

Anti-Chinese Politics in California in the 1870s: An Inter-County Analysis

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Abstract:

This article uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative historical data from all California counties to assess the efficacy of variables derived from the split labor market, cultural division of labor, and ethnic competitive models, as well as variables related to the organizational capacity of majority group workers, to predict efforts in late-nineteenth-century California to institutionalize discrimination against the Chinese through the political system. The results suggest that anti-Chinese voting and support for anti-Chinese legislation are best predicted by presence of large numbers of urbanized majority group workers and the level of organization they achieved and that this was especially true during the period of greatest conflict at the end of the 1870s.

Keywords: Chinese immigration | California | 19th century | Anti-Chinese legislation

Article:

Relationships between racial and ethnic minority groups and the majority have been a persistent source of conflict and tension in the United States. Historians have provided detailed accounts of

numerous specific conflicts and attempted to identify their causes, whereas sociologists have more typically developed abstract theoretical models to identify factors that exacerbate ethnic conflict. Most of the sociological models (e.g., Bonacich 1979; Hechter 1978; Olzak 1992) emphasize actual or potential competition among ethnic and racial groups in labor markets as the source of ethnic conflict, and much of the sociological research (e.g., Olzak 1992) focuses on explaining incidents of open ethnic conflict. There has been less attention in sociological work to efforts by the majority group or elements of it to institutionalize discrimination against minorities using the political process. Perhaps for this reason, most existing theoretical models (e.g., Hechter 1976; Olzak 1986) fail to fully explicate the role of *majority* group organizations that seek to discriminate against the minority. When they do mention the role of organizations in ethnic conflict, existing models generally focus on organizations of the minority group (e.g. Olzak 1986; Olzak and West 1991).

Research based on the sociological models has typically either employed historical data to illustrate a particular model (e.g., Bonacich 1975; Boswell 1986) or used quantitative analysis to test a few hypotheses derived from a model (e.g., Hechter 1978; Olzak, Shanahan, and West 1994). Relatively few studies combine these two types of analysis or systematically compare the predictive efficacy of the numerous variables that the various models suggest (but see Fong and Markham 1991). Moreover, relatively few empirical studies look at how the strength of the antiminority organizations of the majority group affects the outcome of ethnic conflicts or what factors contribute to successful mobilization of the majority group (but see Boswell 1986).

This study addresses these gaps in the literature through an investigation of factors influencing the extent of anti-Chinese activity in the political system in California counties in the late nineteenth century. We combine qualitative historical data and quantitative analysis of county-level data using a relatively large number of independent variables—including several variables relevant to the organizational capabilities of the majority group—to identify factors that predict voting for candidates who promise to use the political system as a tool to discriminate against the Chinese and the actual legislative activity of county representatives. Previous work on anti-Chinese activities in California in the late nineteenth century has focused mainly on events in San Francisco or spectacular conflicts in the minefields. Both our historical and quantitative analyses, by contrast, draw on data from counties throughout the state.

MODELS OF ETHNIC COMPETITION AND CONFLICT A major focus of recent sociological literature about ethnic conflicts has been their attempt to develop models that explain the intensity of ethnic conflict. Among the best known are Bonacich's (1972, 1979) split labor market model, Hechter's (1975, 1976, 1978) cultural division of labor theory, and Olzak's (1986, 1992) ethnic competitive perspective. These models were originally developed separately, and there are significant differences among them; however, they also include numerous common elements, and more recent work, such as the incorporation of some elements of split labor market

theory into the competitive perspective (Olzak and Shanahan 1996; Olzak, Shanahan, and McEneaney 1996), shows some “cross- fertilization” among them. Research based on the models, especially studies using the ethnic competitive perspective, has frequently used incidents of open conflict, such as riots; however, all three approaches claim to be general theories of ethnic conflict, so examination of their utility for predicting use of the political system to discriminate against a minority is appropriate.

All three models share the view that ethnic conflict arises when groups compete for scarce resources, such as jobs and housing. Such conflicts can often be traced to voluntary or forced immigration of economically and educationally disadvantaged persons from poorer to richer nations and to unequal allocation of economic benefits to the two groups in the destination nation. All three models focus on competition between minority group members on the lower rungs of the stratification ladder and majority group members at the same or slightly higher levels. They see members of the majority group as motivated to protect or enhance their positions in response to actual or perceived threats from minority group competitors. The majority group members who are most directly threatened may attempt to protect their position by efforts to exclude the minority group from the society altogether, to restrict the minority to the least desirable jobs, or to maintain higher wages for the majority.

Some possible predictors of ethnic conflict are prominent in all of the models, while others, such as the role of residential segregation, are mentioned only in passing or not cited at all in one or more of the theories. And in some instances, such as the role of occupational segregation, there is disagreement about the effects of a specific variable. However, none of them places strong emphasis on the role of majority group organizations in calling forth discriminatory actions against minorities.

In the following paragraphs, we identify eight variables that may exacerbate ethnic conflicts and can be derived from one or more of these theoretical models, paying special attention to factors related to successful organization of the majority group to work for discrimination against the minority. Limitations of the historical data used in our study make it impossible to include some potentially relevant variables (e.g., residential segregation). Nevertheless, working with a larger number of variables than most previous studies allows us to provide a test of the relative efficacy of a large number of variables and make a contribution to theory building.

1. Where the *proportion of the minority population* is high, members of the majority are more likely to perceive the minority group as a threat. The threat stems from three factors. First, where their proportion of the population is high, minority group members are usually more visible, increasing the majority group’s awareness of their presence. Second, a larger proportion of the minority members, most of whom are usually economically disadvantaged, increases the possibility of wage reductions or job loss for majority group members, especially those on the lower rungs of the occupational ladder (Bonacich 1972, 1979; Olzak, Shanahan, and McEneaney 1996; Quillian 1995). Third, a large minority representation makes it easier for minorities to

organize to fight for more resources and better treatment. Members of the majority group are likely to perceive this as a threat to their social and economic well-being (Hechter 1976; Hechter, Freedman, and Appelbaum 1982; Olzak 1986).

2. A rapid *growth rate of the minority population* also leads to more intense conflict. Regardless of their proportion in the population, a rapidly growing minority group creates more potential for conflict. Members of the majority group note the rapid increase in minority population and expect increased competition in the labor market and for desirable housing and public services (Lieberson 1980; Olzak 1986; Olzak and Shanahan 1996). Because newcomers are especially likely to reside in ethnic enclaves, an influx of newcomers can strengthen ethnic sub-communities, which provide an organizational and resource base for minority groups to draw on in pressing their claims (Olzak 1986; Olzak and Nagel 1986).

3. Poor *economic conditions* can also exacerbate ethnic conflict. Competition for employment intensifies in a weak labor market, increasing majority group workers' fears about job loss or wage reductions. Threatened by downward mobility, they become more disposed to participate in actions to protect their position (Blalock 1967; Boswell 1986; Olzak 1986). Poor economic conditions are apt to be especially threatening when coupled with a high rate of immigration of the minority group. Olzak and her colleagues suggest further that the especially threatening combination of rapid immigration of the minority ethnic group and poor economic conditions is particularly likely to exacerbate ethnic conflict (Olzak 1986; Olzak and Shanahan 1996).

4. The *percentage of minority workers in occupations with strong competition between majority and minority workers* is another possible predictor of level of ethnic conflict. According to this argument, the threat to the majority is small when minority workers are clustered in undesirable and low-wage jobs that majority group workers do not want and rarely hold. When the minority workers become prominent in occupations in which majority workers are common, conflict escalates because the minority poses a greater threat to the majority (Boswell 1986).

