

ciation in 1918 and 1919, and was subsequently president of the Catholic Historical Society.

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Non-Voting in a Typical Ohio Community. The investigation which is described in the following paragraphs was first suggested by a plea made by Professor Merriam at a meeting of the American Political Science Association for a more careful statistical study, and a more detailed analysis, of various units of the body politic. It was further stimulated by the report of Professors Merriam and Gosnell on the study of non-voting made in the city of Chicago which report is published in book form under the title *Non-Voting*.

This study, however, differs somewhat from that made in Chicago as to method and purpose. In the Chicago survey only non-voters were studied and the chief aim was to discover why the non-voters absented themselves from the polling-booth. In our investigation data were gathered, as far as possible, on all the persons entitled to vote in the city of Delaware, Ohio, for the purpose of discovering if possible the variations in the percentage of non-voting according to age, race, sex, occupation, education and so forth.

It should be clearly understood that this is not presented as a comprehensive and conclusive study. On the contrary the writer clearly recognizes that to attach great importance to the conclusions reached would not only be unscientific but provincial. Nevertheless, it is believed that the microscopic study of political units has value. While no one is ready to say that a given community is as likely to be typical of all communities, as a given cell of a plant or an animal is typical of other cells in the organism, it is perhaps true that there is enough similarity to warrant the statement that if enough communities are studied we may generalize, on a statewide, or even a nationwide basis. If a large number of local units were studied for facts on voting and non-voting it might be safe to draw general conclusions, and the results of this survey are presented in the hope that it may suggest similar studies in other localities.

The community studied is the city of Delaware, in central Ohio, with a population according to the 1920 census of 8756, and a fairly typical Ohio community. That it is a college town does not necessarily keep it from being typical. Ohio has so many colleges that one can say, without being more than half facetious, that an Ohio town

must have a college in it in order to be typical. The only effects which the presence of a college has upon our study are: (1) a higher percentage of persons among the voters who have attended college; (2) a few more students—the number of student voters is small as most students do not vote in Delaware—; and (3) a larger percentage of teachers than is usually found in communities not containing a college or university.

The first step was to collect information regarding a large number of persons eligible to vote. The following data were secured on each voter, by personal interview with the voter himself or with members of his family; native born or naturalized; parentage, native, mixed or foreign; length of residence in the community, sex, age, race, marital condition, family relationship, occupation, type of neighborhood, type of dwelling, ownership of home, education, and religious affiliations. Altogether 4390 voters were interviewed, personally or through members of the immediate family, which means that nearly half of the population of the municipality was surveyed. The information was secured through the personal solicitation of undergraduate students in political science. A group of advanced students under the constant supervision of the instructor was placed in charge of the interviews in each precinct. The student solicitors were cautioned not to be unduly aggressive in asking for information, so it happens that under every item a limited number of blanks are found. This will account for the fact that in no item, except sex, does the total used in the calculations reach 4390, the total number actually solicited.

After the solicitation had been completed the data sheets of voters were separated from those of non-voters on the basis of the official poll books of the election of November 4, 1924 and the results tabulated under the following heads.

Nativity. Under this item the persons solicited were classified as native-born and naturalized. No appreciable difference in attendance at the polls was noted as between these two classes. 64.8 per cent of the native born voted while 64 per cent of the naturalized eligibles exercised the right of suffrage. The significance of these figures is lessened by the fact that only 114 of those studied are listed as naturalized.

Parentage. This part of the investigation revealed the interesting fact that those of foreign parentage (70.3 per cent voting) outranked those of mixed (69.1 per cent voting) or native (64.8 per cent voting) parentage, with those of mixed parentage a close second. The greater

interest among those of foreign parentage is not due, as is often the case in the larger cities, to the greater docility of the foreigner in the hands of the bosses. In fact the great majority of those of mixed or foreign parentage are themselves native-born and completely Americanized.

Term of residence in the city. Comparisons under this head were made only between those who had resided in the city two years or less and others. All those who were counted as having two years (or less) residence were eligible to vote in the November election. As might be expected, those of longer residence had a much better record (65.9 per cent voting) than those whose term of residence was less than two years (48.6 per cent voting). Over ninety per cent of the subjects had resided in the city more than two years.

Sex. Men were decidedly better voters than women, the latter showing a voting percentage of 57.1 per cent as against 72.9 per cent for the male voters. Perhaps the percentage for women is slightly too high. In the house to house canvas it was easier to find the non-voting women than the non-voting men, and of the non-voters not interviewed it is likely that the roomers, boarders and others that were missed included more men than women. Perhaps a slight downward correction for the men and upward correction for the women of the percentage of voting should be made.

