

# Cross-Nativity Partnering and the Political Participation of Immigrant Generations

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This article defines cross-nativity intermarriage in four generations of Canadians and explores whether cross-nativity partnering is associated with political assimilation—in this case, similarity in voting and political activities between immigrants with native-born partners and third-plus-generation immigrants. We find that foreign-born residents with Canadian-born partners do not differ from third-plus-generation residents who have Canadian-born partners in their propensities to vote or in the number of political activities in which they participate. Conversely, the foreign-born with foreign-born partners are less likely than the third-plus generation to have voted in a previous federal election; if the foreign-born immigrated later in adolescence or in adulthood, they also are less likely to participate in other political activities. Differences in demographic and socioeconomic characteristics underlie the greater likelihood that second and third-plus generations will engage in political activities.

*Keywords:* intermarriage; foreign-born; generation; political participation; voting

Intermarriage is often considered a measure of assimilation or integration and a signal of diminishing social distance between groups in a society. The large body of research on this topic has two major foci (Dribe and Lundh 2011; Feliciano 2001; Furtado 2012; Kalmijn 1998; Lucassen and Laarman 2009; Qian, Glick, and Batson 2012). First, much of this scholarship

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studies ethnic or racial intermarriage; high rates of intermarriage across ethnic or racial boundaries are thought to indicate the integration of racial and ethnic minority groups and the declining social distance between racial or ethnic groups (Choi et al. 2012; Kalmijn 1993; Kalmijn and van Tubergen 2010; Qian and Litcher 2007). Second, studies emphasize factors that induce or are associated with intermarriage, with considerable attention to the educational homogamy between partners or assortative matching on education (Chiswick and Houseworth 2011; Furtado 2012; Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2011).

Although intermarriage is considered an indicator of social integration (Gordon 1964), it is also associated with other dimensions of integration and assimilation (Dribe and Lundh 2008; Stevens, Ishizawa, and Escandell 2012; Koelet and de Valk 2014). In the little extant research on the implications of intermarriage, the primary focus is on its effect on immigrant economic integration (Platt 2012). Another dimension of integration, as yet unstudied, is political integration.

Additionally, ethnic or racial intermarriage is not the only form of intermarriage that is associated with integration. Cross-nativity marriages, defined as unions between foreign-born and native-born generations, are related to the social, economic, and political integration of the foreign-born (Stevens, Ishizawa, and Escandell 2012). While cross-nativity partnering may also be interethnic, association with a native regardless of ethnicity is key (see Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2009b, 2010). One explanation for the significance of such an association is that those arriving as children or born in the destination country (the 1.5, second, and third-plus generations) have greater exposure to the settlement country (Qian and Litcher 2007) and the foreign-born partners have opportunities to learn from that exposure (Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2009a; Iceland and Nelson 2010). Cross-nativity marriage, however, is an understudied form of intermarriage (Choi et al. 2012; Dribe and Lundh 2008; Iceland and Nelson 2010; Qian, Glick, and Batson 2005; Qian and Litcher 2001; Stevens, Ishizawa, and Escandell 2012).

This article expands research on intermarriage by combining two domains of inquiry—political integration and cross-nativity partnerships—to generate the following research question: is cross-nativity partnering associated with the narrowing or eradication of political participation gaps between the foreign-born and the native-born? This question is answered using data on federal voting and political activities from the Statistics Canada General Social Survey, cycle 22. Cross-nativity partnership is defined as occurring when the foreign-born have native-born partners and conversely when the native-born have foreign-born partners. This is applied to four generation groups, further refining the foreign-born and native-born into the first generation (foreign-born arriving as teenagers or mostly as adults), the 1.5 generation (foreign-born arriving before the age of 15), the second generation (born in the destination society, but with at least one and usually two foreign-born parents), and the third-plus generation (born in the destination country with parents and earlier generations also born in the destination country). The analysis confirms that the foreign-born with Canadian-born partners do not differ from the third-plus generation with Canadian-born

partners in their voting or political activities. Conversely, the foreign-born with foreign-born partners are less likely to have voted in a previous federal election; if they immigrated later in adolescence or in adulthood, they also are less likely to participate in other forms of political activities. Not only do these results extend knowledge about cross-national intermarriage for immigrants and later generations, but they also underscore the need for future research on this type of intermarriage and its association with political participation.

