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2014

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Racial Stereotypes and Perceptions of Representatives' Ideologies in U.S. House Elections

I examine the hypothesis that race affects citizens' perceptions of candidates' ideologies. In the past, systematic tests of this hypothesis have relied almost entirely on data drawn from experiments. While experimental research designs have contributed much to the analysis of political stereotypes and heuristics, the extent to which experimental research on this hypothesis is externally valid is open to question. Moreover, experimental approaches are not well-suited to estimating the *magnitude* of the effects of stereotypes in real-world situations, especially in the context of complex political phenomena such as election campaigns. In this article, I develop a statistical model of the effects of race on perceptions of candidates' ideologies and estimate the model using data on incumbent candidates from the American National Election Studies. The results suggest that, *ceteris paribus*, white citizens will tend to perceive black candidates to be more liberal than ideologically similar white candidates. In contrast, the perceptions of black respondents are not affected by the race of candidates, although black respondents' perceptions are more strongly correlated with candidates' positions on issues of particular interest to minorities than the perceptions of white respondents. I discuss the implications of these findings with respect to descriptive representation in the United States, the accountability of office holders, and the study of voting behavior.

Although a substantial literature portrays typical American voters as having low levels of political knowledge (Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), a similarly sizeable body of research has established that the use of political stereotypes allows many citizens to make political decisions that are consistent with their political preferences (Aldrich and McKelvey 1977; Conover and Feldman 1989; Lupia 1994; Rahn 1993). While specific information about the ideological positioning of candidates may be costly to obtain, candidate characteristics such as partisan identification can serve as informational shortcuts that assist citizens in making inferences about the likely policy positions of those candidates. As American elections have become more candidate-centered, perceptions of candidates' ideologies have received increased scholarly attention. This scholarship has proliferated as researchers have

explored an increasingly wide variety of candidate characteristics that might serve as heuristics in the process of evaluating candidates. As growing numbers of women and minorities have run for office, interest in social group membership as a potential source of ideological stereotypes has also increased (Koch 2000, 2002; McDermott 1997, 1998).

Given the history of race relations in the United States and the continuing importance of race in American politics, the use of race as a heuristic in the evaluation of candidates deserves significant scholarly scrutiny. While having the potential to help citizens mitigate deficiencies in information about particular candidates, the political stereotyping of black candidates may also serve to reinforce racial prejudices and lower the likelihood of black candidates being elected to office. As such, stereotypes might limit the degree of descriptive representation provided to black Americans, thereby inhibiting the potentially desirable policy and nonpolicy outcomes that can result from black office holders representing black constituents (Banducci, Donovan, and Karp 2004; Barreto, Segura, and Woods 2004; Gay 2001; Mansbridge 1999). Moreover, “new style” black politicians (Citrin, Green, and Sears 1990) may be hampered in their attempts to appeal to broader, more moderate constituencies if the stereotype that black candidates are extremely liberal continues to hold sway over citizens’ perceptions of candidates. Lastly, the ability of citizens, both black and white, to hold elected officials accountable at the ballot box is likely diminished if constituents have distorted views regarding the policies that their representatives have supported.

While a substantial body of experimental research suggests that race-based stereotypes play an important role in the perception of candidates’ ideologies (McDermott 1998; Sigelman et al. 1995; Sigelman and Sigelman 1982), the lack of nonexperimental research on the topic is striking. We know little about the extent to which race affects perceptions of candidates’ ideologies during actual election campaigns. The analysis of American National Election Studies (ANES) data presented here sheds light on how citizens’ views of their representatives’ ideologies are formed within the complex contexts of real-world election campaigns. The findings not only attest to the external validity of the experimental work in this area, but they also include estimates of the magnitude of the effects of race on perceptions of candidates’ ideologies, rather than simply demonstrating the direction of those effects.

Background

A substantial body of evidence suggests that racial prejudice is still pervasive in American society (Huddy and Feldman 2009). Additionally,

while the overt expression of racist sentiment by candidates can be an electoral liability in the contemporary United States, scholars have found that, on the campaign trail, some white candidates still attempt to subtly imply that being black is an attribute that should count against their opponents (Mendelberg 2001; Tate 2003). Moreover, research on the election of Barack Obama as President in 2008 strongly suggests that race still matters when it comes to electoral politics in the United States (Highton 2011; Lewis-Beck, Tien, and Nadeau 2010). Yet while racially prejudicial attitudes, whether overt or symbolic, can clearly affect political behavior directly, the importance of racial identification in influencing other variables of electoral importance is somewhat underappreciated in the literature. Race plays no explicit role in many prominent models of voting behavior. Take, for example, the classic spatial model of voting behavior (Downs 1957). In perhaps the simplest one-dimensional model, voters maximize their expected utility by voting for the candidate whose ideological position is in closest proximity to their own. In reality, however, to the extent that voters make decisions in this manner, even their simple calculations are based on the *perceived* ideological positioning of candidates rather than the *actual* positioning of those candidates. As appreciated by scholarship on “correct” voting (Lau and Redlawsk 1997), this introduces the possibility of making voting errors. If racial identification affects the perceived ideologies of candidates, it may play an important role in determining how often voting errors are made.