Age. Six groups were formed on the basis of age, the twenties, the thirties, the forties, the fifties, the sixties and those seventy or over. On the basis of the voting record the group in the sixties, to which 490 individuals belong, ranked first with 81.2 per cent. This remarkably high voting record, was not approached by any of the other age groups, the nearest being the fifties with a voting percentage of 69.8 per cent. Not far behind the fifties came the forties with 64.9 per cent and the thirties with 64 per cent. Still farther down, and lower than any other age group except that of seventy and over, was the group in the twenties with 59.1 per cent, those seventy and older having a voting record of 56.5 per cent. Outside of the oldest group, where the infirmities of age no doubt contributed to absence from the polls, the interest in suffrage seemed to increase with age, the youngest group having the least creditable showing and those in the sixties by far the best record. There may be a small percentage of error under this head, as in some cases the ages were estimated, but these errors are likely to be compensating.

Race. About 95 per cent of the persons solicited were white and 65.0 per cent of the whites voted. Of the 236 colored people interviewed, 50.4 per cent cast their ballots.

Family relationship. Under this head the persons solicited were classified as head of family, wife, son, daughter, parent (including parents-in-law), brother or sister of family head, boarder and roomer. As might be expected the family head who in most cases is also the husband and father had the best record (71.7 per cent) under this grouping. The wife had a much lower record than the sons and daughters. Comparatively low was the record of roomers and boarders, indicating that unmarried persons staying at home are better voters than those living away from home. This is, of course, not necessarily due to living at home. It may result from the migratory and transient nature of the boarders and roomers rather than from the influence of home upon those who are living under the paternal roof. The worst record in this group was made by the people who are making their homes with sons or daughters. The voting percentage of this group was practically the same as that of all persons seventy or more years of age, but very much lower than those in the sixties, and the indications are that elderly persons living with sons or daughters are not likely to vote as generally as the average persons in their age group.

Marital condition. About three-fourths of those interviewed are married, and the percentage of voting was higher among married than among single persons.

Type of neighborhood. The prevailing impression that those living in the less desirable parts of the community are more likely to exercise their suffrage rights than the residents of other sections is not substantiated by the figures of this study. The persons studied were divided on the basis of the type of neighborhood into very good, good, fair and poor; and the ranking on the basis of voting percentage is in the same order, 74 per cent of those from the very good neighborhoods voting, while only 44.5 per cent of those from the poor neighborhoods exercised the franchise right. In a city like the one studied, there is, of course, less likelihood of the local bosses exerting as much influence over the poorer classes as would be the case in the larger cities. At any rate, as far as this one election in this one community is concerned, it is clear that the standard of citizenship, at least as far as voting is an indication, increases with the standard of living as far as such

standard may be based on the type of neighborhood in which one resides.

Type of dwelling. This item has very little significance, for in a community like Delaware only a very small percentage of the voters reside in other buildings than the family dwelling houses and there is little social or economic distinction between the various types.

Ownership of home. Under this head the persons studied were divided into two classes, (1) those who lived in homes owned by the head of the family occupying the same, and (2) others. The individuals were not classified into those who were and those who were not home owners, which would have made the figures a little different. It seemed fair, however, to list those voters who as sons, daughters, brothers, sisters or parents, and, of course, the wife of the head of the family who owned his own home, lived in the home, as a part of the group living in owned homes. The investigation shows that those living in owned homes voted much better (68.9 per cent) than those who were listed as tenants (57.8 per cent). A large proportion of the families in the city (nearly two-thirds) live in owned homes.

Education. The figures under this head show the effects of education on voting. As the amount of education increases the percentage of voting increases also. In interpreting these figures it should be remembered that the college list includes not only college graduates but all who have done any college work; that the high school list includes all those whose school days terminated during the high school years regardless of whether they were graduated, and that the elementary list includes all those who dropped out of the educational system before the secondary schools. Under such a scheme of tabulation, of course, the number of persons in the high school and college groups is much higher than if the list were limited to graduates. However, for the purpose of making comparisons between those who have enjoyed different grades of education these figures serve very well. Of those who have no school room training only 34.9 per cent voted; in the elementary group, 57.2 per cent; in the high school group, 69.6 per cent; and in the college group 78.1 per cent. As far as these data have any weight they indicate that education has a direct effect on good citizenship, at least from the standpoint of interest in suffrage.

