

Local Elections In America Project (LEAP)

(OTT ID 1366)

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Problems/Unmet Needs:

- Local election data increasingly available, but too difficult and time consuming to compile
- Traditional data collection methods are inadequate
 - Costly
 - Ongoing

Technological Solution:

- The inventor's solution is to develop a software tool to systematically collect, digitize and disseminate data on local elections
- Use the LEAP database to conduct large-scale study of race/ethnicity in local electoral politics

- Intellectual Property (IP)
 - Copyrighted Work
- Looking for a development partner to:
 - This software is part of an active and ongoing research program and is seeking partners for development of the final product. It is available for licensing under either exclusive or non-exclusive terms.

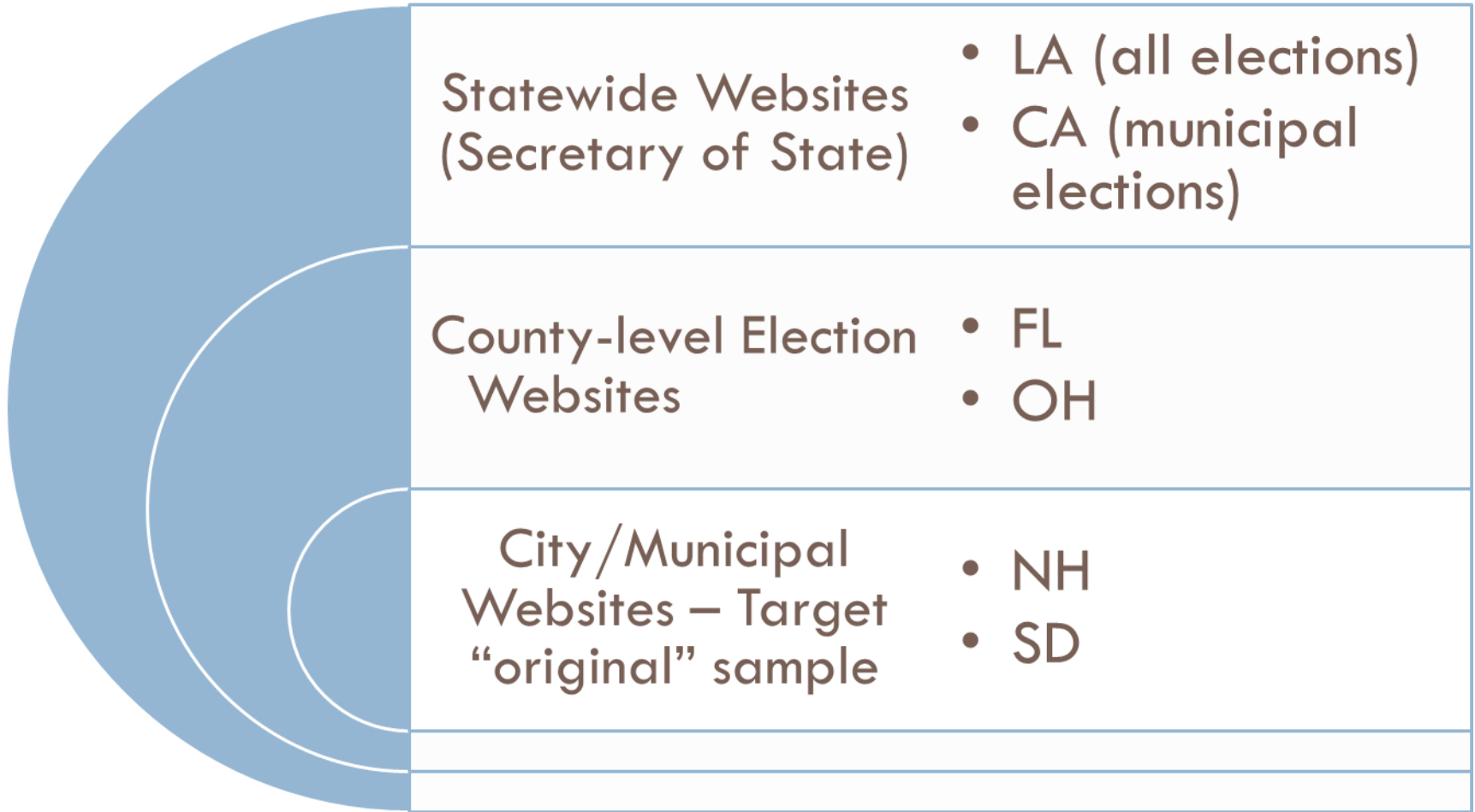
Market

- Local election data offers an important complement to survey data, which tend to dominate the study of local political behavior. Many surveys provide information about potential voters' behavior, information levels, and attitudes but they are not ideal for understanding either electoral behavior per se or the effects of institutional or contextual variables on political behavior.

- 99% of all Governments in the US are local (N=89,476 in 2007)
- About ½ million public officials hold local offices (nearly all elected)
- Significant variation in electoral and governing arrangements at local level
 - Legislative size, election method, timing of election
- Greatest concentration of minority voters and racial/ethnic composition of electorate

- **Specialized** – Census indicators have been added to these data allowing customers to ask for more specific data based on time, location, and particular population sizes.
- **Faster** – Local elections have been well-categorized for easy access and these data provide a critical resource for scholars, practitioners and educators, and allow researchers, educators, governments and organizations to learn about, analyze, and make informed decisions about local politics and policy.
- **Teaching Tool** - Through LEAP, undergraduate and graduate students have an opportunity to gain experience and expertise in elections research and analysis.
- **Consulting** – The LEAP staff is well versed in local elections, voting behavior, and electoral structures, and is able to provide consulting services to individuals and organizations interested in customized reports or spatial analysis.

- Frame: Based on population size/geographic breadth
- Analytic sample all U.S. cities with population > 25,000 (n=1,244 cities)
- Target municipal (city council and mayor) elections
- 1990-present



What Does This Mean For LEAP's Sampling Frame?

- More cities than the original 1,244:
- For a few states, there is data on all places in the state
- For some counties, there is data on all places in the county

- County, State, School Board and Federal Elections data for some places

- Significant variation in time-frame (1920s to 2010)

- Original Sample 877 out of 1,241 (71%)
- Total cities 5,400 (minimum) out of 19,317
- States:
 - 14 good coverage + easy format (CA, LA, MN, WA)
 - 17 less comprehensive coverage + more pdf (TX, NY, IL)
 - 7 limited coverage + pdf (GA, SC)

- LEAP has developed a suite of software application tools to systematically collect, digitize and disseminate data on elections across the United States.
- The LEAP database is the only comprehensive repository in the nation of local elections and related data that are routinely gathered from publicly available sources, organized by geographic location and date, and stored in relational schemas.
- LEAP will provide educators, practitioners, policymakers and government officials with the ability to query the database, examine trends and patterns, and develop a better understanding of local politics and elections in the U.S.

Further investigations

- How do we handle analytic sample cities with no online election data?
- Developing a relationship with election officials?
- Expanding to [local] elections outside U.S.
- British Local Elections, 1889-2003
<http://www.esds.ac.uk/findingData/snDescription.asp?sn=5319>
- Netherlands www.verkiezingsuitslagen.nl
- Institutional Support for the LEAP database

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