In some cases, the effects of race may well be largely benign from a normative point of view. For example, if black candidates are typically quite liberal, as by most scholarly accounts they are (Lublin 1997; Swain 1995), using race as an informational shortcut, or cue, in the evaluation of the political ideologies of candidates may well be a rational response to situations in which information about candidates is costly to obtain (Bullock 1984; Feldman and Conover 1983; Wright and Niemi 1983). The utilization of such a cue is, in a sense, akin to making use of the fact that Republicans tend to be conservative, and as Koch (2002, 2003) shows, the accuracy of citizens’ perceptions of candidates’ ideologies is increased by the use of partisan stereotypes.

On the other hand, the use of stereotypes can also lead voters astray. Lau and Redlawsk (2001) provide evidence that cognitive heuristics can inhibit correct voting, and as Kuklinski and Hurley suggest, researchers “need to identify the conditions under which taking cues from elites does and does not serve the interests of the electorate” (1994, 729). If white citizens perceive black candidates to be more liberal than white candidates with similar policy positions, these citizens might pass over African American candidates that have positions more similar to their own policy

preferences than the positions of opposing white candidates. In such situations, race would contribute to the *misperception* of candidates' ideologies and hence have a normatively negative impact on the voting calculus of citizens. The idea that white citizens might overestimate the liberalness of black candidates squares well with work in social psychology that documents how ingroup/outgroup biases affect perceptions of characteristics of outgroup members. The importance of such biases has been discussed in the political science literature at least since Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee (1954), and as Duckitt (2003) notes, there is strong evidence that social categorization accentuates ingroup similarities and outgroup differences.¹

Experimental Studies

A number of previous studies have found that group membership has important effects on the perception of candidates' ideologies. Experimental research has been particularly useful in establishing the importance of race in the evaluation of candidates' ideologies, as the race of candidates can be manipulated while other factors are held constant.

Sigelman et al. (1995) analyzed subjects' reactions to brief, printed campaign speeches made by hypothetical candidates. The authors find that minority candidates are perceived to be more compassionate toward minority groups and are also perceived to be less competent than white candidates. While race is not a significant predictor of vote choice, race has an impact on the perception of candidates' ideologies, with subjects viewing black candidates as more liberal than white candidates, even when the information given about the black and white candidates is identical. Sigelman et al., however, do not control for the importance of other stereotypes, such as those based on candidate partisanship. Their analysis does not rule out the possibility that subjects perceive black candidates to be more liberal partially because they infer that black candidates are more likely to be Democrats.

McDermott (1998) presented subjects with only the race and gender of hypothetical candidates and basic candidate characteristics such as region of residence and marital status. She finds that the race of a candidate acts as a cue that affects voters' perceptions of that candidate's ideology. The methodology that McDermott employs, however, does not allow her to determine whether voters respond differently to black and white candidates that hold similar policy positions, as respondents are given no information about candidates' policy positions or even their partisan identifications.

Other experimental studies have tested the hypothesis that black candidates are penalized by white voters, but they do not directly address the importance of perceptions of candidates' ideologies. Sigelman and Sigelman (1982) distributed ballots to college students along with descriptions of the personal characteristics of two hypothetical candidates. The authors find that while race does not have a significant effect on the percentage of votes that candidates garner, it does affect vote choice among particular groups such as white male and black voters. Terkildsen (1993) carried out an experiment in which respondents are shown photographs of hypothetical candidates and finds that white voters do penalize black candidates. The decidedly mixed nature of experimental findings regarding the effects of a candidate's race on voting decisions provides further motivation for examining the issue across a large number of real-world election contests.

Additionally, while they are of great value, the experimental studies described above suffer from several drawbacks that potentially limit their validity. First, as is the case with many research designs that employ experiments, there is a possibility that social desirability bias may temper the reaction of experimental subjects to racial cues. Subjects may make conscious efforts to avoid indicating any racial prejudices they may have. Even in cases where it is not immediately clear to subjects that racial attitudes are key components of the experiment, subjects might infer that researchers are interested in such attitudes. As a result, some subjects may eschew even the rational use of race as an informational shortcut. Such a process could potentially limit the internal validity of an experimental study.

Second, experiments cannot capture the complexity of actual election campaigns, and this has the potential to limit their external validity. The importance of race as a determinant of perceptions of candidates' ideologies may be affected by the amount of information presented during a campaign, the context in which the information is received, and the timing and duration of information reception. When race is one of only a small number of characteristics known about a candidate, as is typically the case in experimental studies, respondents may be more likely to use race as a cue in evaluating candidates' ideologies than they would be in the midst of an actual election campaign. In such a context, the perceptual effects of race may be overestimated.

