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THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN DIVERSITY: A NEW LOOK AT HOW SHIFTING DEMOGRAPHICS
ARE SHAPING THE NATION

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ROSS: Hello. Welcome. My name is Martha Ross, and I'm the interim vice president of Brookings Metro, and it is my very, very great pleasure to kick off this event to mark the third edition of Bill Frey's book, originally published in 2015, *The Diversity Explosion*. And I'll tell you a secret, that internally within Metro, when we talk about Bill, we often say, "Bill Frey, comma, national treasure."

And we are not saying that ironically at all. It is totally sincere. His ability to sort through mountains of data to tell a clear story is unparalleled. So much of his analysis, as he will describe, is based on data from the US Census Bureau which sounds like it's one thing, but it's not, because if you go to the US Census Bureau website, you will see a bewildering array of data sources.

Do you want individual level data or pre-tabulated data? Do you want one-year data or five-year data? Do you want projections? What geography? And he sorts through all this, and he distills the important messages and trends to tell us really important things about who America is, how we're changing, and what it means.

So I'm so pleased to ask Bill to come up here and present his findings, after which we will have... we will hear from a panel of nonprofit experts to discuss it all.

FREY: Martha, thank you very much for that very generous introduction, and I'm pleased to have this opportunity to talk about the latest edition of my book. And also want to thank the whole Brookings Institution for the help that it's given me, not for this-- not only for this edition, for earlier editions, especially the Brookings Metro program and Brookings Press which has done an awful lot to make this possible.

I also want to thank my other colleagues at the Population Study Center at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, where I have spent many years prior to coming here to Brookings, and also keep an affiliation there, as they've done an awful lot to keep me making-- make this book possible.

And many other people helped me including my wife, Olivia, who's been able to survive the several editions of this book, me working on it. Where are we going to do- go with diversity in this country? Where are we now? Where are we going to be in the future? Well, as Martha said, I've tried to look at the census data, other surveys, projections election data, and so forth to figure out where we're going.

And those of you who maybe know my work to some degree know that I have lots of colorful charts and graphs and maps, of which I'm going to display some of them here, although they're also in the book. So those of you who are watching me here, those of you who are watching me streaming, you'll have a chance to see a lot of these.

If it's a little bit too much for you, don't worry. We have a lively and engaging panel coming on after my discussion. So they'll make it a little bit more understandable to, to folks who maybe are a little bit confused about some of the data. But I'll try not to make it too confusing. So, you know, in 2015, I wrote the first book, and we called it *Diversity Explosion*.

And, you know, a lot of people thought, well, that was going to scare people. And it might have scared a few people, the fact that we used that title. But the idea was to, to, to allay the fears of people about diversity in the United States, to show that it's important for our future

demographics, for our future economy, and, you know, it's important to have a multiracial, multicultural economy in, in this world in the 21st century.

But there were some people who were scared, and I said to myself, "You know, 10 years from now, people aren't going to be afraid of diversity." But no, I was wrong. There's still a little bit of fear about diversity, especially in the political world. We have a lot of politicians that are trying to build on the people's fears of diversity in various ways.

And, of course, we can see it in the news all the time. But I think that it's even more important to have a good understanding of what's really happening with the diversity rather than some people's c- stereotypes and characteristics, and that's what we've tried to do. You know, I think that the diversity boom that we're having in the first half of the 21st century is a very important part of our, our, our, our country, just as important as the baby boom was in the last half of the 20th century.

I'm, I am an old baby boomer, so I know a lot about what the baby boomers did then. But this is gonna be even more important as we go, go forward. And a lot, I think, and I've said this before, when we get to the year 2050, people are gonna go look back and sort of evaluate how have we dealt with this diversity, this diversity boom that we have in this country. Have, have we dealt with it in a good way? Have we not dealt with it in a good way? And I think that you know, I hope at least that they come out with a positive assessment on what we're doing based on what we know about what's going on.

So what about the diversity boom? Here's a chart that shows the relative size of the U.S. population, the first -- in each year between 1990 and 2020. The first bar shows the size of the white population. Those are people who filled out the census and said they were white, but didn't fill out any other race or say they were Hispanic or anything. And then the second bar shows the size of the different racial and ethnic groups that were not white, including people who said they were Hispanic, and Black, and Asian and American Indian, and people who were two or more races. And you can see that that's grown up over time. For a lot of our history, that second bar was only maybe 10 or 15 or 20% of the U.S. population. The 2020 census showed that it's 42% of the U.S. population, and it's gonna go higher, as we'll see.

Here are some of the trends that we're gonna be looking at in the 21st century. One, the rapid growth of what I call new minorities, which I'll talk about in a minute. Second, the aging and decline of the, the population decline of the white population. And second, a shift to no racial minority nation, and what does that mean?

So I want to talk about the growth of different racial minority groups, and this graph shows the percentage increase of different racial groups over the 20-year period, 2000 to 2020, from those censuses there. And it's pretty clear the fastest growth of all these groups come from people who are identified as Hispanic Asian, and two or more races. I call those new minorities. Now, I realize we had a lot of Spanish-speaking folks in the United States, Mexican origin folks for centuries, and also Asians for at least a century and a half. But this is, emphasizes the growth rate that we have recently.

A lot of it related to the 1965 Immigration Act in the United States, which opened the doors to people outside of Northern Western Europe to all other countries in the world, and brought a lot of people in from Latin America, from Asia, and other places like that. Even still, most of the growth in the Hispanic population to date is not from immigration. It's from births of people who have already been here because we've had all this Hispanic population here for

a long time. So it's not just immigration, it's just fast-growing groups. And then, of course, the two or more race group which is an increasingly part of our population.

So the other part of this is the decline of the white population. What we're showing here between the '70s up to the decade of 2010 to 2020, the change in the white population in the United States, and it's got to be a smaller growth up until 2010 and actually a decline, the first time we've seen a decline in the white population between censuses between 2010 and 2020.

Well, why is that? Well, the white population is older, and so there are more people who are gonna be dying. And also, there are proportionally fewer women in their childbearing ages. So even though they're having children, there are not as many as there were in the past. And there are not a lot of white immigrants to the US, as there aren't globally, I mean, because the, the countries that send them are not a big part of the national immigration pool anymore.

So, we have these two things going on, and we say, "Well, there's no going to be no racial majority," I'd say maybe after the 2040s, the Census Bureau says sometime. So is that good or is that bad? I don't think you could call this replacement, like a lot of people wanna call it, in terms of, well, these other groups are replacing whites.

No, it's an addition. It's an important addition because otherwise we would be declining in our population. We'd be a-aging even more rapidly. And I think when we get to the year 2040, we won't have these racial classifications that we have now. By then there will be a lot more people who are multiple race, identify with multiple races.