5. The same line of argument suggests that the *percentage of majority group workers who are in the types of occupations that experience greatest competition from minority workers* affects the level of conflict. Unlike the previous variable, which emphasizes the amount of competition that minority group members provide, this variable implies that the majority is most likely to mobilize against the minority when large numbers of majority group members are in jobs where they face direct competition with the minority. In such a situation, it is more likely that the number of threatened majority group members will reach the critical mass needed to initiate conflict and that they will have the numbers and resources needed to organize effectively and take action against the minority. In such situations, their complaints will resonate more strongly, and opportunities to form powerful organizations with a realistic chance of success are greater.

6. Numerous theoretical statements identify *occupational segregation* as a predictor of ethnic conflict, but there is considerable disagreement about what effects it has and how and why they

occur. Hechter and his colleagues (Hechter 1976, 1978; Hechter, Freedman, and Appelbaum 1982) argue that the clustering of ethnic minorities in specific occupations—as well as in particular neighborhoods and associations—generally heightens ethnic boundaries and awareness, making it more likely both that minority groups will organize to seek a larger slice of the pie and that majority group workers will organize to maintain their advantages. Olzak and her colleagues (Olzak 1986; Olzak, Shanahan, and McEneaney 1996) cite similar effects of high segregation, focusing primarily on segregation in neighborhoods and local organizations. However, they also argue that decreases in both occupational and residential segregation can stimulate ethnic conflict because they increase competition among groups (Olzak 1986; Olzak and Nagel 1986; Olzak and Shanahan 1996; Olzak, Shanahan, and West 1994). This latter argument presumably applies to situations in which an already well-established ethnic division of labor is disrupted by the movement of minorities into jobs or neighborhoods formerly dominated by the majority.

7. *Urbanization* is also predicted to contribute to ethnic conflict, in part because urban areas typically have a more ethnically diverse population and therefore more opportunities for ethnic competition (Olzak and Nagel 1986). Moreover, urban residence implies that majority and minority group members live in relatively close proximity. This is especially important in situations in which communication technology is limited, because physical proximity makes it easier for both minority and majority groups to share grievances, exchange information, and organize to pursue their interests (Hechter 1978; Hechter, Friedman, and Appelbaum 1982).

8. The *level of organization of the majority group* is also likely to affect the amount of action against the minority (Hechter 1976; Olzak 1986). Movements to discriminate against minority groups, like other social movements, require organization, especially if they wish to pursue action through the political system (Zurcher and Snow 1981). Organization provides a structure for mobilizing and coordinating individual efforts, maintaining group solidarity, and sustaining and focusing effort (Tilly 1978). Groups advocating discrimination can also spread the responsibility for actions among their members, strengthening individuals' willingness to act against outsiders (Coleman 1990).

In some cases, organizations with broader goals, such as labor unions or political parties, may become vehicles for antiminority action. In other situations, single purpose organizations, such as ethnic associations or new political parties, may be constituted for the purpose. But whatever the organizational form, we expect the strength of majority group organizations advocating discrimination against the minority to influence the extent and success of action against the minority. Factors such as urbanization and the percentage of the majority group workers affected by competition from the minority may make the growth of such organizations more likely, but other factors no doubt also contribute to successful organization of majority group workers.

THE CHINESE AND THE ANTI-CHINESE MOVEMENT IN CALIFORNIA

In this section, we examine the historical record of anti-Chinese activity in the late nineteenth century, paying special attention to available information about levels of anti-Chinese activity in different parts of the state in various historical periods, to regional differences, and to factors affecting the organization and political mobilization of the majority. To lay the groundwork for the quantitative analyses in the next section, we also provide additional detail about the situation in the early and late 1870s, the two time periods examined in those analyses.

Chinese immigration to California began with the gold rush and continued until the 1882 Exclusion Act. The rate of immigration varied in response to economic conditions and the amount of anti-Chinese activity (Chan 1986; Chiu 1967; Zo 1978). Nevertheless, by 1860 the Chinese were 9 percent of the population, and the proportion remained about the same in 1870 and 1880 (Fong and Markham 1991). The Chinese concentrated initially in San Francisco and in mining areas (Chan 1986), but by the 1870s they lived in all counties, though in varying proportions.

The majority of Chinese immigrants were young males from poor, rural families. With the exception of merchants, few members of the educated classes emigrated. Passage was financed by family savings or loans, so the immigrants were strongly motivated to work (Barth 1964; Coolidge [1909] 1969; Zo 1978). Most intended to remain only long enough to accumulate enough money to return to China in relative affluence and sent a significant fraction of their income home, often to a spouse. The language barrier, the cultural gap between Chinese and U.S. culture, the harassment they experienced, and the denial of civil rights made assimilation unattractive for most (Barth 1964; Lyman 1974; Zo 1978).

With few job skills and little knowledge of U.S. society and facing discrimination, many Chinese accepted whatever work was available (Barth 1964; Zo 1978). In the early 1850s most mined with hand tools either independently, in small groups, or in companies organized by a head man (Barth 1964). In the early 1850s they competed directly with the white miners, with whom they shared mining camps, but their willingness to work claims abandoned by others kept many Chinese in mining even after most other independent miners had departed (Chan 1986). In the late 1850s the growing domination of mining by white-owned companies using capital-intensive processes led some Chinese into employment as mine laborers, especially in mine construction (Chiu 1967; Coolidge [1909] 1969; Williams 1971). Beginning in the 1860s, others drained marshes and constructed irrigation ditches in rural areas (Chan 1986; Minnick 1988). In such work settings, Chinese competed to some degree with majority group workers, but the competition was reduced by their concentration in the least desirable jobs. Census manuscripts show that Chinese work crews in rural areas often lived in work camps, far from population concentrations of white workers. In the late 1860s the majority of workers in railroad construction were Chinese. Initially, there was competition between white and Chinese labor, but the railroads came to rely heavily on Chinese laborers, who were available for lower wages. Here again most work was conducted in work camps far from population centers (Rawls and Bean 1993). As railroad work and mining declined in the 1870s, the Chinese moved increasingly into

farm labor and tenant farming (Chan 1986), which again kept them isolated from concentrations of majority group workers. More problematic in terms of stimulating competition with the majority was their movement into common labor jobs in cities and the emerging manufacturing sector, though here too they clustered in low wage industries, such as cigar and slipper making (Chiu 1967; Tsai 1986; Zo 1978). From the 1850s on, many worked as cooks, domestic servants, or laundry workers, occupations not desired by majority group males. Some were also fishermen or truck farmers (Chan 1986; Lyndon 1985). Throughout this period, only a few occupied desirable jobs, such as artisans, labor contractors, merchants, or small factory owners (Chan 1986; Chiu 1967), so they competed most directly with working-class whites, not the middle class.

Chinese miners' reliance on poorer claims and hand tools and repeated incidents in which successful Chinese miners were driven from their claims (Minnick 1988; Pitt 1961; Williams 1971) meant that independent Chinese miners typically earned less than whites. As wage laborers in mining and elsewhere, they were relegated to the least desirable tasks and paid less than whites, even for equal work (Chan 1986; Chiu 1967; Daniels 1988). Their lower wages, reputation for reliability, and ready availability through labor contractors made the Chinese attractive to employers (Bancroft 1890; Chan 1986; Chiu 1967). A good number of individual labor actions by Chinese workers are recorded (Chan 1991; Rawls and Bean 1993), but the Chinese were systematically excluded from white-dominated unions (Saxton 1971).