## Immigrant Political Integration and Cross-Nativity Partnering

Why should cross-nativity marriage be associated with immigrant political integration and participation? To date, no studies have examined if cross-nativity partnering is associated with the political integration of immigrants. However, cross-nativity partnering is associated with economic integration, and the explanations for this association may be applicable to political assimilation even though economic and political activities are distinct dimensions of integration. After reviewing the economic literature, we ask if cross-nativity partnering has a similar relationship with political participation for immigrants and subsequent generations.

Despite critiques, investigations into the economic consequences of cross-nativity marriage assert that intermarriage accelerates the pace of assimilation or integration for the immigrant partner (Meng and Gregory 2005). The contention is that immigrants with a native-born partner are able to learn about and adjust to the settlement country's norms and customs quicker than those partnered with a fellow immigrant (Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2009b; Furtado and Trejo 2013; Meng and Gregory 2005). Researchers argue native-born partners can provide crucial information on the local labor market (Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2009a, 2009b, 2010; Kantarevic 2004; Meng and Gregory 2005) and tools for job searches (Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2009a, 2010), which facilitate finding employment.

The argument that cross-nativity marriage is associated with higher levels of economic integration can be applied to political integration. A central tenet in many studies of immigrant political participation is that the time spent in the settlement country and the concurrent exposure to its culture, norms, and institutions promote political participation (de Rooij 2012; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001; White et al. 2008). Thus, if cross-nativity intermarriage helps the foreign-born partner to learn about institutions within the settlement country, perhaps immigrants with a native-born partner may be more likely to engage in political activities than those partnered with fellow immigrants because they have greater exposure to and knowledge of the settlement country's political system and institutions. Moreover, just as the native-born partner is able to provide information on the labor market, he or she also has the ability to share information on political and democratic systems. In short, cross-nativity partnering could enhance knowledge about politics and political institutes and, thus, influence

political participation. This does not, however, preclude that the foreign-born may enter the settlement country with preexisting inclinations toward political participation. Rather, it suggests that, regardless of such inclinations, practical knowledge of the political system and institutions within the settlement country is also necessary for active participation.

Investigations into the economic consequences of cross-nativity partnering also suggest that cross-nativity marriage facilitates the acquisition of human capital, which, in turn, promotes economic integration. Arguably, then, it may also promote political participation. The human capital framework embedded in these economic studies suggests a “spillover” of human capital from the native-born partner to the foreign-born partner, promoting the latter’s acquisition of human capital (Dribe and Lundh 2008, 333; Kantarevic 2004). For example, cross-nativity marriage affects economic assimilation by aiding the development of destination country language skills, which has positive effects on employment rates and levels of earnings (Dribe and Lundh 2008; Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2009a, 2009b; Furtado and Trejo 2013; Meng and Gregory 2005). A parallel argument is that cross-nativity marriage and political participation are related simply because such partnership positively affects the attainment and development of human capital, which, in turn, is associated with higher levels of political activity.

Taken together, the impacts of “the spouse as teacher” and the “spouse as a facilitator of higher socioeconomic status” imply that the foreign-born with native-born partners will have higher levels of political participation than foreign-born residents with foreign-born partners. A crucial question, then, is whether this implication is true.

In addition to these perspectives from economic studies, there is an alternative explanation that recognizes the difficulty in ascertaining the directionality of the relationship between cross-nativity partnering and integration. The classic assimilation perspective suggests that intermarriage occurs as the differences between the foreign-born and native-born dissipate over time with integration (Dribe and Lundh 2011). According to this perspective, foreign-born settlement in a host country can reduce social distance and increase assimilation, resulting in an increased likelihood of intermarriage (Huschek, de Valk, and Liefbroer 2012). High levels of education are also associated with intermarriage, as they facilitate integration by promoting familiarity with the settlement country’s norms and customs (Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2011). Thus, intermarriage is more likely to occur among the foreign-born who are already relatively integrated and have high levels of human capital. These individuals may be politically integrated prior to partnering with the native-born.

## Political Participation and Cross-Nativity Partnering by Generations

Investigations into political participation across immigrant generations often find immigrants, especially recent arrivals, are likely to be less engaged in the destination

country's political system than the native-born or subsequent generations, such as the second and third-plus generations (Chui, Curtis, and Lambert 1991; Logan, Darrah, and Oh 2012; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001). Studies of increasing political engagement over the life course (Aleksynska 2007; Bass and Casper 2001; Chui, Curtis, and Lambert 1991; Logan, Darrah, and Oh 2012; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001) suggest these intergenerational differences reflect time and increased exposure to core institutions, including the polity. With exposure comes both familiarity and increased participation (Bass and Casper 2001; Bueker 2005; de Rooij 2012; White et al. 2008). Although complete integration does not typically occur within one generation, greater levels of political engagement are expected for each consecutive generation (Chui, Curtis, and Lambert 1991; Lamare 1982).