And so there won't be this sort of, "Here are the whites, here are everybody else." I think there's gonna be a much bigger change, and I-- people should see that and embrace this. And this is something to embrace in the future. Now, how are we changing in terms of this demography? I say we're changing one way generationally from the younger generations to the older generations, and also geographically from what I call melting pot areas, immigrant places, and dispersing out to other parts of the country.

Let's talk about that first one. This is from the 2020 census, and it shows the racial composition of age groups going from the left, the zero to four age group, to the right, to the seventy-five and older age group. And you can see for the under age eighteen population, we're a minority white group.

This 2020 census is the first, first census to show that most children under age eighteen are people of color. Whereas at the other end of the spectrum, more than seventy percent of the population are white. And, you know, why has this happened? As we said, we have a decline in the white population, but that's mostly among the younger people in the white population, or at least people under age fifty-five, there's a decline in the white population.

Over age fifty-five baby boomers like me are adding to those population because it's a big generation. Similarly, the older population was growing up at a time there wasn't very much racial diversity, and they're sort of keeping that, you know, profile as they get older. And among the younger in- in- generation, they're gaining a lot from immigrants and their children, as well as from people who are already here having more children.

So that's, you know, the way it's going that way. I threw something in there called the cultural generation gap And what do I mean by that? Well, I talked about the fear about diversity in the United States, and that first appeared in a lot of surveys done by the Pew Research Center and others in the early part of the 2010s, where baby boomers and people older than baby boomers, especially the white members of those groups, were very fearful about the way the diversity was changing in the United States through immigration, through higher numbers of Latinos through higher numbers of people of other races.

They felt this was not good for the country. It was not good for the country's future. After all, they grew up, we grew up in a society where there wasn't that much diversity in the 1950s and 1960s. The biggest minority population then were African Americans, and they were sort of very segregated away from a lot of the population.

Whereas the younger part of the population today is much more open to this diversity, even the white part of it. White children, white young adults are more open to this diversity than is the case for other groups. So I think, you know, we see some of this in our politics, that some politicians are trying to make some hay out of this and get some votes from that older generation.

I'll talk a little bit more about that later. But as we move along, that's going to change, I think. The other way we're going to change our demography is through a movement from the melting pot regions into the middle part of the country, and by melting pot regions, I mean states that have attracted a lot of Hispanic and Asian immigrants in the 1970s, '80s, and '90s.

I was writing back then in my demography articles where I wrote about the potential balkanization of the United States, and by that I mean, you know, a lot of these new minorities were going to stay concentrated in California and Texas and New York and in Chicago maybe. And then the other part of the country will, will not share in this diversity, and there would be some political discrepancies and so forth, and it might not be very good.

But I was wrong. Ever since the 2000 census, there's been a dispersion of Hispanic and Asian populations to different parts of the country. Here's a map which shows different metropolitan areas, over 200 of them in the United States, which have some Hispanic populations. But the ones with the very dark green dots are the ones I term new Hispanic destinations. These are one that's-- ones that even between 2010 and 2020 start with a relatively small Hispanic population but are growing much higher than the national rate. There's 140 of those areas, and they're not just in the melting pot states. You can see them in the Midwest, in parts of the South, parts of the Northeast.

And a lot of the movers that are going there are going for economic reasons. High-skill jobs, low-skill jobs. As the white population, as the younger population in some of these areas is declining, they need to pick up workers from these other places. Here's a map which shows the nation's 3,100 counties based on which minority group is over-represented there.

In other words, they have a higher percentage of the county's population than do they do of the national population. You can see in Texas and some of the Southwest states, those green counties, they're overly represented by Hispanics, where the light green have two or more races, more Hispanics and more Asians.

You can see the blue counties there are over-represented in American Indians and Alaska Natives some of them in Montana, North and South Dakota, and New Mexico, and Arizona. But I want you to focus on the South, where those counties are red. Those are the counties where Blacks are the biggest part of the minority population, and the higher, high representation of the minority population.

Well, of course, there were always Black people in the South, but this-- there's been a growing number of Black folks coming to the South, especially for the last 30 years, from northern areas, from Midwest areas, and from the West, as the economy was somewhat better for them. They have cultural ties to the South.

So when you look at these numbers, you see that Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, some of the North Carolina metros are on the top in terms of attracting Black migrants. And states of New York, Michigan, Illinois, Chicago, or Detroit-- I'm sorry New York, Michigan, Illinois, and California are actually losing Blacks numerically, and there's even gonna be more Blacks there.

So this is to show you that though we have a, a nation that's becoming a melting pot, it's a different set of folks in different parts of the country. Okay, so what about dispar- what about assimilation? How are these groups, you know, moving into other realms in the United States? One way to think about that is do they con-continue to stay concentrated in particular places and neighborhoods, or will they be spreading out to other places?

Is there gonna be more interracial marriage? And that's a good indicator of how much assimilation we have. And then what about presidential politics? To what degree do a lot of these minority groups have a real say in who gets elected president based on the kind of issues that are along here? So I'm just gonna go through a little of these in, in a small overview quickly.

And this is a percent residing in the suburbs of different racial groups between 1990 and 2020. These are within the largest metropolitan areas. You can see on the left for whites, about three-quarters of whites have been in the suburbs for all of those years. That's part of the white flight- flight back in the 1950s and 60s, and stayed that way.

But for Asian and Hispanic residents, they were only about half in the suburbs in 1990. Now they're about more than 60% of them are in the suburbs. Now, for the Black population, there's even more significant change. In 1990, only 37% were in the suburbs. The rest were living in the city. In, in the 2020 census, and even more so in the 2020 cen- In the 2010 census, even more so in the 2020 census more than half the Black population lives in the suburbs.

We actually have Black flight in 30 of the 56 biggest metropolitan areas, an actual loss of the Black population. Not just in Detroit, not just in Chicago, but even in Atlanta, a metropolitan area that's gaining Blacks overall, almost all of that gain is in the suburbs rather than in the cities. I'm gonna go over this one fairly quickly.

I'd like to talk about this for like twenty minutes. And that is, what about white-black residential segregation? This is one of the most shameful residential topics that we've had in our whole history in terms of white-black segregation. For a long part of our history, it was legal to have separate-- Blacks separated from whites in where they could live and what kinds of neighborhoods they could live in.

And this was especially the case during the 1950s and '60s. This chart, by the way, shows the segregation index. The higher the, the bigger the chart, the higher the segregation, back from 1930 up to 2020. But those very high levels of segregation, segregation of about seventy, which means seventy percent of Blacks would have to move to another neighborhood to be distributed like whites, were in the 1950s and the 1960s, as we had suburban white flight in the United States.

