant chapter in American political history.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why were immigrants important to political machines in the late 19th and early 20th centuries?**

Immigrants provided a large and growing voter base for political machines, who in turn offered them jobs, housing, and social services, ensuring loyalty and votes.

### **How did political machines benefit from immigrant**

## **communities?**

Political machines benefited by securing reliable votes from immigrant communities, which helped maintain their power and control over local governments.

## **What role did patronage play in the relationship between immigrants and political machines?**

Political machines used patronage to provide immigrants with jobs, legal assistance, and social services, creating a system of mutual support and political loyalty.

## **Why did immigrants often rely on political machines upon arriving in the United States?**

Immigrants often faced language barriers, discrimination, and economic hardship, so political machines offered essential support and resources that helped them assimilate and survive.

## **In what ways did political machines help immigrants integrate into American society?**

Political machines helped immigrants by providing jobs, housing, legal help, and sometimes education, which facilitated their integration and improved their living conditions.

## **How did the support of immigrants help political machines maintain power?**

The consistent support and votes from immigrant communities allowed political machines to secure election victories and maintain control over city governments and resources.

## **Were all immigrant groups equally important to political machines?**

Political machines typically focused on immigrant groups that were large, concentrated in urban areas, and willing to engage in the patronage system, such as Irish, Italian, and Eastern European immigrants.

## **Did the importance of immigrants to political machines change over time?**

Yes, as immigrants became more assimilated and political reforms reduced patronage, the direct influence of political machines over immigrant voters declined, but initially, immigrants were crucial to their power.

## Additional Resources

### 1. *Bosses, Machines, and the Immigrant Vote: Political Power in Urban America*

This book explores the critical role immigrants played in the rise of political machines in American cities during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It examines how political bosses leveraged immigrant communities to build loyal voter bases in exchange for social services, jobs, and protection. The text offers detailed case studies of cities like New York and Chicago, highlighting the mutual benefits and ethical complexities of these relationships.

### 2. *Immigrants and the Urban Political Machine: A Symbiotic Relationship*

Focusing on the symbiotic relationship between immigrants and political machines, this book delves into the mechanisms through which immigrants gained political influence and social mobility. It discusses how political machines provided essential support to immigrants navigating unfamiliar urban environments while securing votes to maintain power. The author also considers the long-term impacts on immigrant assimilation and urban governance.

### 3. *Machine Politics and the Immigrant Experience in America*

This work analyzes the intersection of machine politics and the immigrant experience, emphasizing how political machines shaped immigrant identities and communities. By offering patronage and social services, machines became a crucial lifeline for many immigrants, fostering political allegiance. The book also critiques the corruption and exploitation inherent in these systems, balancing their role in immigrant integration.

### 4. *Urban Political Machines: Immigrants, Power, and Patronage*

This book investigates how political machines depended on immigrant populations to sustain their power through patronage networks. It highlights the reciprocal nature of this dependence: immigrants received jobs, housing, and legal assistance, while machines secured votes and political dominance. The analysis includes the evolution of these relationships over time and their influence on urban policy and reform movements.

### 5. *The Immigrant Vote and Political Machines in American Cities*

Focusing on the electoral power of immigrant communities, this book explains why political machines prioritized immigrant votes to maintain control. It covers strategies used to mobilize immigrant voters, including naturalization drives and community organizing. The author provides insight into the social and political challenges faced by immigrants and the ways machines capitalized on these vulnerabilities.

### 6. *Power Brokers: Immigrants and the Rise of Political Machines*

This title chronicles the rise of political machines alongside waves of immigration, illustrating how immigrants became indispensable to political bosses. It examines the mutual benefits and tensions in these alliances, showing how machines facilitated immigrant integration into political life while exploiting their needs. The book also addresses the decline of political machines and the changing role of immigrant communities.

### 7. *From Newcomers to Power Players: Immigrants in the Machine Politics Era*

This book traces the journey of immigrants from marginalized newcomers to influential participants in machine politics. It describes how political machines served as gateways to economic opportunity and political representation for immigrants. Through personal stories and historical analysis, the book sheds light on the complex dynamics of loyalty, power, and community building.

### 8. *Political Machines and the Immigrant Network: Building Urban Power*

Exploring the networks that connected immigrants to political machines, this book reveals how trust and reciprocity underpinned urban political power structures. It details how immigrant communities organized themselves within these networks to access resources and influence. The text also discusses the implications for democratic participation and social equity in American cities.

