

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/the-last-shall-be-last-ethnic-racial-and-nativist-bias-in-distributive-politics/>

This video discusses a research project that has been ongoing for about 15 years, led by Professor J Gam at the University of Rochester. The project investigates the evolution of state politics and legislative outcomes in the U.S. from 1880 to the present, focusing on how states transitioned from district-based political practices to statewide political investments, influenced by party politics.

The researchers compiled a dataset to analyze "pork spending" and distributive politics in several states, which had not been well studied compared to national levels of government. They examined state budgets line-by-line to track funding allocations to specific areas, linking these to district demographics.

Key findings suggest that the characteristics of constituents in a district—such as race, immigrant status, and economic status—significantly influence the allocation of state resources, often leading to underfunding in districts with higher percentages of immigrants and non-white residents. The study uncovered a persistence of disparities in state investments based on identity throughout the early to mid-20th century, with historical underrepresentation of women and non-white legislators affecting decision-making.

In addition to analyzing historical spending patterns, the text mentions ongoing projects examining the impacts of state politics on life outcomes, such as education and healthcare, while attempting to understand changes in representation and its effects on different demographic groups. The research reflects broader trends of inequality in American politics and is situated within a context of improving trust in election processes and enhancing equitable representation in government.