That came down a bit from 1970 because we had, one of the civil rights laws was the Housing Act of 1968, which made it illegal to have discrimination in the buying and the, and the selling and renting of homes to some degree. It was not necessarily followed a hundred percent, but it kept-- it made that segregation level go down. And it's going down kind of gradually, but we're still at forty-four percent nationally for segregation, and that's, that's still pretty high. So this is one of the indicators that we have to do more with

And I want to now go to interracial marriages. This is a good one. This is where there's much more assimilation, much more inter-interaction among different racial groups. Back in 1960, less than one half of 1% of marriages were interracial marriages. 2020 census shows that about 11% are interracial marriages, and among new marriages, more than 20% are interracial marriages. Now, the bigger numbers of interracial marriages were among, among Latinos and among Asians. There are a lot of Latino-white marriages, a lot of Asian-white marriages.

In fact, most interracial marriages, one of the, one of the members of the couple is white and the other is another race. But it shows that it's moving up much higher than it was in the past. More significantly, it's more high than it was in the past for Black-white marriages. Up until 1967, Black-white marriages were illegal in 16 states in the United States, mostly Southern states, until the Supreme Court made that, turned that around. But in the more census, in the recent census, about 14% of marriages for Blacks are white-Black marriages, which is a real significant increase over time.

Now, the impact of more interracial marriages are that the children of the people in those marriages are gonna describe themselves as interracial. And the 20-- We didn't have any information on this before the 2000 census because you couldn't tick more than one race on a census form before 2000. But since 2000 and up through 2020, that interracial population also increased. They changed the way they did this in the 2020 census. It was kind of hard to look at the changes over time directly, but anywhere between 4% and 10% of the population today identifies themselves as interracial.

Especially large interracial population are people who, who identify themselves as American Indian or Alaska Natives as one race, and then some other race as, as another race. This increases the American Indian population by, by more than twice as people decide they want to identify themselves that way.

Well, now I want to talk about politics. When I wrote the first edition of this book in 2015, it was two years into Obama's second term. And, you know, if you write that edition, I just go, "Wow. Here is a country that where diversity is making a decision about who's the president of the United States." Not only was it the first African American president, but he won to a large degree because of vote the votes that he got from racial minorities in the United States. And, you know, this was really something to celebrate.

A lot of people were writing, including me, that this is the future. You know, we're always gonna have whatever party it is gonna be trying to appeal to these younger minorities as

they're getting older and they're more in the, in the, in their voting ages and so forth. Well, of course, that didn't happen in the last election. But let's look at these here. What I have here is something called the Democrat over Republican voting margin. This is a percentage voting Democrats minus a percentage voting Republican. So a positive value means a Democratic edge. A negative value is a, is a Republican edge.

And I'm showing it here are these different clusters of different racial groups for different elections going from 2004, George W. Bush's second term, to 2024, and in between are the Obama elections and the first Trump and then Biden and now Trump again. And you can see what sticks out at you is the Black migration, and then, sorry, the Black strong Democratic margin that you see there.

Blacks have voted in presidential elections for, for Democrats in every election since 1936 Franklin Delano Roosevelt's election, and really in high numbers since 1964 when the civil rights laws were passed during the Johnson administration. So it goes up some and it goes down a little bit, but it's very high. It's high for Hispanics but not nearly as high, that is, a Democratic advantage, and for Asians as well, although in the 90s, the Asian vote was more for Republicans than it is for Democrats. Whites, on the other hand, since 1968 have voted for a Republican candidate for president in terms of their overall voting margin. Now, not all whites do. There are some pieces of the white population, of course, that vote for, for Democrats like college-educated women and, and other groups. But clearly that's-- And, and, and don't get fooled by the fact those are smaller bars. They're applied to a bigger population, so they have a bigger impact on this.

But I wanted, I wanted to point out is getting back to Obama in 2008 and 2012. Those are the second and third bars there for the Black population. Those are really high Democratic margins. But also it was high for Latinos in those years and at least in 2012 for Asians in those years. So the minority population had a, a really big impact on the Obama elections. And they, of course, they also, you know, had involved in Trump did, did not get the majority did not get the popular vote in 2016, and the minorities had something to do with that, as well as Biden's.

But here we are in 2024, and look at that big dip for Hispanics. And some people are saying, "Well, things are gonna change now. We're not gonna have this kind of vote for minorities voting for Democrats anymore." This is something that we need to look for maybe in a-- Republicans have finally figured out how to, how to attract minorities. And of course we'll know in a month or so whether that's really true.

But I wanted to show you this 'cause I think that was a blip. And one of the reasons I think it was a blip is this is the man-- this is the Democrat minus Republican margin, again, positive Democrat, negative Republican. For Hispanics in the 2024 election, those who looked at their financial situation as either better, worse, or the same than four years before when they voted 2024. And you can see, yes, the people, the Hispanic voters who said they were in worse economic situation, they voted strongly Republican. But those who said they were in better situation continued to vote strongly Democrat. Those who had the same continued to vote strongly Democrat. And even among the Black voters during that year, all of them voted strongly -- voted Democrat, but the strongest votes were people who thought their economy was better, their financial situation was either better or the same, not as much for that it was worse.

So I think the economy had a lot to do with what was called here as this, this new kind of you know, Republican diversification of their voter base. And even if you look at the voters

themselves in the Trump for Trump and for Kamala Harris, you see that eighty-four percent of Trump voters were white, and only sixty-six percent of Harris voters were white.

So even though there was some movement toward the, toward the Republicans for Latinos and a little bit more for Asians you know, that's still pretty much there's not a diversification all that much in the Republican Party. So I want to get back to the cultural generation gap here with respect to elections.

And here I'm showing again the Democrat over Republican margin for four age groups. Those that are zero to-- sorry, those that are eighteen to twenty-nine, thirty to forty-four, forty-five to sixty-four, and sixty-five and over. Two young ones, two old ones. You can see those four in each cluster. And if you look at the one on the left, those are the white voters by age.

Those young white voters, eighteen to twenty-nine, did not vote in either direction. They voted -- their margin is zero. Just as many Democratic votes as Republican votes for them. But for the other white ages, it gets bigger, and especially for the forty-five to sixty-four-year-olds. Those are largely Generation Xers and they were strongly voting for Trump there, as you can see, 'cause it's a negative - minus twenty-four there.

And the boomers in the older - in, in the older age group also voted for Trump, but not quite as strong. If you look at the minority clusters in the beginning, I, I threw all the minorities together for this, but it all has the four ages that I talked about. For each of those ages, there's a strong Democratic support, especially for the older people of those in that group.