Third, in an experimental setting, while it may be possible to determine whether white citizens perceive black candidates to be more liberal than white candidates, it is difficult to determine whether white citizens perceive black candidates as taking more liberal policy positions than the voting records of these candidates actually indicate. While actual

politicians have voting records, run real campaigns, and take numerous policy stances, the fictional politicians described in most experimental studies are highly simplified caricatures of hypothetical candidates. Because of this, it is difficult to determine experimentally if race serves as an informational shortcut that helps citizens make “good” voting decisions, or if race causes citizens to avoid voting for candidates that they might otherwise vote for.

Lastly, even if an experimental finding that race has a significant effect on perceptions of candidates’ ideologies has a high degree of external validity, little light is shed on the *magnitude* of such effects in real-world contexts. While establishing that race affects perceptions is valuable in its own right, the political ramifications of such effects hinge on their substantive importance relative to other factors that influence elections and other political phenomena. Experimental research has great value, but if one wants to understand which factors are the most substantively important influences on real-world elections, analyzing data from actual election campaigns is a necessary—albeit comparatively messy—endeavor. While the use of survey data in this context presents its own set of methodological challenges, most of these challenges can be addressed. The benefits of estimating the perceptual effects of racial identification in actual election contests are important enough to warrant giving up a degree of experimental control in exchange for increased real-world validity.

Nonexperimental Studies

While several observational studies have explored the effects of candidate race on the success of black congressional candidates, few scholars have performed rigorous nonexperimental studies of the effects of candidate race on perceptions of candidates’ ideologies. An exception is Washington (2006), who finds that whites are less likely to vote for black candidates than white candidates, even when other factors are taken into account. Washington suggests that the effects of race on perceptions of ideology are important, but her empirical evidence for this claim is based on admittedly crude measures.² Using much more precise measures of candidate and respondent ideologies over a much larger set of elections, I provide more substantial empirical evidence of the importance of race in the misperception of candidates’ ideologies.

Among nonexperimental studies that do not explore the effects of racial-group membership on perceptions of candidates’ ideologies but do look for evidence of African American candidates being penalized for being black on Election Day, results are decidedly mixed. In an analysis

of four state-wide races in California in 1982, in which African American Tom Bradley ran for governor, Citrin, Green, and Sears (1990) find that attitudes toward governmental support for blacks are a significant predictor of vote choice, while the race of candidates is not. Using precinct-level data from three elections in which African Americans won congressional elections in majority-white districts, Voss and Lublin (2001) find no evidence that southern whites are consistently biased against black candidates. In contrast, however, using precinct-level data from 100 congressional elections, Bullock and Dunn (2003) find that black candidates still fare significantly worse than white Democrats. The effects of race on perceptions of candidates' ideologies may provide a partial explanation for the mixed nature of results regarding the effects of the race of candidates on voting behavior.

Empirical Analysis

Data. This analysis uses pooled survey data from the American National Election Study (ANES). Beginning in 1978, a number of ANES surveys included questions about respondents' perceptions of the ideologies of the general election candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives in their districts.³ The analysis makes use of data from the ANES general elections surveys performed between 1978 and 2004. The pooling of the data across survey years is critical to overcoming the imprecision that results from the small size of subgroup populations—such as white respondents evaluating black candidates—in any given year.⁴ I used data from various sources to identify the race of all candidates (Amer 2005; Library of Congress 2007; Tong 2007).⁵ I then merged the ANES data with Poole-Rosenthal first-dimension DW-Nominate scores as described below. To facilitate interpretation of the results, especially in the presence of interaction terms, each variable is coded such that a value of 0 represents the mean or median value of that variable.

Perceived Incumbent Ideology. The dependent variable in this analysis, *Perceived Ideology*, is the response to an ANES survey question that asks each respondent to place the House candidates in the respondent's district on a 7-point scale, from extremely liberal (−3) to extremely conservative (+3). Table 1 shows the mean perceived ideology scores for black and white liberal Democratic incumbents among white respondents. The first-dimension DW-Nominate scores of these incumbents place them among the three most liberal deciles in the House during the time period being studied.⁶

TABLE 1
Perceptions of Black and White Liberal Democratic Incumbents

Respondent Race	DW-Nominate Decile	Mean Perceived Ideology (7-Point Scale)	
		Black Incumbents	White Incumbents
White	1st	-1.20	-0.79
	2nd	-0.95	-0.46
	3rd	-0.85	-0.27
Black	1st	-0.60	-0.56
	2nd	-0.45	-0.43
	3rd	-0.35	-0.34

Note: All differences between mean perceptions of black and white incumbents are significant for white respondents, but not for black respondents at the $p < 0.05$ level.