Religious affiliation. Of the several denominations which show fifty or more members among the persons solicited, the Episcopalians rank first, with the Presbyterians, the Catholics, the Reformed, the

Methodists, the Lutheran and the Baptists following in the order named. The Baptists included a large percentage of colored persons. Of those with smaller representations, the Jews and the Christian Scientists showed a high percentage of voting. Under the general head "protestant" are listed 195 persons who gave their affiliations as such without designating sect. Champions of church affiliation may find comfort in noting that those without affiliation had a very low voting record. The unusually large number of Methodists is probably due to the location in the community of a university conducted under the auspices of that denomination.

Occupations. Those engaged in public service, which class is made up almost entirely of public officials, including policemen, firemen, mail carriers as well as other public officers and employees, took first place with a percentage of 88.1. The excellent showing made by the members of this group is partly due, no doubt, to their interest in public affairs. The fact that the group is made up almost entirely of men, most of them neither old nor young, would further explain the high percentage, as our figures show that women vote less generally than men and that persons in the twenties and in the seventies have a poor voting record.

Following closely upon those in the public service were: business executives, banking, real estate, insurance and college teachers. The only other occupational group which voted over eighty per cent was that of the railroad and traction employees. The comparatively high record in this group may also be explained by the absence of women and of young and old voters.

Merchants, professional men, public school teachers, salesmen and clerks, agriculturists, carpenters and painters make up the group of occupations whose voting records were between seventy and eighty per cent. The low record of public school teachers as compared to college teachers may be accounted for, in part at least, by the larger number of women among the former.

Those showing a voting record between sixty and seventy per cent were: clerical occupations, including bookkeepers and stenographers; machinists and mechanics; laborers; and those engaged in domestic and personal services. The largest group of all—housekeepers—with 1859 persons, showed a very low voting record, (55.6 per cent) and this may be explained by the low percentage (57.1) of women generally.

The various groups of occupations have been arranged according to the classification of gainful occupations used by the federal census

bureau. Only one class used by the bureau—the extraction of minerals—had no representatives in the community studied. Ranked in order, on the basis of interest in suffrage, the various classes stand as follows: (1) public service, 88.1 per cent; (2) professional service, 78.3 per cent; (3) trade, 77.3 per cent; (4) agriculture, 71.2 per cent; (5) clerical occupations, 69.4 per cent; (6) transportation, 68.1 per cent; (7) manufacturing and mechanical industries, 66.8 per cent; (8) domestic and personal service, 60.4 per cent. Two groups, housekeepers and students are not listed as gainful occupations.

General summary. The average voting percentage for the community is about 64 per cent, which is considerably higher than the average for the country generally. The most unsatisfactory voting records were found among (1) women, (2) colored persons, (3) voters under thirty years of age, (4) voters past seventy years of age, (5) roomers and boarders, (6) residents of the poorer neighborhoods, (7) those living in rented homes, (8) those with little or no education, (9) those with no church affiliation, (10) persons who have come to city recently, and (11) certain occupations. To generalize from this one study would be, as previously stated, dangerous and unfair; but if other studies should substantiate these findings we should have a basis for beginning the work of increasing the percentage of participation in public elections. It is largely in the hope that this report may stimulate further studies in other localities, so that interesting and valuable comparisons may be made, that these tables and the accompanying comments have been prepared for publication.

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Comparison of voters and non-voters

	NUMBER			PERCENTAGE	
	Voters	Non-voters	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Nativity					
Native born.....	2,736	1,489	4,225	64.8	35.2
Naturalized.....	73	41	114	64.0	36.0
Parentage					
Native.....	2,261	1,230	3,491	64.8	35.2
Mixed.....	154	69	223	69.1	30.9
Foreign.....	308	130	438	70.3	29.7