These are people who, of course, lived through the Civil Rights years. And then finally, the total, we put it all together. And because there's much more of a minority influence among the younger voters than in the older voters in terms of their demographic composition, you see that overall, the younger voters under age forty-five did in fact vote for Democratic-- did in fact vote for Harris, and the older voters voted for Trump.

Now, there are many more older voters than there are younger voters, and therefore, Trump won the election. But you can see the cultural generation gap going on there. So I think, you know, I - wrote some papers in the past about this cultural thing and the, and the racial differentials. I do think it's important that both parties pay attention to the needs of minority groups in the United States, each and every one of them, their issues, and so forth.

I don't think that was necessarily the case in the 2024 election. I think it was more generally about an economy thing that hit a lot of people. But I think as we get into the next election, I think we'll have to think about that. Again, I think the current administration is, is appealing more to these older white folks with their issues.

But I think if that goes ahead into the future that's not gonna be very successful. So let's see where we're going to go in the future here. What about diversity in America's future? We hear about, a lot about immigration in the U.S. Immigration's a big deal, and it's going to help us make our country more diverse, and if we don't have immigration, we're going to go back to being a white country or something like that.

Well, these are projections made by the Census Bureau through the year 2040. And the different levels of immigration are assumed. High immigration, medium immigration, low

immigration, and zero immigration. Medium is where we'd been for a lot of the years before the last two or three. And so you see the size of the population changes a lot over, over time.

If we have high immigration, we're going to go up to 370 million. If we have low immigration, we're going to go below where we are now to 326 million. And especially we should know that immigration helps to beef up the younger population, the labor force age population. So it's important to have reasonable immigration going forward.

Now what about diversity? Here is what the population looks like by race and ethnic status in 2040 based on each of these different immigration projections. In every one of them, we become more racially diverse than we are today. We're about 58% white today. In any one of them, it's 51% white among the high immigration scenario.

But even under zero immigration, no immigration between now and 2040, we're going down to 55% white with big gains in Hispanics and Asians and other groups. Why is that? Because we don't need to have immigrants to become more diverse. We're already fairly diverse in our younger ages, and the children and grandchildren of those folks are going to be growing up, and they're going to increase the size of our, our non-white population.

So this idea that if we can become more - if we get fewer immigrants, we're going to go back to the 1950s or something in terms of our, our, our racial makeup is not the case. Diversity is here for the future. So want to talk about, just end up with a little bit about where we're going. I didn't say much about inequality to you today, but there's parts of it in the book about inequality between white and Black populations, white and Hispanic populations, or even white and Asian populations on measures of income or homeownership or education or things like that.

There is still inequality. There are still structural barriers that have to do with race in our society, and I think you can find that in lots of places, and I talk a little bit about that in the book. And what that means is with this much more racially diverse population, we have to pay attention to ways that we can provide better opportunities to each of these groups as we look into things that are holding them back.

You know, back when the civil rights laws were passed in the 1960s the minority population in the United States was about 15% of the total, most African American. When the 2030 census is taken, we're gonna have about 44% of our population minorities, and the under 30 population - will be well over half minority. That's four years from now. And so, you know, these are folks that have had issues, that had discriminatory issues, and other things that have to be dealt with.

And I think for us to become-- come out of this in a good way for everybody, we have to pay attention to those. We need to prepare the new generations with policies and programs that deal with, say, schools and getting through post-secondary education in ways that's more difficult now to some groups, especially to Latinos and Blacks still living in highly segregated, under-resourced school systems, as well as other kinds of programs. We have to prepare new destinations. You know, everybody knows when you're moving to a new destination and you're the first minority, or you're the first immigrant there you're not gonna be as welcomed maybe as you were before. It's true that we have sanctuary cities in the United States, but in the last year we had people saying, "Oh no, we shouldn't have sanctuary cities. That's not a good thing."

And then closing the cultural generation gap, which we know is still here, okay? We still have sort of older parts of the population not happy about immigration. We have an administration that wants to get away from DEI programs, diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, 'cause they don't think we need them anymore.

And just this month, the current administration has put out a proposal to eliminate the race question from the 2030 census. Let me repeat that. They want to eliminate the race question from the 2030 census. And what does that mean? We've had a race question ever since 1790 in the US Census. We've had it especially since the Civil Rights years in order to be able to enforce the civil rights laws, to monitor people's progress, to make people you know, more upwardly mobile, and just as also generally for the Voting Rights Act.

You might say, "Well, if it's in the census, if it's not in the census, maybe we can get it from another survey or something." Well, the census is the basis for all these, these surveys. It's the 100% of the population, and if we don't have it in the census, it's not a good thing.

So, just one of the things I wanted to throw out there about this cultural generation gap thing and trying to appeal to a certain segment of the population that may not want to have too much about race going on in their life. So I think there's more reason than ever for people to learn about the basics of our, our demographics with respect to diversity, perhaps by reading my book. Who knows?

And but and I also think I'm, I'm hopeful about where we're going in the future because I think as we come more diverse, people are more intermingling no matter what. We can see that with the interracial marriages and so forth. My colleague, Andre Perry, who's gonna be on the next panel, had wrote a very important piece a few months ago using new Gallup poll numbers to show how much more racial interaction we're having in the United States. So that's gonna continue, but we need to not just let that happen naturally.

We did - given the kinds of its barriers and so forth we've had, we have to make, pay attention to what this really means for our future, the diversity, make sure the laws and policies we have are important. And of course, if we have these younger minority people making their voice whole, voices hear- heard in elections, that may happen naturally.

As I said before, in 2050, people are gonna look back at us today and want to know, you know, how we did with respect to this diversity boom that we're having. Did we do good things, or did we do bad things? I'm hoping we're gonna do good things because you know, this is where our country is headed.

So thank you, and I'm now gonna let the stage on for this very dynamic panel that's coming on. Thank you very much.

KIGHT: Hello, hello. Good afternoon. My name is Steph Kight, and I am a Axios reporter. I cover Congress but I spent a long time doing a lot of demographic shift reporting and had many a phone call with Bill, who is always so helpful to go over his latest research.

So I'm really honored to get to be the moderator of this discussion. I know it will be fascinating. This opens up so many questions and conversations about where we are today and where we're going in the future in politics and culture and elsewhere. So I would like to turn to my panel and have each of you just introduce yourselves. You will do it better than I

can. Just your name, your title, and anything that you're currently working on that you think is relevant to this conversation. Start with you.

CASTAÑEDA: Thank you. Can you hear me okay? I'm Rosa Maria Castañeda, and I'm the founder and managing director of the 2045 Project at Assets Under Movement. And our work is about in ensuring that philanthropic investment reaches the demographic map that Bill has just outlined for us.