On average, black incumbents are seen as significantly more liberal than white incumbents with similar ideological placements.⁷ Among white respondents, the mean perception of black Democratic incumbents within a given ideological decile is roughly one-half of a point more liberal on the 7-point scale than the mean perception of white Democratic incumbents in that decile. This difference is approximately one-third of one standard deviation of the *Perceived Ideology* variable.⁸

Actual Candidate Ideology. Accurately measuring the ideologies of representatives is not a simple task. However, measures such as DW-Nominate scores (Poole and Rosenthal 1991, 1985) are readily available and are commonly used in contemporary scholarship (Griffin and Flavin 2007; Schickler 2000; Shotts 2003).⁹ As they are based on roll-call votes, DW-Nominate scores can only provide information on incumbents. In this analysis, therefore, I only consider perceptions of incumbents. While it would obviously be preferable to include both incumbents and challengers in the analysis, reliable data on the ideologies of challengers is available for the 1994, 1996, and 1998 election cycles at most, and even in these years, the data is spotty.¹⁰ Combined with the rarity of black challengers and the fact that in any given year, the ANES survey does not include any respondents from many districts, there is simply too little data from districts with black challengers to generate estimates with a suitable degree of precision.¹¹

In the data employed here, first-dimension DW-Nominate scores range from -0.84 (the most liberal) to $+1.20$ (the most conservative), with

the mean being -0.01 . Among Democrats, the mean DW-Nominate score is -0.33 , with white and black incumbents averaging -0.30 and -0.55 , respectively. The mean score among Republican incumbents is 0.39 . I expect actual incumbent ideology, denoted by *DW-Nominate*, to be significantly and positively related to *Perceived Ideology*. The more accurate the information that respondents have about the ideologies of incumbents, the closer their perceptions will be to the actual ideologies of these incumbents.

In the context of race-based stereotypes and minority representation, it is also important to consider dimensions of policy preferences other than the main economic dimension that underlies the frequently used first-dimension DW-Nominate measure. Because of this, I employ adjusted Leadership Council on Civil Rights (LCCR) scores as an alternative measure of actual ideology.¹² LCCR scores may better capture the positions of representatives on issues of particular salience to minority constituencies, or at least provide additional insight into perceptions of incumbents' ideologies. Candidates' policy positions on issues related to civil rights, for example—positions which do not fall neatly onto the economic dimension—are important both to citizens' perceptions of candidates' ideologies and to the quality of substantive representation that citizens receive (Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Grose 2005; Swain 1995). It may also be the case that legislators' positions on issues that are seen as specifically "minority issues" influence constituents' perceptions of those representatives to a different extent than legislators' positions on other issues. For white constituents, the positions of black legislators on policies of particular interest to minorities might shift reported perceptions of these legislators to the left even if black Democratic legislators are similar to white Democratic legislators when it comes to aspects of ideology captured by first-dimension DW-Nominate scores.

Political Sophistication. A large literature portrays citizens as politically ill-informed (Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Other scholars have found, however, that many citizens are able to correctly identify the voting decisions that their representatives made on key votes (Alvarez and Gronke 1996). Additionally, research has shown that politically knowledgeable citizens are more likely to be able to place candidates on ideological scales and more likely to be accurate in these placements (Powell 1989; Wright and Niemi 1983).

Powell (1989) finds that a significant percentage of respondents who are able to place incumbents on the 7-point scale "get it right" when it comes to evaluating the ideologies of those incumbents, and

Ansolabehere and Jones (2010) find that citizens place their representatives at roughly the correct locations. Powell also notes, however, that the presence of random responses, or “guessing,” in the data will bias estimates of population parameters, such as the mean perception of the ideology of a given incumbent, towards the least extreme response available. The mean response among guessers will tend to be close to a moderate 0, not because guessers have information that incumbents are actually moderates but because guessers will tend to cancel each other out in the aggregate.¹³

To adjust for the effects of education and guessing, I include an interaction term, *Education* \times *DW-Nominate*, that interacts the education level of each respondent with the DW-Nominate score of the incumbent candidate in his or her district. Intuitively, when a respondent has little education (and is hence more likely to guess), the largest effects of education on reported perceptions will occur when incumbents are ideologically extreme, as the distance between the actual ideologies of these incumbents and the median available response is the largest.¹⁴ In these cases, among respondents evaluating a given incumbent, there will be large differences between the responses of more educated and less educated respondents. For more moderate incumbents (i.e., where *DW-Nominate* is closer to zero), differences in responses between guessers and nonguessers will be muted.

Including education and the phenomenon of guessing in this analysis is crucial due to the hypothesis that white respondents perceive black incumbents to be more liberal than the roll-call voting records of these incumbents actually indicate. Assuming that Democratic incumbents all fall on the liberal side of the political spectrum (an assumption supported by the DW-Nominate data), the observed mean perception among all respondents is less liberal than we would expect it to be if guessing were not present. In the aggregate, the extent to which nonguessers correctly perceive liberal incumbents to be liberal is masked by the less liberal perceptions that guessers tend to report. The extent to which race affects the perceptions of nonguessers would therefore be underestimated if guessing were not accounted for. Thus, the coefficient on *Education* \times *DW-Nominate* should be positive and significant.