Initially most Chinese lived in mining towns; later, residence in Chinatowns in cities and labor camps in rural areas became more typical. Residence in Chinatowns made them much more visible to the majority. The Chinatowns of the period were characterized by low-quality rental housing, lack of city services, including sanitation, high densities, and the presence of opium dens, gambling establishments, and prostitutes (Daniels 1988; Lyman 1974; Minnick 1988). Chinese communities included many organizations based on the social structure of China. Most prominent were the Six Companies (Lyman 1974; Lyndon 1985; Zo 1978). Dominated by successful merchants and labor contractors, these organizations provided help in locating employment and quarters, mediation of internal disputes, assistance in dealing with authorities, including pressing for protection of civil rights, and charity in time of need (Hoy 1942; Sandmeyer 1973; Zo 1978). They were also agents of social control, ensuring that debts were paid and obligations met (Barth 1964; Daniels 1988; Lyman 1974).

Friction between Chinese and whites was a persistent—though far from constant—theme in nineteenth-century California. As early as 1849 white miners organized to protest foreign competition, and the Chinese and other minorities were often forcibly removed (Minnick 1988; Pitt 1961; Zo 1978). These incidents were especially common where large numbers of mine laborers and white miners congregated in mining camps (Barth 1964; Chiu 1967; Williams 1971). Beginning in the early 1860s, the center of anti-Chinese organizing moved to the cities, as urban whites organized anticolonial clubs, which sought to exclude the Chinese from certain occupations or bar their immigration (Davis 1893; Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970;

Sandmeyer 1973). Opportunistic politicians (Coolidge [1909] 1969), labor leaders (Daniels 1988; Saxton 1971), and journalists (Chiu 1967; Miller 1969) fanned the flames. The Chinese were charged with being unwilling to assimilate, serving as tools in the hands of capitalists, remitting too much money to China, living in cramped, disease-ridden quarters, patronizing vice establishments, and being virtual slaves of labor contractors (Daniels 1988; Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970; Sandmeyer 1973). Intermittent attacks on Chinese property and mob violence (Chan 1991; Minnick 1988; Sandmeyer 1973) were part of a larger pattern of insult, physical attacks, swindles, and intimidation by bullies, businessmen, tax collectors, and police (Chan 1991; Coolidge [1909] 1969; Lyndon 1985).

Harassment, violence, and locally organized protests did sometimes successfully bar Chinese from a particular area or occupation—but usually only temporarily. Hence the anti-Chinese forces regularly sought government legislation and action. Anti-Chinese bills were first passed by the state legislature in the early 1850s (Coolidge [1909] 1969). Especially prominent in this period, which featured competition between Chinese and whites for good mining claims, were efforts, such as a tax on foreign miners, to reduce competition in the minefields. Legislative activity, both in state government and in San Francisco and other cities, continued sporadically throughout the nineteenth century (Lyndon 1985; Tung 1974). This included, first, efforts to bar the Chinese from occupations in which they competed with the majority group, such as mining, fishing, laundering, and public works, through regulations and taxes targeting the Chinese or through outright prohibition. A second approach was denial of civil rights, including voting, naturalization, education, and testifying against whites in court. There were even proposals to force the Chinese to live outside cities. A third approach featured legal actions against Chinatowns, including regulation of dwelling densities and efforts to control prostitution and gambling (Lyman 1974; Minnick 1988; Sandmeyer 1973).

None of these measures proved very successful. They faced opposition from missionaries, employers of Chinese, or merchants who profited from Chinese trade (Chiu 1967; Daniels 1988; Pitt 1961), as well as lawsuits led by the Chinese (Chan 1991; McClain 1994). Many were ruled either unconstitutional or violations of the treaty guaranteeing immigration rights and fair treatment or of the 1870 Civil Rights Act (Rawls and Bean 1993). State government also became dependent on revenue from discriminatory taxes (Coolidge [1909] 1969; Pitt 1961).

Efforts to control or eliminate Chinese immigration originated in the 1850s (Bancroft 1890; Chan 1991). They included high taxes on immigrants or shipmasters and efforts to exclude “coolie labor” or prostitutes; however, most were struck down by the courts (Sandmeyer 1967). By the 1870s, the limitations of other approaches had become evident, and the anti-Chinese forces devoted increasing effort to the most drastic step, complete exclusion of the Chinese (Fong and Markham 1991).

Although anti-Chinese activity is a recurrent pattern in late-nineteenth-century California history, it was more prominent in some periods and locales than others (Chan 1986; Lyndon 1985;

Minnick 1988). Historians often suggest explanations for these variations, citing factors like economic competition and interdependence, cultural conflict, the rate of Chinese immigration, and political opportunism (see Chan 1986) for an overview). Unfortunately, these explanations are generally offered on an ad hoc basis, not derived from systematic comparisons (but see Boswell 1986 and Fong and Markham 1991). However, the historical record suggests that organized and successful anti-Chinese activity was most likely to appear when two conditions were met: Chinese workers competed directly with white workers for jobs that white workers saw as desirable and white workers were geographically concentrated and able to organize themselves, as labor unions (Cross 1935; Saxton 1971), political parties (Sandmeyer 1973), or other anti-Chinese groups (Sandmeyer 1973; Saxton 1971). This occurred first in mining camps in the early 1850s and again in the cities in the 1870s (Bancroft 1890; Beck and Williams 1972; Boswell 1986; Locklear 1960). Because adequate quantitative data are available only for the latter period, we focus in the next few paragraphs on the 1870s.

The first of two periods of significant conflict in the 1870s occurred early in the decade, when—after a time of relative tranquility during the prosperous early and mid-1860s—conflict between Chinese and whites began to escalate (Coolidge [1909] 1969). Continuing decline in the mining industry and layoffs of railroad workers during these years depressed the economy and led the Chinese to seek alternative employment in the cities (Chan 1986; Rawls and Bean 1993), while the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 led to a renewed surge of Chinese immigration (Rawls and Bean 1993). Rapid immigration of settlers from the East combined with competition from products produced more cheaply in the East and brought to California by rail also contributed to a poor economic climate (Chiu 1967; Daniels 1972; Fankhauser 1913; Ong 1981; Rawls and Bean 1993), threatening labor's gains from the 1860s (Beck and Williams 1972; Cross 1935; Saxton 1971). The view that cheap Chinese labor was the cause of the problems became increasingly popular (Paul 1938; Schwantes 1982), especially among urban laborers (Chiu 1967), some of whom organized as anticoolie clubs (Davis 1893; Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970; Sandmeyer 1973). Even though their members were concentrated in the skilled trades, unions collaborated with the anticoolie clubs because they feared erosion of earlier gains. Mass meetings where the Chinese were denounced occurred (Sandmeyer 1973), and physical attacks on Chinese followed (Daniels 1972; Locklear 1972; Lyman 1974).

As in the two previous statewide elections, battle lines in 1871 were clearly drawn (Coolidge [1909] 1969). Republicans were associated with the powerful railroads, large landowners, the emerging capitalist class, and prosperous merchants, whereas Democrats represented small farmers, labor unions (Cross 1935; Saxton 1971), the urban working class, and the anticoolie clubs (Davis 1893; Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970; Sandmeyer 1973). The Democratic platform included a strong anti-Chinese plank, calling for vigorous action to eliminate Chinese labor. It also advocated an end to land grants and subsidies to railroads, breakup of land monopoly, railroad regulation, and the eight-hour day. Republicans, although also nominally opposed to Chinese immigration, adopted a more moderate stance. They called for protection of

the rights of Chinese already present. They also endorsed reduction in land monopoly and railroad subsidies (Davis 1893; Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970).

Anti-Chinese sentiment during the early 1870s was also manifest in the California legislature, where a steady flow of anti-Chinese legislation was introduced and several bills were passed. Most were efforts to exclude coolie labor or Chinese prostitutes or resolutions urging Congress to end Chinese immigration.