The consequences of cross-nativity partnering for those who are not foreign-born are left unexplored in this across-the-generations scenario of changing political participation levels. If the native-born "spouse as teacher" argument is invoked, it implies little impact of cross-nativity marriage on the political actions of the native-born. The alternative explanation, suggesting that integration occurs prior to cross-nativity partnering, similarly suggests cross-nativity partnering has a negligible effect on the political participation of the native-born. A relatively sparse literature notes that among a small proportion of the native-born second generation, particularly those from non-European backgrounds, cross-nativity marriages may not only reflect marital preferences for culturally endogamous marriages (Dribe and Lundh 2011; Kalmijin 2012; Klein 2001) but also reflect male preferences for "traditional" brides from the origin country and female preferences for the independence and distance from in-laws associated with marriage to foreign-born husbands (Beck-Gernsheim 2007; Charsley and Shaw 2006; Eeckhaut et al. 2011). That said, implications for subsequent political behavior by either partner remain undiscussed. Furthermore, groups with these preferences are a numerical minority within the native-born population. For the overall population, we expect the political participation gap between foreign- and native-born will be reduced where immigrants have native-born partners, but having a foreign-born partner will not be associated with the political participation of the native-born population.

## Data and Multivariate Models

To assess the relationship between cross-nativity partnering and political participation, we analyze data from the Canadian General Social Survey (GSS), cycle 22, first presenting univariate statistics and then using multivariate techniques to control for compositional differences between groups. Fielded by Statistics Canada in five waves between February and November 2008, cycle 22 is a voluntary survey that collected data from persons 15 years and over living in private households in Canada, excluding those in Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut and excluding full-time residents of institutions. The random digital dialing method reached more than 92 percent of the GSS cycle 22's targeted

population (Statistics Canada 2010). Micro-data files are available for analysis in the Statistic Canada Research Data Centres and via the Public Use Microdata file. Our study analyzes data from the public use file.

Cycle 22 was designed to collect information on social networks and on social and civic participation; the latter module contains questions on political participation. Arguably, voting is the most frequently studied form of political participation. To determine the level of overall political participation, studies frequently use indices counting the different number of political activities in which an individual participates. For example, using the 2003 GSS, Krahn et al. (2009) and Nakhaie (2008) constructed political participation measures that include volunteering for a political party (excluded in Nakhaie), expressing views on an issue by contacting a newspaper or politician, signing a petition, boycotting a product or choosing a product for ethical reasons, attending a public meeting, participating in a demonstration or march, and searching for information on political issues (excluded in Krahn). Klofstad and Bishin (2014) and Myrberg (2011) also developed measures based on similar activities. When few participants engage in more than one political activity, some scholars take the count measures and reduce them to dummy measures of whether the individual participates in any form of political activity (Leal 2002; Sandovici and Listhaug 2010).

For the present analysis, one measure of political participation is voting (or not) in the most recent federal election for those eligible to vote. In addition, respondents were asked if they had engaged in the following seven activities within the past 12 months: searched for information on a political issue, volunteered for a political party, expressed views on an issue by contacting a newspaper or a politician, signed a petition, boycotted a product or chosen a product for ethical reasons, attended a public meeting, and participated in a demonstration or march. These political activities are studied in two ways: first as a binary outcome of none versus one or more, and second as a count variable.

Political participation data are analyzed for respondents between ages 25 and 64 and who are either legally married or living in common law unions. The age range is selected because it represents the core years of partnering and minimizes the selective impacts of early-age partnering and widowhood. These partnered individuals are further grouped by generational status: the first, the 1.5, the second, and the third-plus generation. The GSS Cycle 22 Public Use Microdata File also provides data on whether partners are foreign-born or Canadian-born; this information is used to classify cross-nativity relationships. Regrettably, no information is collected in cycle 22 on the age at which foreign-born partners arrived in Canada or the birthplace of the parents, so further classifications of the partner into the 1.5 or the foreign-born arriving after age 15 generations are not possible.

