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WHO VOTED

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One of the most predictable comments following a local election in Metro relates to criticism of the small voter turnout. In 1966, 32.2% of registered voters went to the polls, compared to 30.3% in 1964 and 39.2% in 1962. Yet these Metro-wide figures are deceptive since they fail to indicate the variations from municipality to municipality. Table I shows that Scarborough, Etobicoke, and York have turnouts which are repeatedly below the Metro-wide averages, while East York and Toronto City are consistently above overall figures (1964 and 1962 figures have been recast to reflect 1966 amalgamations).

It is generally believed that scale has an adverse effect on voter participation -- i.e. that turnout decreases as size of governmental unit increases. This is not the case in Metro. Of the 13 municipalities conducting a local election in 1964, only Leaside, Swansea, and Weston had larger turnouts than Toronto City; in 1966 only East York exceeded Toronto City's 36.4%. The scale-turnout hypothesis again fails when Metro Toronto is compared to larger municipalities -- Metro's 32.2% turnout is less than that of New York City (80.2% in 1965), Paris (65.3% in 1965), Metro Tokyo (58.2% in 1965) and Greater London (44.2% in 1964).

Certain voter characteristics have a favourable influence upon electoral participation. The Bureau selected eight such characteristics, and, using 1961 census data for each census tract, calculated ward-by-ward percentages in the City of Toronto for each characteristic.

Table II sets forth this information with the turnout and characteristic rankings of each ward appearing in parentheses below the percentage figures. Each voter characteristic (independent variable) was tested for correlation with the turnout (dependent variable) on a parallel sequence basis to determine the order of influence of these characteristics. The resulting order, most to least influence, was found to be: British Isles Ethnic Background; Female; Male with 1961 Income of \$6,000 and Above; One or More Years of University Education (not now attending); Family in Owner-Occupied Dwelling; Family in Same Dwelling for 10 or More Years; Canadian-Born; Family Head 25 or More Years of Age. These characteristics are entered in Table II in their order of influence. It is not surprising that Ward 9, with the highest composite ranking of the eight characteristics (four 1sts, two 2nds, one 3rd, and one 5th) had the highest turnout; or that Ward 4, with the lowest composite ranking (one 5th, one 6th, two 7ths, one 8th, and three 9ths) had the lowest voter turnout.

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Unfortunately, the precision of mathematics must be qualified when used to help explain a political science situation. In this particular instance, two factors bear consideration: such voter characteristics as income and education, and owner-occupancy and age of family head, are closely interrelated; the census data are dated (although this should not constitute too great a weakness since the wards are large in population and most of them are diverse in make-up of their populations).

TABLE I

VOTER TURNOUT IN THE LAST THREE METRO TORONTO LOCAL ELECTIONS

MUNICIPALITY	1962			1964			1966		
	Regis- tration	Turnout	% Voting	Regis- tration	Turnout	% Voting	Regis- tration	Turnout	% Voting
Toronto	434,069	179,754 (1)	41.4%	439,468	146,120	33.2%	428,683	156,073	36.4%
North York	153,786	62,857	40.9	196,194	60,253	30.7	221,268	64,000	28.9
Scarborough	123,698	43,401	35.1	133,396	34,882	26.1	151,462	33,145	21.9
Etobicoke	117,838	42,400 (2)	36.0	143,001	32,704 (3)	22.9	158,154	50,359	31.8
York	81,638	26,650	32.6	81,827	23,395	28.6	80,621 (4)	25,350	31.4
East York	<u>57,118</u>	<u>23,995</u>	<u>42.0</u>	<u>59,516</u>	<u>21,816</u>	<u>36.7</u>	<u>68,132</u>	<u>28,389</u>	<u>41.7</u>
Totals	968,147	379,057	39.2%	1,053,402	319,170	30.3%	1,108,320	357,316	32.2%

- (1) Forest Hill council head by acclamation.
- (2) Etobicoke council head by acclamation.
- (3) Etobicoke, Mimico and New Toronto council heads by acclamation.
- (4) Appeals not included.

TABLE II

CITY OF TORONTO WARD-BY-WARD PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION
OF 1966 VOTER TURNOUT AND 1961 CENSUS CHARACTERISTICS
(With rankings of turnout and characteristics in parentheses)

	WARD 1	WARD 2	WARD 3	WARD 4	WARD 5	WARD 6	WARD 7	WARD 8	WARD 9	TOTALS & AVERAGES
REGISTERED VOTERS	41,135	50,846	57,665	37,031	38,287	44,178	47,500	54,983	57,058	428,683
TURNOUT FOR MAYOR	13,543	17,762	21,955	10,616	12,957	15,204	18,373	20,315	25,348	156,073
% TURNOUT	32.9 (8th)	34.9 (5th)	38.1 (3rd)	28.7 (9th)	33.8 (7th)	34.4 (6th)	38.7 (2nd)	36.9 (4th)	44.4 (1st)	36.4
1961 TOTAL POPULATION	73,765	74,186	68,385*	72,343*	70,711*	70,043*	78,192	86,437	70,476	664,538*
% BRITISH ISLES ETHNIC BACKGROUND	61.2 (4th)	62.5 (3rd)	51.6 (5th)	24.0 (9th)	32.8 (8th)	42.9 (7th)	45.6 (6th)	68.8 (2nd)	73.4 (1st)	51.4
% FEMALE	50.7 (5th)	50.2 (6th)	53.7 (2nd)	47.7 (9th)	49.6 (8th)	49.7 (7th)	51.1 (4th)	52.0 (3rd)	56.2 (1st)	51.1
% MALES WITH \$6,000+ INCOME	4.0 (6th)	13.2 (3rd)	17.2 (2nd)	2.9 (8th)	2.7 (9th)	3.6 (7th)	7.7 (5th)	8.8 (4th)	24.9 (1st)	9.1
% 1+ YEARS UNIVERSITY EDUC. & NOT NOW ATTENDING	1.7 (9th)	9.1 (3rd)	15.4 (1st)	3.7 (5th)	2.3 (7th)	2.0 (8th)	5.0 (4th)	2.7 (6th)	12.7 (2nd)	5.8
% FAMILIES IN OWNER- OCCUPIED DWELLINGS	64.6 (4th)	19.6 (9th)	27.3 (8th)	46.7 (7th)	66.8 (3rd)	59.6 (6th)	69.3 (1st)	67.2 (2nd)	61.3 (5th)	56.3
% FAMILIES IN SAME DWELLING 10+ YEARS	37.5 (1st)	19.8 (9th)	22.4 (8th)	27.9 (7th)	29.8 (6th)	30.1 (5th)	34.5 (4th)	37.0 (2nd)	36.5 (3rd)	30.6
% CANADIAN-BORN	64.9 (4th)	72.6 (1st)	60.9 (5th)	40.1 (9th)	46.0 (8th)	52.6 (7th)	54.1 (6th)	66.6 (3rd)	68.2 (2nd)	58.4
% FAMILIES WHOSE HEAD IS 25+ YEARS OLD	94.7 (9th)	95.52 (4th)	96.9 (2nd)	95.4 (6th)	94.9 (8th)	95.3 (7th)	95.5 (5th)	95.7 (3rd)	97.8 (1st)	95.7

* Excludes 9 census tracts which are split by ward boundaries and 2 tracts with populations of less than 100. These omitted tracts had a total pop. of only 37,986 in 1961, or less than 6% of the total of 702,524.