The second period of conflict, the late 1870s, was the time of sharpest conflict over the Chinese question. After a modest economic recovery (Coolidge [1909] 1969), economic difficulties and unemployment again escalated. The effects of the Panic of 1873 spread to California, precipitating bankruptcies and bank closings (Chiu 1967; Fankhauser 1913). Conditions worsened when the failure of the Comstock mine to pay dividends in 1877 led to a crash in mining stocks (Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970; Fankhauser 1913). The severe drought in the winter of 1876–77, which caused starvation of livestock, crop failures, and the closing of water-dependent mining operations, exacerbated the crisis (Fankhauser 1913). Jobless laborers drifted to the cities as unemployment increased rapidly, creating a pool of resentful whites (Bancroft 1890). Most of the gains made by labor unions in the late 1860s were lost, and union membership declined (Rawls and Bean 1993; Saxton 1971).

The Chinese again became the scapegoats for the difficult economic situation. Anti-Chinese incidents and riots occurred throughout the second half of the 1870s (Chan 1986), and the legislature prepared a virulently anti-Chinese report in 1876 (Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970; Lyman 1974; Sandmeyer 1973). Anti-Chinese organizations, such as the Order of Caucasians, which held its first state convention in 1876, gained strength (Chan 1986; Lyndon 1985). In San Francisco, mass protests over unemployment in 1877 precipitated formation of the strongly anti-Chinese Workingmen's Party, led by Irish immigrant Dennis Kearney (Sandmeyer 1973). By January 1879 it had branches in forty of fifty-two counties (Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970), but the majority of its activities occurred in San Francisco (Bancroft 1890; Stedman and Leonard 1879). The party was strongest in northern California and among urban laborers, especially the state's large Irish population (Bancroft 1890; Lawton 1987; Rawls and Bean 1993). Most members were former Democrats, many of whom had been active in anticoolie clubs. The Workingmen's Party also received the somewhat reluctant support of the labor unions (Saxton 1971).

The Workingmen endorsed a populist platform that called for ending land monopoly, increased aid for the poor, free public education, regulation of railroads, shifting the tax burden to corporations and large landowners, and ending the domination of state government by the railroad. But its most important aim was the elimination of Chinese labor from the state. Kearney thus ended most of his speeches with the ringing proclamation, "The Chinese must go." These demands were punctuated by mass rallies, incendiary speeches—some advocating violence, at

least one attack on San Francisco's Chinatown, and the organization of Workingmen's militias in San Francisco (Bancroft 1890; Davis 1893; Sandmeyer 1973).

Although hindered by arrests of its leaders and divided by schisms, the Workingmen's Party had considerable initial success, electing candidates in several municipal and special elections in 1878 (Bancroft 1890; Davis 1893; Delmatier, McIntosh, and Waters 1970). Democrats and Republicans tried to stave off the challenge with joint candidates for the constitutional convention election of 1878. Although the party failed to control the convention, the anti-Chinese forces were able to obtain strongly anti-Chinese provisions (Beck and Williams 1972; Coolidge [1909] 1969; Sandmeyer 1973). It then mounted a strong campaign in the state-wide election of 1879, the height of their influence, fielding candidates in most counties. Although all parties adopted anti-Chinese stands, the Workingmen's was by far the most radical, calling for disbanding corporations employing Chinese and expulsion of Chinese from cities (Davis 1893). The party garnered many seats in the legislature and dominated San Francisco, but it did not prevail state-wide (Bancroft 1890; Rawls and Bean 1993).

The anti-Chinese agitation and electoral successes of the Workingmen were accompanied by a spate of activity in the legislature (Coolidge [1909] 1969). Numerous anti-Chinese bills were introduced, including acts making it illegal for corporations to employ Chinese, requiring cities to force Chinese outside the city limits, forbidding the issuance of business or occupational licenses to Chinese, barring Chinese from fishing, and outlawing opium sales (Sandmeyer 1973); however, most of the activity consisted of repeated resolutions urging Congress to abrogate the Burlingame Treaty and bar Chinese immigration (Fong and Markham 1991).

The historical data thus reveal a complex interweave of possible causes of the outbreaks of anti-Chinese activity in the early and late 1870s. Nevertheless, what is most distinctive about this period is the growing level of organization of the anti-Chinese forces around organizations grounded in the urban white working class. Organizations like the Workingmen's Party, anticoolie clubs, and labor unions were strongest in San Francisco, with its large white working class, but the Workingmen's Party was present in most counties by the end of the 1870s, with its greatest strength in the more urbanized counties. The quantitative analysis reported below allows us to determine more precisely the relative importance of these and other variables for predicting the amount of anti-Chinese activity and political action across counties.

DATA SOURCES AND MEASURES FOR QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Our quantitative analysis tests the relative utility of factors derived from the theoretical models for predicting anti-Chinese political activity in California counties during two periods. Because the first analysis centers on the 1871 election, we refer to it as the 1871 analysis. The second analysis focuses on the 1879 election and is referred to as the 1879 analysis. Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for the measures used in each analysis.

Dependent Variables

For both theoretical and methodological reasons, we focus on the political process as a central aspect of anti-Chinese activity in each county. Efforts to use the political system to discriminate against minorities are theoretically strategic because they often represent the most effective way for a majority to advance its interests at the expense of the minority. Although individual acts of personal abuse—or even mob violence—against the minority are highly visible, they do not institutionalize discrimination (Ben-Tovin et al. 1986). Locally organized actions to exclude immigrant workers from an occupation or geographic area, such as efforts by white California miners in the 1850s to exclude the Chinese from mining, may be more effective (Boswell 1986; Saxton 1971), but their success is often geographically limited and ephemeral. On the other hand, by mobilizing state power on their behalf, majority groups are more likely to succeed in institutionalizing discrimination (Offe 1974).

Consequently, antiminority forces are likely to constitute themselves as political parties or to form alliances between their organizations and existing political parties to elect sympathetic candidates and influence legislation (McClain 1994). Through legislation, majority group workers can formalize split labor markets, bar immigrant minorities from desirable jobs, or totally exclude immigrant workers (Bonacich 1972; Boswell 1986).

TABLE 1. Descriptive Statistics for Measures

Variable	1871						1879					
	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skew	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skew	N
Proportion of vote for anti-Chinese candidates for county representatives	0.23	0.72	0.50	0.10	-0.26	44	0.00	0.61	0.16	0.20	0.82	48
Proportion of vote for anti-Chinese candidates for statewide offices	0.29	0.83	0.51	0.10	0.42	50	0.00	0.47	0.18	0.12	0.55	50
Number of anti-Chinese bills introduced per delegate to state legislature	0.00	0.67	0.03	0.11	4.42	50	0.00	1.00	0.16	0.28	1.64	52
Proportion of votes for anti-Chinese bills by legislative delegation	not available						0.16	0.78	0.49	0.13	-0.29	52
Proportion of population Chinese	0.00	0.50	0.10	0.10	1.97	50	0.00	0.39	0.09	0.07	1.84	52
Growth rate of Chinese	-0.08	0.20	0.03	0.06	0.55	41	-0.08	0.08	0.00	0.04	-0.62	49

population												
Ratio of wages to living costs	2.28	4.80	3.36	0.52	0.27	42	not available					
Proportion of real and personal property delinquent for taxation	0.04	0.34	0.15	0.07	0.99	42	0.04	0.39	0.11	0.07	2.13	50
Proportion of laboring jobs held by Chinese	0.00	0.56	0.22	0.17	0.49	50	0.00	0.74	0.29	0.18	0.17	51
Proportion of non-Chinese males in urban working-class occupations	0.05	0.62	0.30	0.14	0.10	50	0.18	0.53	0.34	0.09	-0.11	52
Occupational segregation	0.24	0.99	0.57	0.17	0.35	50	0.21	0.98	0.55	0.15	0.40	51
Size of urban population	0.00	149,473	4,116	21,241	6.81	50	0.00	233,959	6,615	32,839	6.78	52
Proportion of state legislative seats contested by Workingmen's Party	not available						0.00	1.00	0.44	0.43	0.16	49

Number of counties in California, 1871 = 50; 1879 = 52.