So we literally named our fund on the predictions and the demographic findings that Bill said, and we said, we take that as a challenge. And we see the challenge as a 20-year runway to reframe the country to align with the demographic changes that we see.

PERRY: Good afternoon. I'm Andre Perry, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. I also direct the Center for Community Uplift. And we're always looking to eliminate race as a predictor for economic security and wellbeing

DEWITT: Hello, I'm Carolyn DeWitt. I'm the president and executive director of Rock the Vote the nation's largest nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to building political power for young people. And we do that primarily through registration, civic education, and mobilization. But we also work to modernize the process and protect their right to vote and participation in democracy.

KIGHT: Awesome. Well, thank you to all of you for being here. I do wanna kinda jump into this political conversation, and Bill kinda teed us up here talking about 2024. He gave his opinion. He thinks it was a blip. But I do wanna dive in a little bit deeper and try to understand, based on what you've seen, your work, your conversations with people, your research, why did we see these shifts when you look at, you know, especially Black male voters, Latino voters, especially in parts of Texas, certain parts of the country, and even young voters shifting toward President Trump in 2024 and away from Democrats?

Does someone want to start or...?

PERRY: I mean, well, what's interesting is that now that we are seeing current polling numbers, we do see that much of the gains were really a blip, as Bill suggested. That what I interpret that rise as being is that it was people seeking an alternative. We've known for some time since the '80s that wages have not kept pace with inflation particularly among people of color, who have largely supported the Democratic party.

And so after decades and decades of not seeing gains, particularly those in the lowest quintiles in income and wealth, people want an alternative. And the populist message was that they're going to reduce prices and, and this and that, all, all of which did not pan out. And so, people want alternatives. So I do think brown, Black, others, women, were just seeking an alternative, not necessarily gravitating towards Trump.

KIGHT: You go next, Rosa Maria.

CASTAÑEDA: I completely agree. I think that that's right. I think if you-- there's a, you know, probably the most conversation about the Latino vote and the surprise in the swing of the Latino vote and, you know, is that a realignment? Is that durable? I think about the-- what we observed in the 2024 election is not a realignment, but a, a reevaluation.

Not a conversion, not a conversion that is durable. First, I think it was driven by the cost of living. Latinos are overwhelmingly a working-class population. Generation one close to ninety percent working-class population. Generation two, somewhere between seventy, eighty percent working-class population. Generation three, still sixty something percent. So that means that they have maximal exposure and closer proximity to rising rent, to, to rising housing. And so the cost of the groceries are just much more present in their lives.

I think the second piece was, really the absence of a civic infrastructure reaching them. We saw, we know this is now recorded that you know, the conservative Republican ecosystem was more present in certain places where you saw the biggest swings. They were more present in delivering services, delivering economic benefits, and then quickly converting that into C4 money and attaching it to, therefore your political vote should move in this direction. And there was an absence of -- there was an increase in, yes, you know, investments in Latino vote but that's different from being present year long. You know, showing up six to eight weeks before an election is different from you know, the Republicans investing longer term.

And I think the third reason was the information environment. And they were a lot more active in ways that were, you know, smart in reaching young Latino voters for whom the economy is not-- it's, it, it's not delivering on the contract of mobility. That's the generation that's supposed to experience mobility that their parents sacrificed for. And I think the precarity of young Latinos and the in-- you know, investments that we saw on the right on reaching the Latino demographic through creative means, through social media influencers, through, you know, WhatsApp groups and not the traditional institutions.

So we know that those things affected that, but I would think it's a-- even if we swing back now and you are seeing swings, you know, can talk about those numbers and how they're swinging quite drastically. That's it's levels of swing that you don't see in any other demographic group. Where do you see, you know, 30% swings in voting?

And I think it was-- You know, you see in, in Texas that they realigned their districts believing in the durability of that Latino vote and are quite surprised that that may or may-- that, that doesn't look like it'll pay off. So the numbers are looking that it is going to swing back. But I think longer term I think you should consider the Latino demographic as the largest swing vote, and really their vote is a performance review on whether the economy delivered for them.

It's also obviously a-- last thing I'll say is it -- the, the backlash on the overreach of immigration is, yes, drastic. And that and that is, you know, part of it. But I think whoever the durability of the Latino voters, whoever shows up for them and meets their economic needs while respecting the dignity of their lives and gives them a sense of belonging, and that is where I think investments need to be made.

KIGHT: Carolyn, do you want to add?

DEWITT: Yeah, I was gonna say, I think the cost of living and affordability and economy was a very powerful message for young people which we can get to in a little bit too. But I think it is a very complex answer that also involves who actually came out to vote and who didn't, because we did see...I mean, we see this with young people, I mean, since the, the 26th Amendment, that there is a huge disparity that young people tend to turn out 20 to 30 points lower than older voters do. In presidential elections, that's worse. In midterms, that's worse.

In municipal local elections. Then if you start to break down gender and race, it's even more detailed, right? And you see larger disparities between Black, BIPOC youth and white youth.

And that's increasingly complex because what you have been seeing since 2010 but really after the Shelby decision in Supreme Court after 2013, we have seen an onslaught of voting rights attacks, primarily, started primarily in these states where you are seeing the largest generation - the cultural generation gap, right? Where you have an older aging white population that wants to hold onto power and are very scared about the, the younger, diverse generation. And so you're seeing things like polling places being taken off college campuses. You're seeing civic education being taken out of schools. You're seeing voter ID laws that impact them.

I mean, just think about a very simple thing of cars are more expensive. In the '80s, 80% of young people get driver's license. It's down to 60%. So you're not getting the ID, you're not getting automatic voter registration in those states that you used to. So all of these things are systematic barriers that are impacting young people, period, but especially because the youth generation is increasingly diverse, there are even greater disparities there.

KIGHT: Let's, let's keep going on that train of thought because when you're talking about these more diverse populations of voters, you're also talking about younger voters, right? These are the younger voters who are voting now, the young people who will be voting in the future. And, you know, there's a lot of conversation about do young people believe in this idea of democracy? Do they actually have faith in the system? Are they motivated to go out and vote when they see attacks on election processes, or does that discourage them from turning out?

So we'd love to hear... I mean, Carolyn, we can just start with you now if you wanna continue on that. Where have you seen young people responding to some of these attacks you've laid out?

DEWITT: Yeah, I mean, I'll take a step back. I think it's hard for some people to put themselves in, like, the shoes of young people right now, but, like, they're inheriting a world that is very much stacked against them. You think about they grew up doing active shooter drills, right? Grew up looking at the climate crisis, looking at how- the cost of housing, student debt, all of these things.