Accounting for education is crucial not only because failure to account for guessing will result in the use of racial stereotypes among those who are *not* guessing being underestimated but also because increases in education result in more accurate perception of incumbents' ideologies. Furthermore, average education levels vary by race, with whites typically having completed more years of formal education than blacks. It may be the case, however, that even though African American

respondents tend to give moderate responses, highly educated black respondents are similar to highly educated white respondents in their evaluations of incumbents. More educated respondents, regardless of race, should have more accurate information about incumbents. That black citizens tend to be less educated is a fact that may result in blacks having less accurate perceptions of incumbents' ideologies than whites. Indeed, Griffin and Flavin (2007) find informational disparities to be a major reason that black citizens are less likely to hold their representatives accountable. To test whether education affects the perceptions of black respondents differently than white respondents, I include the terms *Education* \times *Black Respondent* and *Education* \times *Black Respondent* \times *DW-Nominate* in the analysis.

As additional indicators of political sophistication, I include the age of respondents and the level of interest that respondents have in the political campaigns going on at the time of the survey. These variables are also interacted with the actual ideologies of incumbents. *AGE* is the logged value of a respondent's age, and it is expected to be associated with lower levels of guessing, as older respondents have had more experience with the political world (Powell 1989). *Interest in Election* is also expected to be associated with higher levels of political sophistication (Luskin 1990) and lower levels of guessing. Hence, both *Age* \times *DW-Nominate* and *Interest in Election* \times *DW-Nominate* are expected to be positively correlated with perceptions of incumbents' ideologies.

Racial Pairings. To examine the effects of race on perceptions of incumbents' ideologies, I classify each respondent by their race and the race of the incumbent candidate in the respondent's district. This results in four dummy variables representing racial pairings: *White Respondent/White Incumbent*, *White Respondent/Black Incumbent*, *Black Respondent/White Incumbent*, and *Black Respondent/Black Incumbent*. The main hypothesis, that white citizens will perceive black candidates to be more liberal than ideologically identical white candidates, would be supported if the estimated coefficient on *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* is negative and statistically significant. Another interpretation of this hypothesis is that a negative coefficient on this variable would indicate that white citizens perceive black incumbents to be more liberal than the voting records of these candidates actually indicate.

Racial Attitudes. Scholars including Stimson (2004) and Ellis (Ellis and Stimson 2009) have documented a significant decline in the proportion of Americans identifying themselves as liberals since the 1960s and

have also noted that the term “liberal” became increasingly tied to government spending on the poor during the Great Society era. Many Americans saw the poor as an undeserving group of people, a group that was (mistakenly) perceived as being made up mostly of blacks and other minorities (Kellstedt 2000). Hence, for some Americans, the term “liberal” took on a new pejorative connotation, one which was also tied in many cases to racial prejudice. In order to examine the possibility that conservative racial attitudes, rather than the mere fact that a legislator is black, drive constituents’ placements of black incumbents to the left, I include a measure of racial resentment developed by Kinder and Sanders (1996). This measure is an additive scale generated from responses to four ANES questions in which respondents are asked to characterize the amount of discrimination that blacks face and the reasons that black Americans lag behind other racial groups in socioeconomic status.¹⁵ I also interacted racial attitudes with *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* to account for the possibility that racial attitudes affect perceptions of white and black incumbents differently.

Party Identification and Respondent Ideology. As previously noted, researchers have shown that citizens sometimes use partisan stereotypes as informational shortcuts in evaluating the ideologies of candidates. I include a dummy variable, *Republican Incumbent*, to examine the importance of this phenomenon. Additionally, research in social psychology suggests that in the context of ingroup/outgroup situations, ingroup members misperceive characteristics of outgroup members for several reasons (Brewer and Kramer 1985; Duckitt 2003). When group boundaries are explicit, as is the case when Democratic and Republican citizens compare Democratic candidates to Republican candidates, ingroup members tend to perceive differences between themselves and outgroup members to be greater than they actually are. This suggests that, ceteris paribus, Democratic respondents will perceive Republican incumbents to be more conservative than they actually are, and vice versa. To test for such effects, I include dummy variables that pair partisan respondents with the party identifications of incumbents. Respondents were coded as Democrats if they identified themselves as either strong Democrats or Democrats on a 7-point scale and as Republicans if they identified themselves as strong Republicans or Republicans. The reference category in this case consists of independent and weak partisans, or “leaners,” who are not expected to be affected by ingroup/outgroup effects with respect to Democratic and Republican incumbents.¹⁶ I also include a dummy variable for states in the South in order to account for regional differences in perceptions.