The final population of interest (ages 25–64 by generational status and cross-nativity designation) consists of 8,940 respondents, representing 13,548,345 persons or half (49.7 percent) of the population targeted by cycle 22. There are 1,643 foreign-born respondents representing a population of 3,048,909 or 22.5 percent of the overall population selected for analysis; only those with permanent legal status are targeted in the sampling design of cycle 22, thus excluding

TABLE 1  
 Sample Size and Population Estimates for Population Age 25–64,  
 by Generational Status and Cross-Nativity Partnering, Canada 2008

	Sample Size	Population Estimates	Type of Union
1st-generation respondents			100.0
With a foreign-born partner	1,003	1,958,553	84.8
With a Canadian-born partner	222	351,685	15.2
1.5-generation respondents			100.0
With a foreign-born partner	145	285,664	38.7
With a Canadian-born partner	273	453,007	61.3
2nd-generation respondents			100.0
With a foreign-born partner	164	302,221	14.7
With a Canadian-born partner	1,074	1,757,270	85.3
3rd-plus generation respondents			100.0
With a foreign-born partner	368	558,260	6.6
With a Canadian-born partner	5,691	7,881,685	93.4

SOURCE: Statistics Canada (2010).

migrants with temporary status in Canada. Table 1 provides sample sizes and population estimates for the groups of interest, defined by cross-classifying generation status with the nativity (Canadian-born or foreign-born) of the partners. The 1.5 generation, who are foreign-born but arrived before age 15, are the most likely to have a cross-nativity partner. Nearly two in five in the 1.5-generation population have a Canadian-born partner. Percentages decline to approximately 15 percent for the first and second generations. Among the third-plus generation, fewer than 7 percent have a foreign-born partner.

The research objective is twofold: (1) to demonstrate variations in political participation by generation and cross-nativity status, with particular emphasis on gaps between the foreign-born and the third-plus generation with native-born partners and (2) to determine the persistence (or disappearance) of these gaps when taking into account other variables known to influence political participation and that also vary by generation and cross-nativity status. In the analysis that follows, the designated reference group for comparison is the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners. This reference group represents the extension of research on the political participation of the first, 1.5, second, and third-plus generations where the third-plus generation usually is the reference for comparisons (see Boyd and Laxer 2011; Chui, Curtis, and Lambert 1991; Lamare 1982; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001). In our analysis, the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners is arguably the dominant population, both socioculturally and numerically (nearly 60 percent of the population under analysis).

A large literature on political participation identifies demographic characteristics and resource variables as factors contributing to group differences in political participation, including sex, age, residential location, education, and income.

Historically, men have been more politically involved than women in North America, although the gender gap has lessened over time (Manza, Brooks, and Sauder 2005; Nakhaie 2006; Sandovici and Listhaug 2010). More recent research is less consistent on the effect and significance of sex on political participation (Marrow 2005). Studies document that age has either a positive or curvilinear relationship to political participation (Bueker 2005; Krahn et al. 2009; Lien 2005; Ramakrishnan 2005; Sandovici and Listhaug 2010; Uppal and LaRochelle-Côté 2012). Younger individuals are less likely to vote (Gibbins 2004; Manza, Brooks, and Sauder 2005) or be involved in political activities (Gidengil et al. 2003; O'Neill 2003) than older ones. Political participation, such as voting behavior, also varies by region of residence (Manza, Brooks, and Sauder 2005) and by whether one resides in an urban or rural area (results vary cross-nationally) (Nevitte et al. 2009). In Canada, residents of Ontario and western provinces are less likely to vote in federal elections than those residing in eastern provinces (Nakhaie 2006). Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Quebec have higher than average voter turnout (Uppal and LaRochelle-Côté 2012).

Persons with high levels of education are more likely to engage in various forms of political participation, including voting (Gidengil et al. 2003; Nakhaie 2008; Ramakrishnan 2005; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001; Sandovici and Listhaug 2010; Uppal and LaRochelle-Côté 2012). Education may provide the knowledge and skills necessary for understanding politics and voting and foster political engagement (Gidengil et al. 2003; Nakhaie 2006; Sandovici and Listhaug 2010; Verba et al. 1993). Education is also associated with intermarriage (Furtado and Theodoropoulos 2011). Income (measured alternatively as individual, family, or household income) is another resource or indicator of socioeconomic status with a significant, positive effect on voting (Nakhaie 2006; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001; Uppal and LaRochelle-Côté 2012) and other types of political participation (Nakhaie 2008; Ramakrishnan 2005). Those with higher levels of income are more likely to have free time for political activities (Sandovici and Listhaug 2010; Verba et al. 1993) and disposable income to contribute to political campaigns (Verba et al. 1993). Finally, individuals with high incomes are more likely to have social networks including political actors, something that promotes participation (Sandovici and Listhaug 2010).