And, and for this, for this generation and even younger, things like immigration are very real because it's either them or it's their family or their friends or their classmates, right? It's, it's in front of their face. And, and another piece is COVID happened. For them, it wasn't just a public health crisis, it was a foundational experience that helped shape their views of institutions, of authority, of systems, and if they show up when things matter.

And so they're being asked to have faith in a system that produced this and has, has meant that these things are unresolved, and to just trust it, right? They're not apathetic. They care about things. They care about their communities, and so they're showing up, but they are showing up and they're not waiting for government. They're, like, joining mutual aid groups. They're, like, doing- taking care of things on their own. And so there is a very real need for us to communicate what democracy can be and the, the places of reform. And so that's where actually I would say, like, you're starting to see candidates who speak about affordability and have bold solutions and are proposing real reforms of some of these issues.

PERRY: And you know, when I look at Congress, clearly I do not see young people represented. And, and just from a very structural lens, if you don't have people that are truly in your shoes, you're not going to have the issues presented. So, when it comes to Gaza, environmental justice, concerns of AI, immigration, these things - these are the, the issues that young people are concerned with.

And, and in addition, young people really don't feel like the American dream is achievable. Look at the jump job numbers every month. Look who's not getting jobs. Look at wage stagnation among young people. And so I don't think that it's they're losing faith in a government. I also don't think that they are losing faith in capitalism, although the approval rating of capitalism has dropped according to Gallup, NBC polling.

But what I do see is a, a real fear that an oligarchy is solidified, and they don't have a say in their government, and this is something that is legitimate. And so we're gonna have to restructure things in a serious way. I mean, I'm talking from Mitch McConnell to Maxine Waters. I'm not trying to be partisan here. But I mean, they literally are, like, have been in, in place for decades, right? We need a shift.

And then let's not even talk about representation of our American Indian brothers and sisters, our Asian brothers and sisters. We, we need a shift. We need a shift.

KIGHT: And what does that look like? I mean, I, I also wanna talk about, I mean, there's so much discussion about the Democratic Socialist movement that we've seen this year. We're, we're just gonna dive into that, right? We see young people excited about these candidates who, yeah, are, are on the far left compared to most standard Democrats we see in the capital, elsewhere in government. But it's resonating. We're seeing excitement. We're seeing young people in particular show up at rallies, volunteer.

Is this something that you think should be taken seriously? Is it just a reaction to a Trump presidency? Is it something that young people get excited about and then they grow older and they move on?

PERRY: Well, I-- Okay, go, go, go.

KIGHT: This is for anyone.

PERRY: I can go on and on. Go, go for it.

DEWITT: I was, I, I think what you're saying is them respond to a candidate who is speaking to their economic pain and to a system they feel is very unfair and corrupt, and going to your point about oligarchy. Like, they they want reform, and they want solutions to these things.

And I think what you're saying with the candidates who are speaking to their economic pain and addressing the cost of affordability, addressing rental, right, cost of rent and housing and student debt and things, that is resonating with them.

I mean, you have to remember, like, young people swung to Trump in 2024, and we saw them, like, three-fourths of them vote for Mayor Mamdani, right? So, so it is the issues that they care about. And I think you're also seeing a lot of those candidates are young candidates. They're-- they did a, I think it was Harvard IOP did a, a study on what would

young people say is the, like, ideal age of a congressional candidate, and they said 39. And, and look at how many candidates we have that are, right? And also the top issue they want is money out of politics.

PERRY: Yeah, that's fair

DEWITT: Yeah.

CASTAÑEDA: I think there's a really interesting paradox speaking to the sort of, what I, my read of Latinos. So Latinos poll as responding well to a very aspirational politics, right? A strong mobility agenda, you know, work ought to pay off. So the very aspirational messages respond they, they respond well to and that's obviously, you know, promise their sacrifice is made for their kids' future.

I had a brief conversation with Van Jones about this because I read it, I read it as less of a turn to a DSA as an ideology than a demand for a politics who names who is making life more expensive for me. And as, you know, they are coming up, we're talking about a, you know, the economy looking and the, and the stock market looking more and more like a Gilded Age. And it's worth noticing the Español race and what happened in the Español race, who is you know, a Latino in New York who represented, you know, establishment, Latino Congressional Hispanic Caucus head delivering for Latino populations and got beaten by a young socialist Latina.

Because I think the deeper question is not, or are they buying into the DSA, but it's an affordability populism, right? It's like, who is ... who can explain to me what is rigged about this economy? So Latino, Latinos are the most attached to work, but it's not paying off in terms of economic wellbeing. It's not paying off in terms of, you know, ownership. It's not paying off in terms of wealth building.

So I think in many ways, Latinos are the test case as to whether, you know, an investment in work will actually pay off for them, and I think it depends on what state you are. Like in Florida, the socialist agenda, non-starter, in many ways. But you know, you saw Bernie very popular in Nevada with a populist agenda. So I think it's almost like a state-by-state Latino electorates responding differently, and we should take nothing for granted, but a message that is somewhat aspirational but positive and populist can move Latino electorates, and I think we are seeing that.

PERRY: You know, I just wanted to say, see I, I look at it a little bit differently. I do think America is starting to catch up with other industrialized countries who are, God forbid, giving free higher education, free public health care, a public option. America, I mean, our, as Bill mentioned, our aging white population is, is shrinking. We have a growing younger population and multiracial. Something's gonna have to give in terms of the social safety net.

And so I do think that this DSA, and we, we'll always throw around labels but there, there needs to be a structural shift in our economy and our politic. And so I do think that is a reflection of what has happened in, in other parts of the world.

KIGHT: And so you think this is something that is gonna have longer term sticking?

PERRY: Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

KIGHT: So I do, and just a heads-up for everyone here, we will have a chance for you to ask questions in just a little bit. We've, we're gonna have a couple more questions here, but just be prepared if you have anything you'd like to ask the panelists here today.

But I do wanna dive in and look at each party, each political party, and how they are responding to some of these trends that Bill outlines in his book. We've talked a little bit about it here. I wanna start with the Republican Party. We will go to the Democratic Party as well. We have seen some kind of direct responses, and I'm not just talking about, of course, there's the DEI campaign that the Trump administration started out on.

But they've also done things like Vice President Vance talking about extending tax credits to stay-at-home families. That gets at some of the other data points in the book about, you know, the, the, the smaller generation of children coming. What is something that you feel like Republicans have done well in response to this and also have done poorly, whether it's, you know, even just politically?

PERRY: Go for it. Yep. Go for it.

DEWITT: Okay. I would, There's a lot. I'm gonna talk a little bit about going back about how they're organizing young people. There is an investment in young people. There are, that I, my- It's really hard to talk about one party and not talk about what the other party does. But the, the, what we saw in 2024 especially, and, and lately, I don't know where things stand exactly, but there was an investment of organizing on college campuses.