Data about the anti-Chinese activity in the political system are also desirable from a methodological standpoint. There are no public opinion poll data for the 1870s, and the highly partisan newspapers of the period are a poor index of public opinion. Exclusion of the Chinese from giving testimony against whites, the absence of good law enforcement records, and geographically limited and biased press reporting make the number of anti-Chinese attacks or incidents of overt ethnic conflict on the streets impossible to measure, and workplace discrimination was so pervasive as to attract no notice. There is a rather complete historical record of union activity in San Francisco (Cross 1935; Saxton 1971), but there are no adequate records of union activity by county. However, relatively complete data about the political process, including election returns and actions of the state legislature, are available.

Using these historical data about the political process, we developed four dependent variables. The first two, *proportion of vote for anti-Chinese candidates for county representative to the state legislature* and *proportion of vote for anti-Chinese candidates for statewide offices*, focus on anti-Chinese voting by county. The data come from official records of election returns (California State Archives n.d.).

Because Democrats were identified as the more strongly anti-Chinese party throughout the late 1860s and early 1870s, were closely allied with anti-Chinese organizations, and adopted a far stronger anti-Chinese platform in 1871, votes for Democrats suggest a preference for a stronger

anti-Chinese stand. Therefore, the 1871 measures are operationally (a) the proportion of all votes for representatives to the state assembly and for state senators from the county received by Democratic candidates and (b) the average proportion of the county's votes received by Democratic candidates for three important state offices, governor, lieutenant governor, and secretary of state.¹ In the 1879 election, the Workingmen's Party made its anti-Chinese stand the linchpin of its campaign. Accordingly, the two parallel 1879 measures are based on the percent of votes for its candidates. As in present-day elections, a variety of issues no doubt influenced California voters' choice of parties in the 1870s. Hence the electoral data must be interpreted cautiously. Nevertheless, the historical research cited above clearly indicates that the Chinese issue was quite salient in 1871 and that it was the defining issue for the Workingmen's Party in 1879. No informed voter with sympathy for the Chinese would have been likely to cast a vote for a Workingmen's Party candidate in 1879.

The other two indicators of anti-Chinese activity provide information about the strength of anti-Chinese stands by each county's delegation to the state legislature. They are the *number of anti-Chinese bills introduced per delegate to the state legislature* and the *proportion of votes for anti-Chinese bills by the county's legislative delegation*.

We tabulated the first measure from the *Journal of the Assembly* and the *Journal of the Senate*, the official minutes of the California legislature. For the 1871 analysis, we counted the number of anti-Chinese bills or resolutions introduced by members of each county's legislative delegation between 1869 and 1873. For the 1879 analysis, we used the years 1877 through 1881. In both periods numerous anti-Chinese bills were introduced, and the San Francisco delegation, by far the largest, was far more active than any other. To take size of delegation into account and reduce the impact of San Francisco as an outlier, we divided the number of bills introduced by each county's delegation by its size. Nevertheless, the measures remain skewed, especially in 1871, because representatives of many counties introduced no anti-Chinese bills.

The proportion of votes for anti-Chinese bills is the number of anti-Chinese votes cast by a county's delegation divided by the total number of voting opportunities. We excluded bills and resolutions that were "passed on third reading," that is, by unanimous consent without a formal vote, and included only votes in which there was no doubt as to which position was anti-Chinese. For the most part, these are votes on final passage on bills or resolutions. We did not include votes on amendments because no information about their content has been preserved. We also excluded procedural votes in which a representative's vote might have been a matter of parliamentary strategy. After these exclusions, there was only one recorded vote each in the Assembly and Senate for the period of the 1871 analysis, so we computed this measure only for the 1879 analysis. It is based on thirteen votes in the Assembly and six in the Senate.²

Independent Variables

Eight independent variables that may affect the anti-Chinese political activities in California during the 1870s are suggested by the theoretical models reviewed above. The first is proportion of the minority population. In our case, it is the *pro-portion of the population Chinese* in each county for the two periods, derived respectively from published volumes of the 1870 and 1880 U.S. Censuses. The second variable, growth rate of the minority population, is measured as the *growth rate of the Chinese population*. For the 1871 analysis, it is the proportion of the Chinese population in the county in 1870 minus the proportion in 1860. For the 1879 analysis, it is the difference between the proportions in 1880 and 1870.

Economic conditions are tapped by two measures. The first, *ratio of wages to living costs*, was based on two sources: microfilm records of data collected by the 1870 Social Census and reports of the State Superintendent of Instruction to the state legislature in the Appendices of the *Journal of the Assembly* and *Journal of the Senate*. As part of the Social Census, census takers estimated for each county the average daily wages of a day laborer and of a carpenter who did not receive room and board. The Superintendent of Schools' report listed the average monthly wages of male teachers in each county.³ These data provide information about wages for an unskilled laborer, a skilled laborer, and a white-collar worker for most counties. In addition, the Social Census also provided information about average weekly cost of room and board.⁴ We used this information to compute ratio of wages to living costs by converting all of the data to a weekly basis and dividing the weekly wage for each occupation by the cost of room and board. The mean of the three quotients is our measure. Since the three weekly ratios are highly correlated, the average provides a reliable (alpha 5 .75) measure. Unfortunately, no parallel data are available for 1880.

Our second measure of economic conditions is the *proportion of real and personal property delinquent for taxation*. For the 1871 analysis, it is the mean of the proportions of real estate delinquent for taxation in 1871 and 1872 and personal property delinquent for taxation in 1871 and 1872 (alpha = .61),⁵ computed from reports in the appendices to the *Journal of the Senate* and the *Journal of the Assembly*. The parallel measure for the 1879 analysis was computed from the proportions of taxes reported as delinquent for 1878–79⁶ and for 1880 (alpha = .86). The two measures of county economic prosperity for the 1871 analysis are moderately correlated in the expected direction ($r = -.31$).

The fourth variable, the proportion of jobs in occupations with the greatest competition between majority and minority that are held by minority workers, is measured by the *proportion of laboring jobs held by Chinese*. The information about occupations comes from our own tabulations of the occupations of men⁷ sixteen years and older from microfilm of the original 1870 and 1880 manuscript census. We coded the occupations of all Chinese males age sixteen and over in every county in both years. For 1870, we coded the occupations of all non-Chinese males age sixteen and over in all but the state's largest four counties, where we used a systematic sample designed to yield a sample size of approximately 1,000 per county. In 1880, when the populations of most counties were substantially larger, we used a systematic sample designed to

yield an N of approximately 1,000 in all but the six smallest counties, where we included all males.