#### *9. The Role of Immigrants in Sustaining Political Machines: A Historical Perspective*

This historical study emphasizes the indispensable role immigrants played in sustaining political machines across various American cities. It offers a comprehensive overview of the social services and political strategies used to attract and retain immigrant support. The book provides a nuanced understanding of how these relationships affected urban politics and immigrant integration over time.

## **Why Were Immigrants Important To Political Machines**

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**why were immigrants important to political machines:** Understanding Immigration Marilyn Hoskin, 2017-11-14 Undergraduate-level textbook introducing students to the factors which define immigration politics in the United States and Europe. Based on the dual premise that nations need to learn from how immigration issues are handled in other modern democracies, and that adaptation to a new era of refugee and emigration movements is critical to a stable world, Marilyn Hoskin systematically compares the immigration policies of the United States, Britain, Germany, and France as prime examples of the challenges faced in the twenty-first century. Because immigration is a complex phenomenon, Understanding Immigration provides students with a multidisciplinary framework based on the thesis that a nation's geography, history, economy, and political system define its immigration policy. In the process, it is possible to weigh the influence of such factors as isolation, colonialism, labor imbalances, and tolerance of fringe parties and groups in determining how governments ultimately respond to both routine immigration requests and the more dramatic surges witnessed in both Europe and the United States since 2013.

**why were immigrants important to political machines:** Three Worlds of Relief Cybelle Fox, 2012-04-29 Three Worlds of Relief examines the role of race and immigration in the development of the American social welfare system by comparing how blacks, Mexicans, and European immigrants were treated by welfare policies during the Progressive Era and the New Deal. Taking readers from the turn of the twentieth century to the dark days of the Depression, Cybelle Fox finds that, despite rampant nativism, European immigrants received generous access to social welfare programs. The communities in which they lived invested heavily in relief. Social workers protected them from snooping immigration agents, and ensured that noncitizenship and illegal status did not prevent them from receiving the assistance they needed. But that same helping hand was not extended to Mexicans and blacks. Fox reveals, for example, how blacks were relegated to racist and degrading public assistance programs, while Mexicans who asked for assistance were deported with the help of the very social workers they turned to for aid. Drawing on a wealth of archival evidence, Fox paints a riveting portrait of how race, labor, and politics combined to create three starkly different worlds of relief. She debunks the myth that white America's immigrant ancestors pulled themselves up by their bootstraps, unlike immigrants and minorities today. Three

Worlds of Relief challenges us to reconsider not only the historical record but also the implications of our past on contemporary debates about race, immigration, and the American welfare state.

**why were immigrants important to political machines:** *The Economics of Immigration* Örn B. Bodvarsson, Hendrik Van den Berg, 2013-05-17 *The Economics of Immigration* is written as both a reference for researchers and as a textbook on the economics of immigration. It is aimed at two audiences: (1) researchers who are interested in learning more about how economists approach the study of human migration flows; and (2) graduate students taking a course on migration or a labor economics course where immigration is one of the subfields studied. The book covers the economic theory of immigration, which explains why people move across borders and details the consequences of such movements for the source and destination economies. The book also describes immigration policy, providing both a history of immigration policy in a variety of countries and using the economic theory of immigration to explain the determinants and consequences of the policies. The timing of this book coincides with the emergence of immigration as a major political and economic issue in the USA, Japan Europe and many developing countries.