The analysis includes three other factors not discussed in the literatures on cross-nativity marriage or political participation: type of partnering (legally married or common-law), educational attainment of the partner, and a measure of racial endogamy/exogamy. Common-law unions have increased over time as an alternative to marriage, fostering an interest in the stability of such unions and raising the possibility that the applicability of the "spouse as teacher" argument is dampened in such unions, which often are shorter in duration than legal marriages. Characteristics of the spouse may also influence political participation beyond cross-nativity status. Cycle 22 collected information on three characteristics of the partner: birthplace (used to define cross-nativity unions), education level, and visible minority status. Because it represents a socioeconomic resource, partner's education also may have an impact on the respondent's political activity.



Unfortunately, no information was collected about the partner's political engagement, thereby preventing analysis of the extent to which cross-nativity relationships reflect similar (or different) levels of activity.

Research confirms political participation varies by race and country or region of origin (Bueker 2005; Junn 1999; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001), but small sample numbers prevent further refinement of the generation and cross-nativity distinctions into either national origin groups or specific racial categories (see Table 1). Instead, the visible minority status of respondents and partners is combined to distinguish among couples that are visible minorities, not visible minorities (primarily white), and where one partner is a visible minority and the other is not. In Canada, the term "visible minority" is used to denote groups distinctive in phenotypical characteristics, particularly color. The term was developed by the federal government to meet data needs of federal employment equity legislation in the 1980s and beyond. Visible minorities consist of ten subgroups: black, South Asian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, South East Asian, Filipino, Other Pacific Islander, West Asian and Arab, and Latin American. Persons who self-identify as Chinese, South Asian, and black are the largest visible minority groups in Canada, reflecting a high volume of migration from Asia since the 1970s and the combination of black settlement in the late 1700s and recent migration from the Caribbean and Africa. Unlike the United States, the Latin American population is small, and the population from Mexico is even smaller. According to the 2006 Census of Population, fielded two years before cycle 22, those of Mexican ancestry represented 0.2 percent of the total population of 31.5 million; of the entire foreign-born population (including those temporarily residing in Canada) only 1 percent was born in Mexico.

Our multivariate analyses of the likelihoods of voting and participating in political activities include all these factors to determine if the basic patterns of political participation observed across generations and by cross-nativity status simply reflect group differences in characteristics. Specifically, do the (presumed) propensities of the first generation or the 1.5 generation with native-born partners to have levels of political participation on par with the levels of later generations simply reflect their demographic and socioeconomic profiles compared to other groups, particularly the third-plus generation with native-born spouses?

Because the measures of voting and political activities are either binary (no/yes) or count the number of activities, two statistical procedures assess the political participation of generation and cross-nativity groups and take into account the factors that could influence political participation. In logistic regression, a binary dependent variable, such as voted no/yes, is converted into probabilities and transformed into natural logarithms. The impact of membership in various partnering and generation categories on political participation (and for other variables such as age, education, and income) is expressed as logits indicating the logged odds of the impact of a specific category on the dependent variable, relative to a specific reference category. For ease of interpretation, logits frequently are transformed into odds ratios (Menard 1995). Thus, among the eight groups defined by generation status and cross-nativity status and where the third-plus

generation with a Canadian-born partner is the comparison (reference) group, groups with odds ratios greater than 1 have a higher likelihood of voting than the third-plus generation Canadian-born partner group, while odds ratios of less than 1 indicate a particular group is less likely to vote than the reference group.

Count measures of political activity are truncated at 0 and are often highly skewed to the right, meaning most individuals either do not participate in any political activities or undertake only one or two, with only a few persons undertaking three, four, and more. In such cases, negative binomial regression is preferred over ordinary least squares in multivariate analysis (Krahn et al. 2009; Piza 2012). As such, it is the technique used here to control for the effects of differences between the generation and cross-nativity groups in demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Incidence rate ratios (IRR) are produced by exponentiating regression coefficients; the IRR represents the estimated rate ratio for a specific category compared to a reference category, holding other variables constant in the model. As in odds ratios in logit regression, an IRR higher than 1 for a specific independent variable indicates more political activities, and an IRR of less than 1 indicates fewer political activities than the designated reference group.

Cycle 22 employed a stratified cluster sampling design, whereby all multivariate analyses must be subjected to a technique called bootstrapping to obtain accurate variance estimates (Statistics Canada 2010). Without this, smaller variance estimates are produced for the logit and negative binomial regression coefficients, and these may increase reporting of significant effects under the erroneous assumption of random samples and normal distributions. Significance levels reported in this article are based on bootstrapping estimates of the variances, and they are for the regression coefficients from which odds ratios and IRRs are calculated.