Coding occupations from the census manuscripts involves numerous difficulties. For example, census takers almost never distinguished between independent miners and employees of mining firms, classified many men as “laborers” without elaboration, and did not clearly distinguish workers who were currently employed and unemployed.⁸ To avoid as many of these difficulties as possible, we used an initial review of a sample of manuscripts to develop a detailed classification of forty-three job titles or clusters of similar titles for coding the data. We condensed these to eleven categories for the present analysis: farmer/animal husbandry, agricultural labor, nonagricultural unskilled labor, miner, skilled labor, professional, independent shopkeeper or businessman, clerical, domestic servant, cooks/waiters, and drivers/peddlers.⁹ Our measure is the proportion of Chinese in each county employed in agricultural labor, unskilled nonagricultural labor, and mining. These occupations were chosen because they generally required little education or skill and provided low pay. All were frequently held by Chinese, who competed with white workers for them.¹⁰

To measure the proportion of majority group workers employed in occupations that experienced greatest competition from minority workers and were most favorably situated to mobilize to protect their interests, we used 1870 and 1880 census data to compute the *proportion of non-Chinese males in urban working-class occupations*.¹¹

Occupational segregation is measured by the widely used dissimilarity index (Duncan and Duncan 1955). We computed the index for each county for Chinese versus non-Chinese across the eleven major occupational categories listed above. The higher the index, the higher the proportion of workers who would have to change jobs in order to make their occupational distributions equivalent. Recent work by Olzak and colleagues (see above) sometimes includes decrease in the amount of occupational segregation as a predictor of ethnic conflict, on the assumption that decreases in occupational segregation disrupt the established ethnic division of labor and threaten the privileged jobs of the majority. This argument is of uncertain applicability to the turbulent and rapidly evolving labor markets of late-nineteenth-century California, but we experimented with it in the 1879 analysis by computing the difference between occupational segregation in 1880 and 1870. The resulting change scores were not significantly correlated with any of the dependent variables.

Urbanization is measured by the *size of the urban population* in each county. It is measured by the number of persons in each county living in cities of over 4,000 population in 1870 and 1880, the Census Bureau’s standard for urban in both censuses. We were able to measure the level of organization of the majority group only for the 1879 analysis. In the late 1870s the Workingmen’s Party emerged as the major organizational vehicle for the anti-Chinese forces. Consequently, we use the *proportion of state legislative seats contested by Workingmen’s Party* as our measure of the level of organization of the anti-Chinese forces in each county. It is

computed as the proportion of seats representing each county in the state legislature for which the Workingmen’s Party offered candidates in the 1879 election.

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

Tables 2 and 3, for the 1871 and 1879 analysis respectively, display the zero-order correlations of the measures of anti-Chinese voting and legislative activity with independent variables derived from the literature review above. The tables also show the regression of each dependent variable on the independent variables with which it had a simple correlation greater than .10. The relatively small *N*’s, significant amounts of missing data for some variables—which result in substantially reduced *N*’s in some of the regressions—and inclusion of several variables that are skewed because most counties have a value of zero means the regression results must be interpreted as exploratory. Moreover, most of the theoretical statements cited above offer little guidance about what relationships should be expected between the independent variables they cite and anti-Chinese activity when other relevant variables are controlled. Consequently, we emphasize the bivariate correlations in our interpretation. Since our study includes all counties, we report results of the significance tests only as a heuristic. Following the suggestion of Olzak, we tested for the interactions between the rate of increase in the Chinese population and the economic conditions. Since the interaction terms were neither substantively nor statistically significant, we omitted them from the tables.

1871 Analysis

The results for 1871, shown in Table 2, reveal a pattern of isolated relationships that fail to provide a clearly interpretable pattern. At the zero-order level, most of the independent variables were unrelated or very weakly related to anti-Chinese voting and legislative activity. Only two predictors have noteworthy relationships to any of the dependent variables. First, the average percentage of the county’s real and personal property delinquent for taxation, a variable that indicates economic condition of the county, is moderately related as predicted to the percent of votes for Democratic candidates for State Assembly and Senate. However, this variable is only very weakly related to the percentage of votes for Democratic candidates in statewide elections and is unrelated to the number of anti-Chinese bills introduced by the county’s legislative delegation. Nor is the other measure of county prosperity, the ratio of wages to living costs, related to any of the dependent variables. Second, the size of the county’s urban population, which measures the level of urbanization, is moderately related to introduction of anti-Chinese bills. It is also weakly related to the percentage of the vote for Democratic candidates for State Assembly and Senate in 1871.

TABLE 2. Relationships between Independent Variables and Anti-Chinese Voting and Political Activity, 1871

	Proportion of Vote for Anti-Chinese	Proportion of Vote for Anti-Chinese	Number of Anti-Chinese Bills
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	Candidates—County Representatives		Candidates—Statewide Offices		Introduced per Delegate to State Legislature	
	r (N)	Beta	r (N)	Beta	r (N)	Beta
Proportion of population Chinese	.03 (44)		.02 (50)		.09 (50)	
Growth rate of Chinese population	.12 (35)	0.06	.14 (41)	-0.01	-.04 (41)	
Ratio of wages to living costs	-.02 (37)		-.01 (42)		-.03 (42)	
Proportion real and personal property delinquent for taxation	.39** (38)	0.13	.11 (42)	0.09	-.04 (43)	
Proportion of laboring jobs held by Chinese	-.05 (44)		-.16 (50)	0.04	.21 (50)	0.14
Proportion of non-Chinese males in urban working-class jobs	-.16 (44)	-.45*	-.01 (50)		-.07 (50)	
Occupational segregation	-.17 (44)	0.19	.15 (50)	0.17	-.19 (50)	-0.06
Size of urban population	.19 (44)	-0.22	-.02 (50)		.35** (50)	.33*
Regression R2		0.34		0.03		0.16
N for regression		31		35		50

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ (One-tailed tests).

Examination of the scatterplot for the relationship between the size of the county's urban population and introduction of anti-Chinese bills reveals that this relationship occurs solely because of the effect of San Francisco County as an outlier. With a population of 149,473 in 1870, San Francisco County dwarfed all other settlements in the state, and its legislative delegation was by far the most active in introducing anti-Chinese bills and resolutions, accounting for more than half of those submitted during this period. San Franciscans also cast 64 percent of their votes for Democratic candidates for State Assembly and Senate, far higher than the state average of 50 percent. When San Francisco County is removed from the analysis, the relationships between size of urban population and the dependent variables range from negligible to very weakly negative.

In the regression analysis, the effect of size of urban population on the number of anti-Chinese bills introduced per delegate in the state legislature persists. However, the effect of the proportion of real and personal property delinquent for taxation on the percent of votes for anti-Chinese candidates for the county's legislative delegation is almost eliminated. In this regression, the percent of non-Chinese males in urban working-class occupations emerges as the strongest predictor but with effects opposite to the predicted direction, and the sign of the weak relationship between urbanization and the dependent variable also reverses from the predicted direction to the opposite direction. These regression results should be interpreted with special

caution, however, because the *N* is small, the ratio of independent variables to cases is relatively high, and there are moderate multicollinearity problems involving size or urban population, percent of non-Chinese males in working-class population, and tax delinquencies.

The 1871 analysis thus fails to provide clear and consistent support for any of the independent variables as predictors of anti-Chinese political activity. It is possible that the lack of interpretable results stems from weaker measurement of anti-Chinese voting behavior in 1871 than in 1879. Although the Democratic Party platform was clearly more anti-Chinese than the position of the Republicans, the party's anti-Chinese stand did not dominate its agenda to the same extent as it did the platform of the Workingmen's Party in 1879. Mitigating against this interpretation is the fact that the results for introduction of anti-Chinese bills were no more robust than those for the two variables derived from election results. Another possibility, suggested by the historical data, is that—with the possible exception of San Francisco—the anti-Chinese forces had not yet succeeded in mobilizing into an effective political force in 1871. It was variables related to this factor that proved decisive in the 1879 analysis.

1879 Analysis

In the 1879 analysis, reported in Table 3, most of the stronger zero-order correlations involve indicators of the level of organization or the potential for organization among the majority group workers. The strongest of these are the correlations between our measure of the organization level of the anti-Chinese forces—the percentage of local races for seats in the state Assembly and Senate for which the party had candidates—and the percentages of the county's votes received, first, by Workingmen's Party candidates for these offices and, second, by its candidates for statewide office. The former correlation is in part a result of the fact that the Workingmen could not receive votes in races where they offered no candidates;¹³ however, the correlation between the percentage of seats in the Assembly and Senate for which the Workingmen offered candidates and the percentage of votes its candidates received for statewide office is not constrained in this way.¹⁴ These correlations, along with the weak relationship between this independent variable and the number of anti-Chinese bills introduced by the county's legislative delegation, strongly suggest that the presence of an active anti-Chinese party in the county helped to promote anti-Chinese activity in the political system.