**why were immigrants important to political machines:** *E Pluribus Unum?* Gary Gerstle, John Mollenkopf, 2001-11-29 The political involvement of earlier waves of immigrants and their children was essential in shaping the American political climate in the first half of the twentieth century. Immigrant votes built industrial trade unions, fought for social protections and religious tolerance, and helped bring the Democratic Party to dominance in large cities throughout the country. In contrast, many scholars find that today's immigrants, whose numbers are fast approaching those of the last great wave, are politically apathetic and unlikely to assume a similar voice in their chosen country. *E Pluribus Unum?* delves into the wealth of research by historians of the Ellis Island era and by social scientists studying today's immigrants and poses a crucial question: What can the nation's past experience teach us about the political path modern immigrants and their children will take as Americans? *E Pluribus Unum?* explores key issues about the incorporation of immigrants into American public life, examining the ways that institutional processes, civic ideals, and cultural identities have shaped the political aspirations of immigrants. The volume presents some surprising re-assessments of the past as it assesses what may happen in the near future. An examination of party bosses and the party machine concludes that they were less influential political mobilizers than is commonly believed. Thus their absence from today's political scene may not be decisive. Some contributors argue that the contemporary political system tends to exclude immigrants, while others remind us that past immigrants suffered similar exclusions, achieving political power only after long and difficult struggles. Will the strong home country ties of today's immigrants inhibit their political interest here? Chapters on this topic reveal that transnationalism has always been prominent in the immigrant experience, and that today's immigrants may be even freer to act as dual citizens. *E Pluribus Unum?* theorizes about the fate of America's civic ethos—has it devolved from an ideal of liberal individualism to a fractured multiculturalism, or have we always had a culture of racial and ethnic fragmentation? Research in this volume shows that today's immigrant schoolchildren are often less concerned with ideals of civic responsibility than with forging their own identity and finding their own niche within the American system of racial and ethnic distinction. Incorporating the significant influx immigrants into American society is a central challenge for our civic and political institutions—one that cuts to the core of who we are as a people and as a nation. *E Pluribus Unum?* shows that while today's immigrants and their children are in some ways particularly vulnerable to political alienation, the process of assimilation was equally complex for earlier waves of immigrants. This past has much to teach us about the way immigration is again reshaping the nation.

**why were immigrants important to political machines:** *Roadmap to 6th Grade Social Studies, Ohio Edition* Jack Miller, Princeton Review (Firm), 2002-01-15 The Roadmap series works as a year-long companion to earning higher grades, as well as passing the high-stakes 6th Grade Social Studies Ohio Proficiency Test that is necessary for grade level promotion. This book has been designed according to the specific standards set forth by the state of Ohio. Now parents can work



with their kids to both improve their grades and pass these important tests. The experts at The Princeton Review have analyzed the OPT, and this book provides the most up-to-date, thoroughly researched practice possible. TPR breaks the test down into individual skills and provides lessons modeled after the OPT to familiarize students with the test's structure, while increasing their overall skill level. The Princeton Review knows what it takes to succeed in the classroom and on tests. This book includes strategies that are proven to raise student performance. TPR provides: - Content review, detailed lessons, and practice exercises modeled after the actual exam - Test-taking skills and social studies essentials such as using charts and graphs and reading maps - 2 complete practice OPTs

**why were immigrants important to political machines: An Election Year Primer** Dean A. Harris, 1996 In the 1992 presidential election only 50% of the voting-age population voted. Biennial congressional races are even worse with voting-age participation rates typically in the 30% range. What do these abhorrent statistics say about this nation? This is a collection of essays about public participation in politics. The ultimate goal of this text is to inspire, argue, coax, and challenge the reader to increase his or her attention to the political, and as a result become an active participant in the political process. Contents: Introduction; Political Participation in American Politics: A Critique, Christine Marie Sierra; How Elites Usurp Democracy in America, Daniel Hellinger; Immigration: The Subjectification of Political Discourse, Henry Flores; Political Messages in Nonpolitical Programming, Art Silverblatt; Sexuality and Citizenship, Shane Phelan; Why Gender Parity? The 50% Solution, Nicola Mazumdar and Jean Reith Schroedel; The 1996 Election and the Welfare State, Mack Jones; A Black-Organized Third Party?, James Jennigans; New Public Dialogues: Ecstatic Politics from the Public Culture, Nancie Caraway; Expanding Public Life at the Local Level, Christopher Freeman Adams; Notes; Bibliography; Index; Contributors.

**why were immigrants important to political machines: Old Labor and New Immigrants in American Political Development** Gwendolyn Mink, 2019-06-30 Why have American politics developed differently from politics in Europe? Generations of scholars and commentators have wondered why organized labor in the United States did not acquire a broad-based constituency or form an autonomous labor party. In this innovative and insightful book, Gwendolyn Mink finds new answers by approaching this question from a different angle: she asks what determined union labor's political interests and how those interests influenced the political role forged by the American Federation of Labor. At bottom, Mink argues, the demographic dynamics of industrialization produced a profound racial response to economic change among organized labor. This response shaped the AFL's political strategy and political choices. In her account of the unique role played by labor in politics prior to the New Deal, Mink focuses on the ways in which the organizational and political interests of the AFL were mediated by the national issue of immigration and links the AFL's response to immigration to its conservative stance in and toward politics. She investigates the political impact of a labor market split between union and nonunion, old and new immigrant workers; of dramatic demographic change; and of nativism and racism. Mink then elucidates the development of trade-union political interests, ideology, and strategy; the movement of the AFL into established state and party structures; and the consequent separation of the AFL from labor's social base.