As an additional control, I include the self-reported ideology of respondents on the 7-point liberalism-conservatism scale. A respondent's ideology could shift perceptions of an incumbent's ideology in either direction. On the one hand, similar to the hypothesized effects of partisan identification noted above, respondents might perceive incumbents with ideologies similar to their own to be more "normal," and hence more moderate, than they actually are, while perceiving the distance between their own ideologies and those on the opposite side of the political spectrum to be greater than it actually is. This would result in a negative coefficient on *Respondent Ideology*. On the other hand, a respondent may assume that others, including political candidates, hold views similar to their own (Conover and Feldman 1989; Koch 2002). In pulling the views of both candidates on the opposite side of the ideological spectrum and candidates who are on the same side of the political spectrum but less extreme than the respondent towards the respondent's own views, a positive effect would result, with a liberal respondent pulling most incumbents to the left and a conservative respondent pulling most incumbents to the right.

Results

Regression results are presented in Table 2. In Model 1, only the revealed ideologies of incumbents and the race-pairing variables are included as independent variables. Ordered probit analysis is used due to the ordinal nature of the dependent variable,¹⁷ and one-tailed tests are used where appropriate.

In Model 1, the coefficients on *DW-Nominate* and *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* are of the expected signs. *DW-Nominate* is positive and significant, indicating that, in the aggregate, respondents' perceptions of incumbents' ideologies are indeed related to the actual revealed ideologies of incumbents.

The coefficients on the race-pairing variables lead to conclusions similar to the preliminary results shown previously in Table 1. As the coefficient of *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* is negative and significant, the estimated model suggests that white respondents would indeed tend to perceive black candidates to be more liberal than ideologically identical white candidates, even when actual incumbent ideology and other important factors are controlled for.¹⁸ This finding serves as strong support for the main hypothesis tested in this study.

Models 2 and 3, the results of which are also presented in Table 2, include controls for political sophistication and party identification. Model 3 is identical to Model 2 except that only respondents who were

TABLE 2
Factors Influencing the Perceived Ideologies of U.S. House Incumbents

	Ordered Probit Models			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
DW-Nominate	1.143** (0.045)	0.364** (0.103)	0.434** (0.142)	0.515** (0.259)
White Respondent/Black Incumbent	-0.351** (0.094)	-0.337** (0.107)	-0.372** (0.156)	-0.409* (0.198)
Black Respondent/White Incumbent	-0.058 (0.055)	-0.074 (0.080)	0.013 (0.116)	—
Black Respondent/Black Incumbent	0.338** (0.082)	-0.057 (0.110)	-0.180 (0.163)	—
Education	—	-0.018 (0.016)	-0.030 (0.019)	-0.056 (0.036)
Education × Black Respondent	—	0.036 (0.066)	-0.088 (0.097)	—
Education × DW-Nominate	—	0.502** (0.041)	0.448** (0.052)	0.537** (0.086)
Education × DW-Nominate × Black Respondent	—	-0.081 (0.062)	-0.270** (0.088)	—
Age	—	-0.087** (0.039)	-0.144** (0.046)	-0.145 (0.091)
Age × DW-Nominate	—	0.306** (0.102)	0.193 (0.128)	0.076 (0.214)
Interest in Election	—	0.049* (0.021)	0.027 (0.025)	0.026 (0.047)
Interest in Election × DW-Nominate	—	0.237** (0.055)	0.294** (0.025)	0.353** (0.119)
Republican Incumbent	—	0.341** (0.082)	0.333** (0.101)	-0.020 (0.178)
Democratic Respondent/Democratic Incumbent	—	0.224** (0.044)	0.145** (0.050)	0.094 (0.091)
Democratic Respondent/Republican Incumbent	—	0.129* (0.060)	0.275** (0.064)	0.443** (0.130)
Republican Respondent/Democratic Incumbent	—	-0.366** (0.053)	-0.398** (0.061)	-0.447** (0.109)
Republican Respondent/Republican Incumbent	—	0.103* (0.047)	0.098 (0.054)	0.241** (0.086)
Respondent Ideology	—	0.122** (0.013)	0.133** (0.015)	0.114** (0.030)
South	—	0.085* (0.036)	0.097* (0.044)	-0.013 (0.009)
Racial Attitudes	—	—	—	-0.013 (0.009)
Racial Attitudes × White Respondent/Black Incumbent	—	—	—	0.075 (0.040)
N	8783	7171	5058	1499
Pseudo-R ² (Cox-Snell)	0.16	0.27	0.29	0.31

Notes: The dependent variable is a 7-point scale from “Extremely Liberal” (-3) to “Extremely Conservative” (+3). Models 1 and 2 include all respondents who placed the incumbent candidate on the scale, whereas Models 3 and 4 include only those who correctly identified the incumbent candidate in their district, and Model 4 includes only white respondents. Standard errors are robust and adjusted for clustering by district-year.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$. One-tailed tests are used where appropriate.