## Cross-Nativity Partnering and Patterns of Political Participation

Variations in political participation measured by generation and cross-nativity status are shown in Table 2 for the population in the multivariate analysis. Among those eligible to vote in a federal election held before the survey, voting rates were higher for foreign-born respondents with Canadian-born partners than for foreign-born respondents with foreign-born partners. This pattern holds for those who arrived as adolescents and adults and for those who arrived as children (i.e., both the first and 1.5 generations). It also describes second-generation respondents. Similarly, compared to immigrants with foreign-born partners, higher percentages of immigrant respondents (first and 1.5 generation) with Canadian-born partners engaged in at least one political activity during the 12 months preceding the survey. Table 2 also shows the numbers of political activities; this confirms the more active engagement of immigrant respondents with

TABLE 2  
 Voting and Political Activities of the Married or Common-Law Population Age 25–64, by Generational Status and  
 Cross-Nativity Status, Canada 2008

	First-Generation Respondent		1.5-Generation Respondent		2nd-Generation Respondent		3rd-Plus-Generation Respondent	
	Partner Foreign-Born	Partner Canadian-Born	Partner Foreign-Born	Partner Canadian-Born	Partner Foreign-Born	Partner Canadian-Born	Partner Foreign-Born	Partner Canadian-Born
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
Percent voted in the last federal election	75.1	85.1	72.4	80.5	78.5	83.3	88.4	82.9
Number of political activities								
Mean	0.8	1.4	1.0	1.4	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0	57.3	37.5	45.3	34.1	26.7	35.2	34.1	40.4
1	21.9	25.7	26.6	26.0	30.4	23.5	23.8	24.4
2	9.5	16.4	16.1	19.6	14.9	15.7	17.6	16.7
3	6.1	7.9	5.3	10.1	14.5	13.2	11.5	10.3
4	3.6	8.6	5.5	6.7	8.2	8.4	8.1	5.1
5	0.9	3.2	1.1	2.8	3.1	2.9	3.9	2.0
6	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.3	2.1	0.9	0.2	0.9
7	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.8	0.1

(continued)

TABLE 2 (CONTINUED)

	First-Generation Respondent		1.5-Generation Respondent		2nd-Generation Respondent		3rd-Plus-Generation Respondent	
	Partner Foreign-Born	Partner Canadian-Born	Partner Foreign-Born	Partner Canadian-Born	Partner Foreign-Born	Partner Canadian-Born	Partner Foreign-Born	Partner Canadian-Born
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Type of political activities								
Percent searched for information on a political issue	27.7	40.2	30.4	32.6	42.5	34.3	35.3	26.9
Percent volunteered for a political party	3.8	1.4	0.7	3.2	4.4	2.3	4.5	2.6
Percent expressed views on an issue by contacting a newspaper or a politician	9.8	17.1	9.5	15.4	22.4	17.9	19.1	11.9
Percent signed a petition	11.4	25.2	20.6	32.0	29.7	33.1	26.3	28.7
Percent boycotted a product or chose a product for ethical reasons	12.4	29.8	29.9	37.8	37.4	35.6	44.1	31.3
Percent attended a public meeting	14.3	18.7	11.4	18.6	23.1	23.5	19.9	21.0
Percent participated in a demonstration or march	3.7	4.7	1.2	1.6	4.3	2.8	4.4	3.3

SOURCE: Statistics Canada (2010).

Canadian-born partners. Although these measures are presented for information and not analyzed, the most prevalent activities for both foreign-born and Canadian-born respondents were searching for information on a political issue, signing a petition, and/or boycotting a product or choosing a product for ethical reasons.

How do these immigrant patterns for voting and other political activities compare with those observed for the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners? Answers rest on the logistic regressions for voting in a previous federal election and for participating in at least one political activity within the 12 months preceding the GSS survey (coded as no/yes) and on the negative binomial regressions for the actual count of political activities, using a range of zero to four-plus activities (the full range of zero to seven activities was collapsed because of the very small number of cases that declared five, six, or seven activities). Table 3 shows two models for each measure of political participation. The first provides the “gross” set of odds ratios and IRRs calculated from regression coefficients that are unadjusted for other factors that might influence political activity; the second provides the “adjusted” odds ratios and IRRs based on coefficients where statistical adjustments are made for the effects of group differences in the demographic and socioeconomic variables discussed in the previous section. (Tables showing different distributions of these variables for the generation and cross-nativity groups and their effects on political participation are available from the first author.)