There was an investment in creating a network of platforms and trusted messengers. They, you know, spoke about specifically the things that young people cared about. Now, what I will say is they have not delivered on a lot of those things. And so you are starting, I mean, you started to see that even last year with New Jersey and Virginia elections, and you saw young people come out because those candidates on, on the Democratic side were talking about affordability and talking about the things that young people cared about, and they're hurting even more.

I will say the, the most recent thing too that I think is going to be hurtful with young people is AI. Young people are incredibly concerned about AI and what it's going to do for their economic future. And I think the administration on that is, is gonna run, continue to run a problem.

PERRY: You know, what is good and impactful is, is to me the question. They have leveraged this threat of diversity to rally mostly white voters around presidential elections. In addition, they have used these, this economic hurt as also a way to mobilize voters. But you see this thing falling apart.

As early as yesterday, day before, Sarah Huckabee releases a video to support her work requirement policies of a young white man eating Cheetos or cheese puffs sitting on a couch. And what she got was significant backlash, largely from conservatives saying, "What about your policies that you're, you're ignoring?" And so for me, what was impactful was their use of these stereotypes of, of racism, sexism to rally people, 'cause we know that that is a practice that is used every four years and, and particularly used by Donald Trump. What, what was ultimately bad about that, chickens come home to roost eventually.

And so you can't live in this world where we... As you heard, we are literally mixing at all-time highs. We are having children together across racial li- We are less segregated than ever before, and yet you're telling people to or pitching this great replacement theory as if that's a good for the country. So, so yes, they've been impactful using this message but it's horrible. It's, it's good for their short, short-term gain, horrible for this country long-term

CASTAÑEDA: I will say briefly that, everything that you said is playing like Whac-A-Mole with the demographic reality that is coming. So, you know, the massive deportation agenda with exploitation, abuse of Latino families, destroying Latino families, creating angst and mental health problems among young Latino group youth who are living in you know, primarily they are citizen children, but many living in multi-status families.

So the experience is very visceral. Their own family economics are getting destroyed. And I would say that this message of a pronatalist agenda, we cannot buy that. You cannot be pronatalist and you know, separate young Latino citizen children from their parents and say that you are pronatalist. You cannot say that you are, you know, pro-procreation and, you know, increasing the population and want to and pass an executive order that, you know, birthright citizenship you want to repeal. And so I think we need to call BS on that agenda. I think we - I think we need to say and, and call it what it is.

This is playing Whac-A-Mole with a race lens, and here are all the ways that it's playing out, and it's fooling no one. And I think the young population is feeling that the most, and I think this is, you know, affecting their, their sense of, again, I'll come back to belonging, that whether you belong, whether you are wanted in the nation that you grew up in, in addition to the economic contract is fraying for them. And so, and yes, now we're seeing that, you know, young that entry-level jobs are harder to get because of the introduction of AI.

So, I think this. . . There's no win, and I'll just last say there is no squaring this because you have, for example you know, Representative Salazar in Miami, who is a Republican Latina, who has supported the Republican agenda, and a couple of weeks from the elections, then suddenly, after reporting 90% of that agenda is now standing in front of the White House saying, "Mr. Trump, you've gone too far." Well, the, that, you know, the local community is saying, "Well, oh, no, we don't buy that." We don't buy that. There're, so there is no squaring that for people who are paying attention and people who are experiencing the actual, you know, very real human- humane violations to their, their lives and, and their rights and, and I think they're gonna pay a price for it

KIGHT: Well, really quickly I appreciate all of those very thorough answers. Really quickly before we turn to the audience, can you give what's one policy that you think Democrats, or message Democrats have that is resonating? And is there one thing that they are missing? What is your message to Leader Schumer or future Leader Jeffries?

PERRY: Well, I mean, okay, it- it's a good in many ways that we are...now, we're nonpartisan. I'm non-party, but Democrats are a big tent. It's very diverse. It doesn't have a concrete agenda, and that's a good thing. That's America. And so for me, I think that's a good, but it's, but it's harder to have this sort of loose, looseness within the, your voting base and establish an agenda.

And so it becomes state by state, city by city, different platforms. But for me, that's okay, right? That is, that is very okay. We are a diverse country. We have diverse goals. We have diverse needs. Our politics should reflect that. And so, but, but people are looking for this

ironclad agenda that, you know, everyone's in line for, that we can't have disagreements on, and I just think that's the wrong way to go.

KIGHT: Does that make it hard to follow through on your promises if-

PERRY: No, I mean, and, and yes, on, on a national scale to a certain extent, but I also think politics are... I mean, it's always been local, but we put way too much stock in the, the presidency and not enough in what's happening at the state and local levels.

So for me, it's, it's about having policies go to Washington, not having policies come from it. Yeah. And so we just need to have that focus at least for the, the short... I keep saying, going back to we. But, but we do. No, Americans do need a bottom up because you... On, on the Republican side, you see a very a top down approach. Grassroots ideas are not surfacing. Republicans want childcare in places like Arizona. And, and Mississippi. They want to see health care plans, right? But it's not getting it's not getting there because you have a very top down approach, and likewise Dems have the same issue.

So the more we focus on local, the better in the short particularly short term, but I just ultimately think it's better for the country as a whole.

KIGHT: Do either of you have responses there before we turn to the audience?

CASTAÑEDA: I'll just say briefly that I think there has been a lesson learned that the only issue that you speak to Latinos about is not just immigration, that Latinos are workers, they're homeowners, they're parents, they're business owners and they're just very multidimensional voters.

So I think that that is one thing that both are doing better, doing right. I think that the f- the Latino vote should be contested for. And so I think that that is positive. I am concerned that, again, I'll say, I'll speak to philanthropy about what does philanthropy need to do differently. Map your investments with the map that Bill is showing us.

And the problem is that philanthropic investments and social investments are still in the sort of melting pot states and the coastal areas and not sufficiently going to the places where you know, Latino working families with young children are. And so I think we need to rethink and rebalance where investments are made, and I think we need to double down on you know, bringing out the Latino voter and investing in civic engagement where the, you know, population demographics of Latinos are growing by, you know, 100%, 200%.

They can make a difference in those places. They ought to be contested for. And I think they need to be contested for as multidimensional voters and primarily as voters who care about the future of their next generation because that's what they came here to sacrifice for. And Bill, Bill did say in his you know, he said Latino voters, working-class Latino voters, more likely to have children at home, more likely to respond to and view positively messages that are about social investments in that because they know that, that those are the mobility investments.