able to correctly identify the incumbent candidate in their district are included in the sample analyzed in Model 3. Guessing, then, should be somewhat less common among the respondents in the third model. In Models 2 and 3, *Education* \times *DW-Nominate* is positive as expected and statistically significant. This means, for example, that when respondents with low levels of education (*Education* $<$ 0) evaluate liberal incumbents (*DW-Nominate* $<$ 0), the interaction term is positive, and as compared to respondents with average or higher levels of education, perceptions are shifted to the right, towards "moderate." When the incumbent is conservative (*DW-Nominate* $>$ 0), the interaction term for less educated respondents is negative, and perceptions are once again moderated. This result is consistent with the supposition that less educated respondents are more likely to guess in placing incumbents on a liberalism/conservatism scale. The positive and statistically significant coefficients on the interaction terms involving age and interest in the election are also in accordance with the phenomenon of guessing.¹⁹ The significant negative coefficients on *Education* \times *Black Respondent* \times *DW-Nominate* indicate that the marginal effect of changes in education on perceptions of incumbents' ideologies is smaller amongst black respondents. The lower mean-education level among black respondents still leads, however, to black respondents holding more moderate perceptions than white respondents on average.

The fact that the inclusion of political sophistication in Models 2 and 3 renders the coefficients on *Black Respondent/Black Incumbent* insignificant strongly suggests that guessing among less educated black respondents accounts for the somewhat puzzling bivariate result that black respondents, on average, perceive black incumbents to be only barely to the left of "moderate." More educated black respondents are less likely to have their responses moderated by guessing and more likely to correctly identify liberal black incumbents as liberals. The coefficient of *White Respondent/Black Incumbent*, on the other hand, remains negative and statistically significant in Models 2 and 3.

In lieu of having more detailed information about incumbents, it is often rational for voters to assume that black incumbents are liberal. The problem is that white voters place the typical black incumbent *too far* to the left in comparison to ideologically similar white Democratic incumbents. In contrast, the errors that black respondents make do not appear to be affected by racial stereotypes. Indeed, the coefficient on *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* is largest in magnitude in Model 3, where only those respondents able to correctly identify the incumbent candidate in their district are included in the sample.²⁰ This may indicate that those respondents with more political knowledge are more likely to be aware of ideological stereotypes of black politicians in the first place.²¹ While

misperceptions of incumbents' ideologies among black respondents seem to be driven by low levels of political sophistication, racial stereotyping is an additional important factor that causes white respondents of all education levels to "get it wrong" when evaluating the ideologies of black incumbents.

Model 4 includes racial attitudes as potential determinants of perceptions of incumbents' ideologies. This model was estimated using only white respondents. Neither the racial attitudes measure nor its interaction with *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* are individually significant, and these variables are jointly insignificant as well.

The results regarding the partisan identification variables are interesting in several respects. First, the magnitude of the coefficient of *DW-Nominate* is significantly reduced when partisan identification is included in the analysis. This result is consistent with work by Rahn (1993) and Koch (2002), who find that respondents rely to some extent on partisan stereotypes to evaluate candidates' ideologies rather than relying only on their knowledge of candidates' actual ideologies. As the positive and significant coefficients on *Republican Incumbent* indicates, this result holds for independents as well as partisans. The positive coefficients on *Democratic Respondent/Democratic Incumbent* indicate that Democratic respondents perceive Democratic incumbents to be less liberal than independent respondents do. This may reflect a tendency among Democratic identifiers to see incumbents belonging to their own partisan group as more "typical" with respect to the population as a whole than they actually are. In contrast, the positive coefficient on *Republican Respondent/Republican Incumbent*, significant in Model 2, indicates that Republican respondents perceive Republican incumbents to have ideologies that are more conservative, or less typical, than they actually are. The coefficients on *Democratic Respondent/Republican Incumbent* and *Republican Respondent/Democratic Incumbent* mesh well with previously discussed social-psychological findings that outgroup members are perceived as more different from ingroup members than they actually are. In contrast, the significant and positive coefficient on *Respondent Ideology* suggests that respondents may indeed assume that candidates are more like themselves than they actually are, at least when the effects of partisanship are controlled for.

Regression results for models estimated using adjusted LCCR scores in place of DW-Nominate scores as the measure of actual ideology are available in Table A1 in the online appendix. In addition to models including all respondents, I estimated models on separate samples of white and black respondents. The full-sample results using LCCR scores as the measure of ideology are strikingly similar to the results described

above. The effect of an incumbent being black on perceptions of that incumbent's ideology remains statistically significant and is quite similar in magnitude (-0.410 vs. -0.372 in Model 3 above). The relationship between actual ideology, as measured by LCCR scores, is somewhat stronger than when the DW-Nominate measure is used, but the difference is not overly large (0.551 when using LCCR scores vs. 0.434). Moreover, when looking only at white respondents, the coefficients on the variables measuring actual ideology and *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* are nearly identical.

