

Announcing the Final Examination of

Edward M. Burmila

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

Monday, November 9, 2009 at 1:00 P.M. in Woodburn Hall Room 218

Dissertation: The Political Geography of Voter Turnout and Micropartisanship

American political behavior is rarely examined through the lens of political geography; much the contemporary literature discounts the spatial aspects of political phenomena like party identification and voter turnout. This dissertation includes three distinct analyses of political behavior at both the individual and aggregate levels, each of which supports the unifying argument that research which treats political-behavioral data as aspatial may have reduced explanatory power compared to models which recognize the geographic context of individual behavior. In other words, geography matters when it comes to explaining political-behavioral phenomena like voter turnout and party identification. Three major concepts in the geography of American politics – post-World War II suburbanization, net interstate migration to Sun Belt states of the south and southwest, and the relationship between the physical accessibility of voting opportunities and voter turnout – are identified and subject to hypothesis testing using a variety of survey data, aggregate electoral and demographic data, and a novel data set based on voter registration records. The results provide evidence suggesting that these geographic concepts are influential determinants of behavior independent of the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics commonly used as explanatory variables in research on voter turnout and partisanship.

Outline of Studies

Major: Political Science

Minor: Population Studies

Educational Career

B.A., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1999

Committee in Charge

Dr. Marjorie Randon Hershey, Department of Political Science

Dr. Edward G. Carmines, Department of Political Science

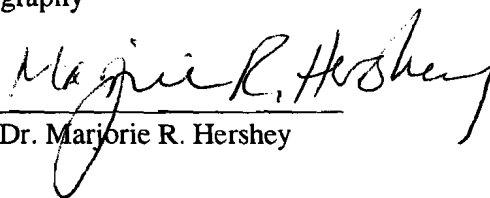
Dr. William Bianco, Department of Political Science

Dr. Michael Ensley, Kent State University Department of Political Science

Dr. Tom Evans, IU-Bloomington Department of Geography

Approved: _____

Dr. Marjorie R. Hershey



(Any graduate student or faculty member may attend. As a courtesy, please notify the Committee Chair in advance.)