Comparison of voters and non-voters

	NUMBER			PERCENTAGE	
	Voters	Non-voters	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Term of residence in city					
Over two years.....	2,616	1,352	3,968	65.9	34.1
Two years or less.....	151	160	311	48.6	51.4
Sex					
Male.....	1,467	546	2,013	72.9	27.1
Female.....	1,357	1,020	2,377	57.1	42.9
Age					
21-29.....	491	340	831	59.1	40.9
30-39.....	577	325	902	64.0	36.0
40-49.....	563	304	867	64.9	35.1
50-59.....	593	256	849	69.8	30.2
60-69.....	398	192	490	81.2	18.8
70 and over.....	175	142	317	56.5	43.5
Race					
White.....	2,680	1,446	4,126	65.0	35.0
Colored.....	119	117	236	50.4	49.6
Family relationship					
Head.....	1,364	539	1,903	71.7	28.3
Wife.....	874	653	1,527	57.2	42.8
Son.....	161	76	237	67.9	32.1
Daughter.....	189	96	285	66.3	33.7
Parent.....	34	45	79	43.0	57.0
Boarder.....	25	32	57	43.9	56.1
Roomer.....	56	51	107	52.3	47.7
Brother or sister.....	31	23	54	57.4	42.6
Miscellaneous.....	46	26	72	63.9	36.1
Marital condition					
Married.....	2,142	1,116	3,258	65.7	34.3
Single.....	666	432	1,098	60.7	39.3

Comparison of voters and non-voters

	NUMBER			PERCENTAGE	
	Voters	Non-voters	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Type of neighborhood					
Very good.....	462	146	608	74.0	26.0
Good.....	1,224	587	1,811	67.6	32.4
Fair.....	809	521	1,330	60.8	39.2
Poor.....	204	254	458	44.5	55.5
Type of dwelling					
House.....	2,468	1,337	3,805	64.9	35.1
Apartment.....	117	73	190	61.6	38.4
Flat.....	25	13	38	65.8	34.2
Store.....	22	11	33	66.7	33.3
Ownership of home					
Yes.....	1,900	857	2,757	68.9	31.1
No.....	784	572	1,356	57.8	42.2
Education					
None.....	22	41	63	34.9	65.1
Elementary.....	1,124	840	1,964	57.2	42.8
High School.....	848	371	1,219	69.6	30.4
College.....	684	192	876	78.1	21.9
Religious affiliation					
Methodist.....	1,356	700	2,056	66.0	34.0
Catholic.....	280	100	380	73.7	26.3
Presbyterian.....	285	89	374	76.2	23.8
Lutheran.....	161	84	245	65.7	34.3
Baptist.....	138	108	246	56.1	43.0
Protestant.....	120	75	195	61.6	38.4
Reformed.....	92	40	132	69.7	30.3
Episcopalian.....	71	20	91	78.0	22.0
Jewish.....	11	3	14	78.6	21.4
United Brethren.....	24	18	42	57.1	42.9
Congregational.....	9	5	14	64.3	35.7
Christian.....	9	11	20	45.0	55.0
Christian Science.....	20	6	26	76.9	23.1
Quaker.....	5	2	7	71.4	28.6
Seventh Day Adventist.....	6	5	11	54.5	45.5
International Bible Students.....	2	5	7	28.6	71.4
Miscellaneous.....	19	38	57	33.3	66.7
None.....	166	189	355	46.8	53.2

Comparison of voters and non-voters

	NUMBER			PERCENTAGE	
	Voters	Non-voters	Total	Voters	Non-voters
Occupations					
Agriculture.....	47	19	66	71.2	28.8
Manufacturing and mechanical industries..					
Business executives, including contractors.	55	9	64	85.9	14.1
Carpenters and painters.....	70	23	93	75.2	24.8
Laborers.....	308	180	488	63.1	36.9
Machinists and mechanics.....	84	45	129	65.1	34.9
Total.....	517	257	774	66.8	33.2
Transportation.....					
Railroad and traction employees.....	69	17	86	80.2	19.8
Drivers.....	29	29	58	50.0	50.0
Total.....	98	46	144	68.1	31.9
Trade.....					
Banking, insurance and real estate.....	48	8	56	85.7	14.3
Merchants.....	230	66	296	77.7	22.3
Salesmen and clerks.....	134	47	181	74.0	26.0
Total.....	412	121	533	77.3	22.7
Public service, including public officials....	52	7	59	88.1	11.9
Professional service.....					
Professions, including medical, legal and clergy.....	74	19	93	79.5	20.5
College teachers.....	61	11	72	84.7	15.3
Public school teachers.....	74	28	102	72.5	27.5
Total.....	209	58	267	78.3	21.7
Domestic and personal service.....	58	38	96	60.4	39.6
Clerical occupations.....	50	22	72	69.4	30.6
Housekeepers.....	1,034	824	1,859	55.6	44.4
Students.....	66	17	83	79.5	20.5
Retired.....	77	35	112	68.8	31.2
No occupation.....	38	33	71	53.5	46.5