There are also noteworthy positive relationships between the size of the county's urban population and all four dependent variables, including two correlations of .40 or above. These correlations suggest that the concentration of white workers provided conditions that made it easier to organize to turn out the anti-Chinese vote and persuade legislators to introduce and vote for anti-Chinese bills. Along the same lines, there is evidence in the cases of two of the four dependent variables that the proportion of the county's non-Chinese workforce in skilled and unskilled labor jobs characteristic of urban areas influenced anti-Chinese voting and legislative activity, quite likely by providing a constituency for labor unions, the Workingmen's Party, and other anti-Chinese groups.

Only two zero-order correlations fall outside of this pattern. There is a weak to moderate positive correlation as predicted between the growth rate of the Chinese population and votes for anti-Chinese (Workingmen’s Party) candidates for the state legislature and a weak relationship in the reverse of the hypothesized direction between the proportion of laboring jobs held by Chinese and the same dependent variable. However, neither of these relationships is part of an interpretable pattern, and both are reduced in strength in the regression analysis.

The regression analyses generally also reduce the effects of the percentage of non-Chinese males in working-class occupations, size of the urban population, and the percent of state legislative seats contested by the Workingmen’s Party, but only two of the beta coefficients drop substantially, in each case to near zero. There is also evidence in the regression analyses involving anti-Chinese voting in statewide elections and introduction of anti-Chinese bills that the effects of the percentage of non-Chinese males in working-class occupations and size of the urban population were at least partly independent of the level of organization achieved by the Workingmen’s Party, possibly reflecting the efforts of unions and anticoolie clubs.

The combination of these three conditions to produce strong anti-Chinese political activity is illustrated well by San Francisco County, again the center of anti-Chinese action. With 233,959 residents, San Francisco County was by far the state’s most urbanized area. And its 45 percent of its non-Chinese male population in skilled and unskilled labor jobs characteristic of urban areas was a full standard deviation above the mean. It was one of thirteen counties to mount a full slate of Workingmen’s candidates for Assembly and Senate, but beyond this, it was the birthplace and headquarters of the party. San Francisco’s representatives submitted thirty-one of the fifty anti-Chinese bills and resolutions introduced in the legislature and the county continued to rank highest on this variable after we standardized for the size of each county’s legislative delegation. San Francisco also gave far more support to the party’s candidates for Assembly and Senate (64 percent) and for statewide office (47 percent) than the average for all counties (16 and 18 percent respectively). Finally, its delegation cast 69 percent of its votes for anti-Chinese legislation, compared to 49 percent for the average county. In short, as the state’s metropolitan center with a large working-class population and the headquarters of the anti-Chinese political party, San Francisco played a leading role in the anti-Chinese movement in the late 1870s.

TABLE 3 Relationships between Independent Variables and Anti-Chinese Voting and Political Activity, 1879

	Proportion of Vote for Anti-Chinese Candidates—County Representatives		Proportion of Vote for Anti-Chinese Candidates—Statewide Offices		Number of Anti-Chinese Bills Introduced per Delegate to State Legislature		Proportion of Legislative Delegation Voting for Anti-Chinese Bills	
	r (N)	Beta	r (N)	Beta	r (N)	Beta	r (N)	Beta
Proportion of population Chinese	-.19 (48)	0.17	-.09 (50)		-.03 (52)		.01 (52)	

Growth rate of Chinese population	.31* (45)	0.22	.12 (47)	0.02	.18 (49)	0.17	.09 (49)	
Proportion real and personal property delinquent for taxes	-.05 (46)		-.13 (48)	-0.24	-.13 (50)	-0.17	-.03 (50)	
Proportion of laboring jobs held by Chinese	-.24 (47)	-0.15	-.09 (49)		.18 (51)		.18 (51)	0.15
Proportion of non-Chinese males in urban working-class jobs	.15 (48)	0.13	.23* (50)	0.16	.39** (52)	.34*	-.04 (52)	
Occupational segregation	-.10 (47)	-.00	-.09 (49)	-.23 (51)	-0.14	-.12 (51)	-0.02	
Size of urban population	.23 (48)	0.06	.40** (50)	.31*	.46** (52)	.40**	.20 (52)	0.20
Percent of state legislative seats contested by Workingmen's Party	.75** (45)	.67**	.55** (47)	.46**	.21 (49)	0.02	.04 (49)	
Regression R2		0.62		0.47		0.41		0.07
N for Regression		42		42		44		51

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ (One-tailed tests).

Nevertheless, the effects of urbanization, an active Workingmen's Party, and concentrations of non-Chinese in working-class jobs on the dependent variables are by no means completely accounted for by San Francisco's position as an outlier. This is illustrated by the results of regression analyses for each of the dependent variables, using the percent of non-Chinese males in working-class occupations, the size of the urban population, and the percent of state legislative seats in the county contested by the Workingmen's Party as independent variables with San Francisco omitted.

The results in Table 4 show that removing San Francisco from the analysis does not generally eliminate or reverse the relationships reported in Table 3. The effects of the percent of local offices contested by the Workingmen's Party and the percent of white workers in urban working-class jobs are essentially unchanged. The correlations between size of urban population and dependent variables are reduced, but in two instances there are still noteworthy relationships.

Table 4. Effects of Percent of Non-Chinese Males in Working-Class Occupations, Size of Urban Population and Proportion of State Legislative Seats Contested by Workingmen's Party on Anti-Chinese Voting and Political Activity, 1879 (San Francisco County Omitted)

	Proportion of Vote for Anti-Chinese Candidates—County Representatives	Proportion of Vote for Anti-Chinese Candidates—Statewide Offices	Number of Anti-Chinese Bills Introduced per Delegate to State	Proportion of Legislative Delegation Voting for Anti-
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					Legislature		Chinese Bills	
	r (N)	Beta	r (N)	Beta	r (N)	Beta	r (N)	Beta
Size of urban population	.05 (47)	-.13	.30* (49)	0.17	.25* (51)	0.19	-.03 (51)	-.04
Proportion of non-Chinese in urban working-class occupations	.11 (47)	0.02	.18 (49)	0.12	.36** (51)	0.28	-.08 (51)	-.08
Percent of state legislative offices contested by Workingmen's Party	.74** (44)	.77**	.53** (46)	.46**	.14 (48)	0.03	.00 (48)	0.03
Regression R2		0.56		0.32		0.15		0.01
N for Regression		44		46		48		48

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ (One-tailed tests).

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Our review of historical sources indicated that a variety of factors may have contributed to anti-Chinese activity in nineteenth-century California; however, it appears that direct competition between the majority group and Chinese workers in areas where white workers were geographically concentrated and successful in organizing anti-Chinese groups was especially likely to precipitate high levels of anti-Chinese activity, like those activities that occurred in the early 1850s and in the 1870s. Our quantitative results, which examine the effects of a number of variables suggested by sociological models of ethnic conflict, revealed few noteworthy and no consistent effects in 1871. Whether this occurred because of weaker measurement of the variables, especially use of voting for Democratic candidates as an index of anti-Chinese pressure on the political system, or from other reasons cannot be known with certainty. On the other hand, our 1879 results are clearly in line with the historical analysis, suggesting a decisive role for the organizations of non-Chinese workers and for variables that created favorable conditions for such organizations to flourish.