**why were immigrants important to political machines: U.S. Immigration in the Twenty-First Century** Louis DeSipio, 2018-04-19 Immigration in the Twenty-First Century is a comprehensive examination of the enduring issues surrounding immigration and immigrants in the United States. The book begins with a look at the history of immigration policy, followed by an examination of the legislative and legal debates waged over immigration and settlement policies today, and concludes with a consideration of the continuing challenges of achieving immigration reform in the United States. The authors also discuss the issues facing US immigrants, from their reception within the native population to the relationship between minorities and immigrants. Immigration and immigration policy continues to be a hot topic on the campaign trail, and in all branches of federal and state government. Immigration in the Twenty-First Century provides

students with the tools and context they need to understand these complex issues.

**why were immigrants important to political machines:** Advancing Immigrant Rights in Houston Els de Graauw, Shannon Gleeson, 2024-10-11 Shows that the advancement of immigrant rights in Houston has necessitated a diverse, and at times unusual, set of governmental and non-governmental actors to collaborate and negotiate difficult compromises--

**why were immigrants important to political machines:** *The Handbook of International Migration* Charles Hirschman, Philip Kasinitz, Josh Dewind, 1999-11-04 The historic rise in international migration over the past thirty years has brought a tide of new immigrants to the United States from Asia, South America, and other parts of the globe. Their arrival has reverberated throughout American society, prompting an outpouring of scholarship on the causes and consequences of the new migrations. The Handbook of International Migration gathers the best of this scholarship in one volume to present a comprehensive overview of the state of immigration research in this country, bringing coherence and fresh insight to this fast growing field. The contributors to The Handbook of International Migration—a virtual who's who of immigration scholars—draw upon the best social science theory and demographic research to examine the effects and implications of immigration in the United States. The dramatic shift in the national background of today's immigrants away from primarily European roots has led many researchers to rethink traditional theories of assimilation, and has called into question the usefulness of making historical comparisons between today's immigrants and those of previous generations. Part I of the Handbook examines current theories of international migration, including the forces that motivate people to migrate, often at great financial and personal cost. Part II focuses on how immigrants are changed after their arrival, addressing such issues as adaptation, assimilation, pluralism, and socioeconomic mobility. Finally, Part III looks at the social, economic, and political effects of the surge of new immigrants on American society. Here the Handbook explores how the complex politics of immigration have become intertwined with economic perceptions and realities, racial and ethnic divisions, and international relations. A landmark compendium of richly nuanced investigations, The Handbook of International Migration will be the major reference work on recent immigration to this country and will enhance the development of a truly interdisciplinary field of international migration studies.

**why were immigrants important to political machines:** *Managing the Sustainable City* Genie N. L. Stowers, 2017-10-02 We hear the term “sustainability” everywhere today. In the context of city management, the term often refers to environmental concerns, both locally and globally. *Managing the Sustainable City* examines not only how cities can prepare to weather the local effects of climate change, but also how urban centers can sustain themselves through other modern management challenges, including budgeting and finance, human resource management, public safety, and infrastructure. This clearly written and engaging new textbook provides a comprehensive overview of urban administration today, exploring the unique demographics of cities, local government political structures, intergovernmental relations, and the full range of service delivery areas for which cities are ever more responsible. Throughout the book, two important components of city management today—the use of technology and measuring performance for accountability—are highlighted, along with NASPAA accreditation standards and competencies. Particular attention is paid to incorporating Urban Administration standards to provide students using the text will have a thorough understanding of: The ethics of local government management The roles and relationships among local and elected/appointed government officials, as well as what makes local institutions different from other institutions Strategies for engaging citizens in local governance The complexities of intergovernmental and network relationships to develop skills in collaborative governance How to manage local government financial resources as well as human resources Public service values such as accountability, transparency, efficiency, effectiveness, ethical behavior, and equity and emphasized throughout the text, and discussion questions, exercises, and career pathways highlighting successful public servants in a variety of city management roles are included in each chapter. *Managing the Sustainable City* is an ideal textbook for students of public

administration, public policy, and public affairs interested in learning how cities can be sustainable—in their management, their policies, and their interactions with their citizens—as well as in preparing for and managing the impacts of climate change.