The significance levels for the underlying regression coefficients also are found in Table 3, indicating where the political participation behaviors of groups defined by cross-nativity partnering and by generation differ from those of the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners. These significance levels along with the odds ratios and the IRRs (see Table 3) generate the following six conclusions. First, and foremost, where immigrants are partnered with the Canadian-born, their voting rates and their engagement in other types of political activities do not differ from the levels observed for the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners; this finding holds for the 1.5 generation as well as for those who migrated as older adolescents and adults.

Conversely, and second, it is only the foreign-born with foreign-born partners who are less politically engaged. This is especially true for immigrants arriving as adolescents and in adulthood. Regardless of whether the measure is voting in a federal election prior to the survey or involvement in other political activities (see Table 2), such immigrants are less likely to politically participate. Compared to the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners, the first generation is 37 percent ( $1 - 0.631$ ) less likely to have voted in the last federal election, 49 percent less likely ( $1 - 0.513$ ) to have participated in at least one political activity in the past 12 months preceding the survey, and the actual activity count is 32 percent lower ( $1 - 0.682$ ) (see Table 3, columns 1, 3, 5).

Third, although the 1.5 generation with foreign-born partners is also 52 percent less likely to vote, it appears not to be quite as politically uninvolved as the first generation. Although 1.5-generation immigrants with foreign-born partners are less likely to vote, their behavior with respect to other political activities (defined either as at least one political activity in the past 12 months or as an

TABLE 3  
 Odds Ratios, IRRs, and Significance Levels<sup>a</sup> for Married and Common  
 Law, Age 25–64 by Generation and Nativity of Partner, Canada 2008

	Voting in a Federal Election, Yes/No		One or More Political Activities, Yes/No		Number of Political Activities, 0–4+	
	Odds Ratios	Odds Ratios <sup>b</sup>	Odds Ratios	Odds Ratios <sup>b</sup>	IRR	IRR <sup>b,c</sup>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intermarriage across generations						
1st-generation respondents						
With a foreign-born partner	0.631 ***	0.486 ***	0.513 ***	0.492 ***	0.682 ***	0.755 ***
With a Canadian-born partner	1.165 (ns)	0.940 (ns)	1.423 (ns)	1.071 (ns)	1.174 *	1.028 (ns)
1.5-generation respondents						
With a foreign-born partner	0.484 **	0.502 *	0.861 (ns)	0.996 (ns)	0.857 (ns)	0.934 (ns)
With a Canadian-born partner	0.769 (ns)	0.684 (ns)	1.265 (ns)	0.980 (ns)	1.110 (ns)	0.977 (ns)
2nd-generation respondents						
With a foreign-born partner	0.805 (ns)	0.780 (ns)	1.736 **	1.469 (ns)	1.245 **	1.135 (ns)
With a Canadian-born partner	1.026 (ns)	1.007 (ns)	1.199 *	0.961 (ns)	1.173 ***	1.061 (ns)
3rd-plus-generation respondents						
With a foreign-born partner	1.460 (ns)	1.180 (ns)	1.312 *	1.014 (ns)	1.164 *	1.015 (ns)
With a Canadian-born partner	(RG)	(RG)	(RG)	(RG)	(RG)	(RG)
Diagnostics <sup>d</sup>						
Likelihood ratio					-11209.6	-10754.0
Cox & Snell R-square	0.006	0.084	0.018	0.119		
Nagelkerke R-square	0.010	0.140	0.025	0.161		

SOURCE: Statistics Canada (2010).

NOTE: RG = reference group. (ns) = not significant at  $p = .05$  level.

a. Significance levels are for the regression coefficients using the bootstrapping procedures. See text.

b. Net of respondents' sex, age, marital status, place of residence, education, partners' education, racial endogamy/exogamy, and household income.

c. Categories of 5 to 7 activities are collapsed to 4-plus. See Table 2 and text.

d. Diagnostics are taken from analyses that do not correct variances by bootstrapping. Bootstrapping software (in stata) does not produce diagnostics.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

actual count) are not significantly different from that of the third-plus generation with a Canadian-born partner (see Table 3, columns 1, 3, 5).

Fourth, in terms of political activities (but not voting), the second generation—both with Canadian-born and with foreign-born partners—is actually more likely to participate in at least one political activity and to have higher counts than observed for the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners. These findings also hold for the third-plus generation with foreign-born partners.

These four empirical conclusions derive from the observed patterns of political participation measures that can be found for the various groups defined by generation and cross-nativity partnering. As noted earlier, such groups also vary with respect to their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, which in turn are related to political participation. One real possibility is that the findings across generations and by cross-nativity partnering ultimately reflect variation in the group-specific demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Odds ratios and the IRR in Table 3 (columns 2, 4, and 6) partly—but only partly—confirm the roles played by demographic and socioeconomic differences among groups, producing the remaining two conclusions.