As the 1870s progressed, anti-Chinese voting patterns and legislative activity became most pronounced in counties that were most urbanized and in counties with concentrations of non-Chinese workers engaged in typically urban working-class occupations. Both the quantitative and qualitative analyses suggest that these factors provided the critical mass and organizational potential that brought the Workingmen's Party and its anti-Chinese platform to the fore. With its stridently anti-Chinese rhetoric, the party also provided both an organizational base for the anti-Chinese forces and a clearer choice for anti-Chinese voters than had been available in 1871. The regression results suggest, however, that the presence of the Workingmen's Party was not the only factor. Urbanization and the presence of concentrations of urbanized white workers appear to have had effects over and above providing supporters for the party, perhaps operating partly through anti-coolie clubs and labor unions.

Although our results highlight the importance of the organization of majority group workers in generating political action against the minority, the absence of strong support for other variables derived from existing theories does not necessarily mean that they have no utility. Our reliance on historical records means that some variables, such as the relative economic prosperity of the counties and variables derived from coding of occupations from census manuscripts, may be poorly measured. Census data allow measurement of the proportion of Chinese in each county only every ten years, so our measure of change in the proportion of each county's residents who were Chinese may miss shifts that occurred over shorter periods in a dynamic, quickly evolving economy. It is also possible that in comparison to statewide changes in economic prosperity over time, variations in prosperity across counties were too small to have much impact. Finally, existing theories were developed as general models of ethnic conflict, and most tests of them have focused on incidents of overt ethnic conflict. It is possible that they are not as well adapted to predicting efforts by the majority groups to mobilize and use the political system to discriminate against the minority.

What our results do demonstrate is the importance of factors that make it easier for antiminority forces to organize and the level of organization they achieve in predicting efforts to use the political system to discriminate. In the late 1870s these conditions were met best in urban areas where working-class whites were concentrated. In the early 1850s the historical record suggests that they were met best in the mining counties. The utility of this approach is adumbrated in the existing theoretical statements by Hechter and Olzak and their colleagues, and it has received some attention in studies growing out of Olzak's ethnic competitive model. However, none of this work gives a central role to the organizations of majority group workers and understands conditions conducive to the organizations.

In this respect, our findings are consistent with those from the study most directly comparable to this one, our previously published comparison of the amount of anti-Chinese activity in .ve historical periods in California (Fong and Markham 1991; see also Boswell 1986). In that analysis, we concluded that economic hard times were a necessary but not sufficient condition for extensive anti-Chinese action and that the spread of a well-developed anti-Chinese ideology and the level of political organization of non-Chinese workers were key variables leading to successful action against the Chinese.¹⁵ This analysis goes beyond the earlier one by suggesting an important role for geographic concentration of aggrieved members of the majority and their political mobilization for predicting the extent of antiminority action through the political system.

Our results thus suggest that subsequent theory building and research should pay close attention to the role of majority group organizations in ethnic conflict, especially when the dependent variable is efforts to institutionalize discrimination through the political system. Theory-building efforts that develop more elaborate models of the causes and consequences of majority group organization and research that tests such models in other contexts and with a greater variety of more sophisticated measures are especially desirable.

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NOTES

1. In each case, we combine votes from several races to minimize the impact of idiosyncratic factors, such as votes for a “favorite son,” that might affect the vote for a single candidate. Due to staggered terms, some counties did not have state Senate elections in 1871. For these counties, except for one in which the Democrat candidate for Assembly ran unopposed, we used the Assembly votes only. Because of the adoption of a new constitution, Senate terms were not staggered in 1879. Alpha for the measure of the proportion of the vote for state offices was .91 in 1871 and .93 in 1879. For county representatives, alphas are .31 and .73 respectively. The low reliability in 1871 reflects in part the smaller number of counties for which complete data were available (see Table 1).
2. To avoid confusion over the meaning of abstentions versus absences, we computed the percentage of all possible votes from the delegation that were actually cast for the anti-Chinese position. When a senator or assemblyman represented more than one county, we counted his votes on bills and resolutions and his introduction of bills as the reciprocal of the number of counties he represented. This procedure gives more weight in determining the legislative activity of the county to the votes of delegates who represented only that county.
3. Mean wages for female teachers were also given, but to ensure consistency with the remaining data, we decided not to use them. Our measure is computed from the mean of the averages reported for each county in 1871 and 1872.
4. Information about one or both occupations or the cost of room and board was missing for some counties in the 1870 Social Census. In a few larger counties, the census takers provided separate estimates of wages and the cost of room and board for various wards. For these, we computed the county average.
5. These data, which were reported for the first time in 1871, were not listed for some counties, and there are a few obvious inconsistencies in the information reported for the two years. Because no information about the accuracy of the data to guide us in deciding which year’s report to favor has been preserved, we elected to combine the results for both years.
6. The data for 1878 and 1879 were combined in the original source.
7. The percentage of women with listed occupations in the 1870 and 1880 censuses was low, and there were very few Chinese women in California.

8. Because enumerations of Chinese in work or mining camps often end precisely at the conclusion of a 40-line census manuscript page, it also appears that some census takers estimated the numbers of Chinese in such camps.

9. A complete list of the occupations in each category is available from the authors on request.

10. We did not include jobs as cooks or waiters and domestic servants because these jobs were rarely held by white males. Mining is included because by the 1870s most miners were paid employees of mining companies. The few remaining independent miners generally worked claims abandoned by others with modest success.

11. The occupations included are nonagricultural unskilled labor, skilled labor, and drivers and peddlers. We excluded miners and agricultural laborers because the theoretical rationale for this variable specifies that it is aggregations of majority group workers in working-class jobs who provide the potential for organizing against the minority. Agricultural workers and miners were not urban and played little role in the anti-Chinese activity of the 1870s. Aggregations of miners in mining camps had mobilized against the Chinese in the 1850s, but by the 1870s the number of miners had declined greatly and mining towns were shrinking (see above).

12. We did not include all independent variables in the regression because the resulting ratio of independent variables to degrees of freedom would have been too high and *N*s would have been further reduced. Because we are dealing with small numbers of cases, we have reported bivariate correlations based on all cases available for each pair of variables rather than only for cases for which information was available for all variables.

13. We considered removing counties where the Workingmen's Party offered no candidates for state Senate and Assembly from the analysis but decided against doing so for four reasons. First, the absence of Workingmen's Party candidates is not a simple missing data situation; instead it has an important substantive interpretation: the Party was weak or nonexistent in the counties where it offered no candidates. Removing counties where the party Workingmen fielded no candidates for state Assembly and Senate would thus truncate the range of the independent variable. Second, removing these counties reduces the *N* for the regression analysis for percentage of the vote received by Workingmen's Party candidates for state Assembly and Senate to an undesirably low level. Third, because there were few counties where the party offered candidates for some seats in the Assembly and Senate but not others, the percent of state legislative seats contested by the Workingmen's Party becomes skewed when counties with no candidates are removed, leaving only the relatively few counties where the party contested some seats and a majority of counties where it had candidates for all seats. Finally, although the fact that voters could not vote for Workingmen's Party candidates where there were none makes a positive correlation likely, it does not guarantee a strong positive correlation. A weak correlation would occur if the party's candidates had received few votes in state Assembly and Senate races even in counties where it offered a full slate of candidates, limiting the amount of variance in the

dependent variable. A weak or nonexistent correlation would indicate that even where well organized, the party could not obtain many votes. The observed correlation shows that this is not the case.

14. Voters in *all* counties could vote for Workingmen's Party candidates for statewide office, so in this case there is no chance that the lower support for the party in counties where it was inactive results simply from the unavailability of its candidates on the ballot.

15. No existing data allow intercounty comparisons of the pervasiveness of anti-Chinese ideology.

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