**why were immigrants important to political machines: America's State Governments**

Jennifer Bachner, Benjamin Ginsberg, 2020-07-23 This timely and important new work takes a critical look at government in the American states and illustrates the disconnect between state government institutions and their constituents. The text illuminates three basic political problems of state governments: weak constitutional and institutional foundations; a lack of civic engagement; and long histories of unchecked public corruption. In addition, the book explains why some states did and others did not respond promptly to the COVID-19 pandemic and examines America's long-standing problem of police and prosecutorial misconduct—providing a context for understanding the demonstrations and protests that rocked American cities in the summer of 2020. For students and citizens of state politics, the book concludes with a proposal aimed at civic literacy and action

**why were immigrants important to political machines: *Why is There No Socialism In the United States*** Werner Sombart, 2019-08-22 Why is the United States the only advanced capitalist country with no labor party? This question is one of the great enduring puzzles of American political development, and it lies at the heart of a fundamental debate about the nature of American society. Tackling this debate head-on, Robin Archer puts forward a new explanation for why there is no American labor party—an explanation that suggests that much of the conventional wisdom about American exceptionalism is untenable. Conventional explanations rely on comparison with Europe. Archer challenges these explanations by comparing the United States with its most similar New World counterpart—Australia. This comparison is particularly revealing, not only because the United States and Australia share many fundamental historical, political, and social characteristics, but also because Australian unions established a labor party in the late nineteenth century, just when American unions, against a common backdrop of industrial defeat and depression, came closest to doing something similar. Archer examines each of the factors that could help explain the American outcome, and his systematic comparison yields unexpected conclusions. He argues that prosperity, democracy, liberalism, and racial hostility often promoted the very changes they are said to have obstructed. And he shows that it was not these characteristics that left the United States without a labor party, but, rather, the powerful impact of repression, religion, and political sectarianism.

**why were immigrants important to political machines: *Modernity and Exclusion*** Joel S Kahn, 2001-08-09 This penetrating book re-examines 'the project of modernity'. It seeks to oppose the abstract, idealized vision of modernity with an alternative 'ethnographic' understanding. The book defends an approach to modernity that situates it as embedded in particular and historical contexts. It examines cases of 'popular modernism' in the United States, Britain and colonial Malaysia, drawing out the specific cultural and religious assumptions underlying popular modernism and concludes that modernism is implicated in a diversity of forms of cultural and racial exclusion.

**why were immigrants important to political machines: *Democracy's Promise*** Janelle Wong, 2008-12-18 Given the massive demographic changes in the United States during the past few decades, understanding the place of immigrants in the public sphere has never been more critical. *Democracy's Promise* examines both the challenges and opportunities posed to American civic institutions by the presence of increasing numbers of immigrants. Author Janelle Wong argues that the low levels of political participation among contemporary immigrants are not due to apathy or preoccupation with their homeland, but to the inability of American political parties and advocacy organizations to mobilize immigrant voters. Wong's rich study of Chinese and Mexican immigrants in New York and Los Angeles complements traditional studies of political behavior and civic institutions while offering a nuanced examination of immigrants' political activity. *Democracy's Promise* will appeal to a broad spectrum of social scientists and ethnic studies scholars who study or teach immigration, racial and ethnic politics, political participation, civic engagement, and American political institutions. In addition, it will appeal to community organizers and party activists who are interested in issues of race and ethnicity, immigration, political participation, and political