And then at last thing, they-- nobody's talking enough about AI. Okay? Nobody's talking enough about AI and the you know, the ways that they're already being experienced in the workplace now. Latinos are gig workers, you know, low-end workers that are experiencing a

lot of the bossware, the, you know, ways that algorithms are scrambling their work lives and, and reducing their economic power and voice in the workplace, and I think nobody's doing enough to speak to that.

KIGHT: Thank you, all of you. We will turn to questions here. We just have time for, like, one or two. So does anyone have a question they'd like to ask the panelists? Up here in the front. Wait one second, the mic's coming.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: Hello, everyone. My name's Aliana Anderson. I'm a freshman honors political science student over at Howard University. And my question to you is, do you guys think the Shelby County versus Holder decision in 2013 will continue to have, as you mentioned more of an impact on youth and as, like, in turn diverse voters? 'Cause we're kind of starting to see the whole thing with voting IDs and stuff like that. Do you think this will continue to have a long-term effect?

PERRY: Oh, before -- can you answer that?

AUDIENCE QUESTION: Yeah.

PERRY: Provide it. 'Cause I -- now, what's interesting, we always have the gray heads talking to the young folks, so I would love to hear your perspective on it.

AUDIENCE QUESTION: I think a little bit. I'm from a state, like, I'm from Indiana, so, like, kinda, like, the Midwest, where we're starting to see diverse people move into them. And so I think that the Shelby County decision has repealed a lot of voter protections for minorities, specifically Black people, because we don't have that history of birth certificates and stuff like that. So I think that will curb the older generations from voting.

But I am concerned about it having an impact on young voters, because, like you mentioned, like, people don't get their driver's license anymore, so they don't have that automatic voter registration in some states. So that's something I'm concerned about. I wanted to hear your guys' opinions about it as well.

DEWITT: 100%. You're also seeing attacks on vote-by-mail, as you probably know. I mean, you're studying this stuff, I think sounds like. Yeah, all of... We don't have the protections right now, right? We need to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. We need to pass the, the Freedom to Vote Act. And we need elected leaders who are pro-voting.

And if we can't do it at the federal level, we need to start doing it at the local and state levels. And that is, you know, it's a design, and it should actually be motivating. If, like, you hear people say, "My vote doesn't matter," it's like, then why the heck that would they be trying to take it away, right?

CASTAÑEDA: And where, and where are you seeing that the most? Texas, Florida, and the states where you have huge concentrations of Latinos, and, and young Latinos, so yeah.

KIGHT: And you have a question in the back?

AUDIENCE QUESTION: Good afternoon. Thank you so much for this robust panel following a wonderful presentation from Dr. Frey. My name is Nicole Nelson. I'm a former senior policy

advisor. Unfortunately, I'm one of the 600,000 Black women who was laid off. And I have a question when we're talking about voters, when we're talking about Black voters, Latino voters, young voters, white voters, et cetera.

I'm just curious if anyone on the panel has done any more disaggregation of these different racial groups by ethnicity, and if there are any, like, interesting challenges or moments where there can be coalition. But first, first part of the question, has anyone done any data disaggregation by ethnicity?

Are there differences in ethnic groups amongst Latino and Black and Asian and even white voters? And then what are the opportunities given this knowledge for coalition? Thank you.

DEWITT: Yes. There are some great-- I mean, we do work, but also there are some great groups looking at different demographics. I mean, we talk about Latino voters, and we talk about AAPI voters. That is a - there is a huge, right, spectrum of... These are not monolithic groups, just like young people aren't monolithic, right? And depending on what state you're in or what community you're in, like, these things change. So there, there are efforts to look at the data, but there are also coalitions happening both at the national level and in the state and local levels too.

But philanthropy can help with investments.

KIGHT: Would you like this?

CASTAÑEDA: I will say that the, increasingly in recent years, the new entrants, Latino entrants to the country are darker and darker. In the Latin-Cuban population, 400,000 Cubans that entered through parole, you know, the first generations of Cubans were primarily white, primarily elite, higher educated, you know, higher class, were land-owning. The ones that are arriving today are primarily Black people, because that's who Cuba is. It's primary - it's 60% Black.

And so the generations that are coming now are the ones that had stayed behind before but they're now here. They're now here for lots of reasons, for economic reasons, for asylum reasons, for violence reasons, for, you know, authoritarian governments in their home countries, gangs, et cetera. They're arriving. That is a, that is a huge opportunity to engage those populations because they are more nuanced in their thinking. They experience in America where they are Black first, and yet that's not a conversation that we're having enough among the Latino populations. And then they might see themselves, you know, their fellow Latinos as more racist here.

So that white Latinos are more ... They wanna be more proximate to whiteness, and the new generations of Latinos who are darker and darker, they don't get that. They, they're less proximity to whiteness. They're not gonna aspire to it 'cause it's not gonna re-deliver for them. So that's a huge opportunity and an really underrepresented, under-investment population as well as, you know, among the, the BAJI - Black Americans for Just Immigration - doing tremendous work to highlight the number of you know, Black immigrants coming to this country who are also facing violence and facing these conditions.

So those are highly -- if you're a researcher, if you're ... those are huge areas of new and emerging work both political opportunity as well as a research and investment opportunity.

PERRY: Can I just add one quick, one of the reflections of the book. I had had the opportunity to reread it for this panel. And by the way, Bill Frey is great a scholar as he is, he's actually a better colleague. He is a just a wonderful person. I've been here nine years at Brookings. He was one of the first to open up his office. I mean, he's a tremendous person, so I just have to say that.

And for me, what ... But one of the things when I was reading the book, I and looking over time how the we're diversifying, there was a time where so much from a Black perspective was the worry is about majority rule That, you know, in the space where you're the, you know, very, having few numbers, you can't win.

Now we're getting to this place where the fear is minority rule. And literally shifting the rules of the game. People now, I mean, you hear people say, "Oh, this is a republic. This is not a democracy." Right? And, and you just hear it. So I mean, this wonderful contribution is so important because we are shifting in some dangerous ways where we're moving further and further away from a democracy.

So, I just wanted to share that because it's an important contribution because there's a lot at stake, not just with this upcoming election, but just with the country as a whole. And so we need these kind of contributions in our lives.

KIGHT: Well, I think that's a perfect place to end. Thank you to all three of you for your thoughtful responses, and thank you, Bill, for your, your new book and research.

FREY: As I promised, a lively panel that talked about a lot of these. One of the things I've learned, not from this book, from my earlier books, is when I go and give a book talk and there's a lot of... There's a panel afterwards or a couple people afterwards talking, I learn so much. And I learned so much from you guys today, and, and I think the audience has too.

So thank you very much, and thank you for coming.