Fifth, even when the influences of variables such as age, sex, place of residence, education, partners' education, household income, type of partnership, and racial endogamy/exogamy are taken into account, the first and second conclusion persist. Notably, after controlling for demographic and socioeconomic differences, immigrants who have Canadian-born partners continue to have voting rates and political activity profiles that are not different from those of the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners; again, this holds for the 1.5 generation as well as for those who migrated later in life. And compared with the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners, immigrants arriving in late adolescence or in adulthood and who have foreign-born partners continue to have lower voting propensities and lower likelihoods of engaging in other forms of political activities (see Table 3, columns 2, 4, and 6).

Sixth, the major impact of adjusting for group differences in demographic and social characteristics is that the second generation and the third-plus generation with foreign-born partners no longer have significantly higher likelihoods of participating in at least one political activity compared to the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners. This also holds when counts of political activity are used as the measure of political participation. In sum, group differences in characteristics do underlie the observed higher levels of political activity (other than voting) of the second generation and the third-plus generation with foreign-born spouses, but adjusting for their effects does not alter the earlier conclusions reached for the first and 1.5 generations with foreign-born and Canadian-born partners.

## Conclusion

Studies that demonstrate the positive effect of cross-nativity marriage on the economic integration of immigrants suggest that cross-nativity partnering has

similar implications for immigrant political integration. Accordingly, this article asks if cross-nativity partnering is associated with the narrowing or elimination of the gaps in political participation between the foreign-born and native-born. The analysis extends previous research on cross-nativity unions not only by focusing on political participation outcomes as additional indicators in integration but also by refining the foreign-born and native-born classifications into four generations, consisting of the first, 1.5, second, and third-plus generations. Data from the GSS cycle 22 support the core supposition: foreign-born residents with Canadian-born partners do not differ from the third-plus generation with Canadian-born partners in their voting or political activities. Conversely, foreign-born residents with foreign-born partners are less likely to have voted in a previous federal election; if they immigrated later in adolescence or in adulthood, they also are less likely to participate in other forms of political activities.

Research in this article represents the first step in connecting cross-nativity partnering and political participation, particularly in reference to immigrant populations. Consequently, two core research agendas remain for the future: first, further specification of the relationship between cross-nativity partnering and political participation; and second, ascertaining the less proximal factors behind the association of cross-nativity partnering, generational status, and political participation. With respect to the first agenda, the relatively small number of respondents in the GSS cycle 22 prevents asking how the findings on immigrant political participation might vary for specific national origin groups or by race; similarly, the multivariate analyses include a crude measure of racial endogamy/exogamy. As well as thwarting detailed analysis of racial groups, sample numbers also prevent investigating if cross-nativity partnerings are interethnic. And small numbers prevent more in-depth examination of other factors that also affect political participation. For example, our analysis indicates that the foreign-born with foreign-born partners are less likely to vote, but is that true even for those whose partners immigrated as children? For respondents, does duration in the settlement country matter; and if so, at what point does it outweigh the effects of having a foreign-born partner? Does the level of politicization within the country of origin affect participation in the settlement country? Moreover, does prior political engagement in the country of origin affect political participation in the settlement country? Larger surveys will help to extend our initial results.

Our analytical results are consistent with the dominant explanations proffered by research on the economic consequences of cross-nativity marriage; these in turn suggest agendas for future research. First, native-born partners may accelerate political integration by providing essential information on the political system of the destination country as well as how to become involved in other political activities. Simple information such as how to register to vote can factor into the propensity to exert that right. Moreover, if native-born partners are themselves politically engaged, such actions may also encourage positive attitudes toward political participation. The foreign-born with foreign-born partners, on the other hand, do not have a coresident “insider” to the political culture or institutions in the settlement country. Second, cross-nativity partnering may lessen the gap in political participation between the foreign-born and the native-born indirectly by



facilitating human capital acquisition. In particular, partnering with the native-born has the potential to develop or enhance destination country language skills of migrants. This, along with advancements in other areas of human capital (such as additional education in the destination country), may promote political participation. To date, these relationships have not been directly studied. Thus, a better understanding of the processes by which cross-nativity partners influence political participation also remains a future project, one that would be facilitated by designing a survey that explicitly probes the mechanisms of partner influence. In sum, the links between cross-nativity partnering and political participation represent fertile ground for future research.

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