mobilization. Janelle Wong is Assistant Professor of Political Science and American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. As political parties (perhaps) decline in the United States, as civic organizations (perhaps) move away from direct participatory politics, and as the number of immigrants certainly increases--what will link new Americans to the political realm? Janelle Wong answers this important question clearly, with elegance, nuance, rich description, and galvanizing provocativeness. Her evidence is compelling and her sense of urgency about the need for parties to look beyond short-term interests even more so. --Jennifer L. Hochschild, Harvard University Wong draws on the Latino and Asian immigrant experience, with specific examples from the Chinese and Mexican communities of New York and Los Angeles, to show how the political parties have largely failed to organize these groups and why labor unions and immigrant advocacy organizations have stepped in to take their place. Far from 'disuniting' America, she clearly shows that bringing these groups into the political fray is central to the project of renewing American democracy. --John Mollenkopf, CUNY Graduate Center A scathing critique of the role of parties in the mobilization of new immigrants and an invaluable analysis of alternative pathways of mobilization through community organizations. --Michael Jones-Correa, Cornell University By employing multiple empirical methods, including in-depth interviews and sophisticated survey analyses, Janelle Wong provides a compelling account of the political activities and allegiances of America's Asian and Latino immigrants that challenges much conventional wisdom. Often the political parties are failing to reach out to these groups, and often immigrants remain concerned about their home countries; but they are nonetheless increasingly active in American politics, in ways that may do much to shape the course of American political development in the 21st century. *Democracy's Promise* is a major contribution to our understanding of this crucial dimension of American politics. --Rogers M. Smith, University of Pennsylvania *Democracy's Promise* challenges political parties to reexamine their priorities for mobilizing new voters, and identifies the critical role civic institutions play in invigorating participation among immigrant citizens. Wong's analysis is at once precise and expansive; illuminating the contours of Latino and Asian American political incorporation and provoking thoughtful debate on inclusion in democratic theory. --Jane Junn, Rutgers University

**why were immigrants important to political machines:** *Concise Encyclopedia of Democracy* the staff of Congressional Quarterly, 2013-12-02 The *Concise Encyclopedia of Democracy* is a single-volume version of the award-winning *Encyclopedia of Democracy*. Not a condensation, the new *Concise* was created to address the special needs of smaller libraries. The more than 300 articles include concepts, countries, and individuals, emphasizing the historical and practical, rather than the strictly theoretical. While the coverage is international in scope, special emphasis, in the *Concise*, is given to the democracies of the West. As well as including the most important entries from the four-volume original work, the *Concise Encyclopedia of Democracy* also includes new entries on the Constitution of the United States, general government practices in the democracies, etc. The 150 maps, photographs, charts, and timelines are designed to present the researcher with information in a concise, visual form.

**why were immigrants important to political machines: The Political Economy of the Living Wage: A Study of Four Cities** Oren M. Levin-Waldman, 2016-07-22 This book examines the movement for living wages at the local level and what it tells us about urban politics. Oren M. Levin-Waldman studies the role that living wage campaigns may have had in recent years in altering the political landscape in four cities where they have been adopted: Los Angeles, Detroit, Baltimore, and New Orleans. It is the author's belief that the living wage movements are a result of policy failure at the local level. They are the by-product of the failure to adequately address the changes that were occurring, mainly the changing urban economic base and growing income inequality. The author undertakes a scholarly analysis of the issue through the disciplinary lenses of political science while also employing some of the economists' tools.

**why were immigrants important to political machines: White Party, White Government** Joe R. Feagin, 2012-04-23 *White Party, White Government* examines the centuries-old impact of

systemic racism on the U.S. political system. The text assesses the development by elite and other whites of a racialized capitalistic system, grounded early in slavery and land theft, and its intertwining with a distinctive political system whose fundamentals were laid down in the founding decades. From these years through the Civil War and Reconstruction, to the 1920s, the 1930s Roosevelt era, the 1960s Johnson era, through to the Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Barack Obama presidencies, Feagin exploring the effects of ongoing demographic changes on the present and future of the U.S. political system.

**why were immigrants important to political machines: Bringing Outsiders In** Jennifer Hochschild, John Mollenkopf, 2011-05-02 For immigrants, politics can play a significant role in determining whether and how they assimilate. In *Bringing Outsiders In*, leading social scientists present individual cases and work toward a comparative synthesis of how immigrants affect—and are affected by—civic life on both sides of the Atlantic. Just as in the United States, large immigrant minority communities have been emerging across Europe. While these communities usually make up less than one-tenth of national populations, they typically have a large presence in urban areas, sometimes approaching a majority. That immigrants can have an even greater political salience than their population might suggest has been demonstrated in recent years in places as diverse as Sweden and France. Attending to how local and national states encourage or discourage political participation, the authors assess the relative involvement of immigrants in a wide range of settings. Jennifer Hochschild and John Mollenkopf provide a context for the particular cases and comparisons and draw a set of analytic and empirical conclusions regarding incorporation.

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