Results for black respondents when the LCCR measure is used are particularly interesting. The coefficient on LCCR is much larger for black respondents than it is for white respondents (0.897 vs. 0.514). Moreover, the coefficient on *Black Respondent/White Incumbent* is statistically insignificant. Taken together, these results suggest that for black respondents, a representative's stances on "minority issues" are particularly important in determining perceptions of that representative's ideology, regardless of the representative's race. This finding has some bearing on the important debate regarding the possibility that the creation of majority-minority districts has resulted in more conservative policy outcomes due to the "bleaching" of majority-white districts (Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Epstein and O'Halloran 1999; Grose 2011; Lublin and Voss 2003; Shotts 2003). It is possible that even if race-based redistricting leads to more conservative policies *in general*, black voters in majority-minority and/or majority-influence districts may be happier with the representation that they receive. While some ambiguity in the interpretation of these results is unavoidable due to the fact that respondents are not necessarily conscious of all of the determinants of their perceptions of candidates' ideologies, the results do indicate that white and black voters evaluate candidates in different ways.

As a robustness check, I also estimated a model using a matched sample. The use of matched samples can be used with observational data to better approximate an experimental research design, in which the clear delineation of control and treatment groups greatly facilitates the testing of causal hypotheses. The use of matching procedures can also reduce the model-dependence of results. I used the coarsened exact-matching procedure described in Iacus, King, and Porro (2012) and estimated the average treatment effect of having a black incumbent rather than a white incumbent on perceptions of that incumbent's ideology. Estimates were generated both with and without additional controls.²² Using matched samples, the average treatment effect for *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* is negative and statistically significant and therefore in accordance with the hypothesis that white respondents will tend to see black

TABLE 3
Probability that an Incumbent is Perceived
as Liberal or Extremely Liberal^a

	Moderately Liberal White Incumbent (DW-Nom = -0.4) ^b	Moderately Liberal Black Incumbent (DW-Nom = -0.4)
White Respondent, Average Education	0.32	0.45
Black Respondent, Average Education	0.31	0.37
White Respondent, Low Education	0.25	0.37
White Respondent, High Education	0.48	0.61
Black Respondent, Low Education	0.24	0.30
Black Respondent, High Education	0.53	0.52

	Liberal White Incumbent (DW-Nom = -0.80)	Liberal Black Incumbent (DW-Nom = -0.80)
White Respondent, Average Education	0.49	0.72
Black Respondent, Average Education	0.59	0.65
White Respondent, Low Education	0.45	0.58
White Respondent, High Education	0.85	0.92
Black Respondent, Low Education	0.48	0.55
Black Respondent, High Education	0.77	0.82

^a“Extremely Liberal” and “Liberal” are the two most liberal responses on the 7-point scale. Predicted responses of “Somewhat Liberal” are not included in these probabilities.

^b-0.40 and -0.80 represent DW-Nominate scores one standard deviation and two standard deviations below the mean, respectively.

incumbents as more liberal than ideologically similar white incumbents. When ordered probit regression is used with the matched samples, the coefficient is negative and statistically significant as well, again supporting the hypothesis in question.²³

To further examine the importance of the effects of race and education on perceptions of incumbents' ideologies, I calculated the predicted probabilities that respondents of various types will perceive various types of incumbents to be either liberal or extremely liberal, based on the coefficients from Model 3 in Table 2. These probabilities are displayed in Table 3. Probabilities were calculated for two types of hypothetical incumbents, with one incumbent being moderately liberal (DW-Nominate = -0.40, or one standard deviation below the mean ideology score), and the other being liberal (DW-Nominate = -0.80, or two standard deviations below the mean). The races of incumbents and respondents and the education levels of respondents were then varied as the

other variables in Model 3, with the exception of the relevant interaction terms, were held at their means or medians.

Among white respondents, the magnitude of the effect of changing the race of the incumbent from white to black is relatively constant regardless of the education level of the respondent or the ideology of the incumbent. The probability that a white respondent with an average level of education will perceive an incumbent to be liberal or extremely liberal is increased from 0.33 to 0.47 when the incumbent is black. For purposes of comparison, switching the party identification of the incumbent from Democrat to Republican causes a roughly 0.10 change in the same probabilities. Race-based misperception of incumbents' ideologies, then, clearly has a substantial degree of substantive significance.

A somewhat surprising finding is that blacks are slightly less likely than whites to classify black incumbents as liberal or highly liberal. Again, this may be due to black incumbents taking relatively conservative positions on moral, as opposed to economic issues, and these moral issues may be of particular import to black citizens. White respondents, in contrast, may be more likely to focus on the economic liberalism of black incumbents and downplay, consciously or not, any morally conservative positions that black incumbents may stake out. Alternatively, Mansbridge (1999) has suggested that in majority-black districts where blacks are descriptively represented, black citizens are less likely to be well-informed about the ideologies of their representatives, as these citizens are content simply to have black representatives. Recent evidence confirms the hypothesis that the information gap between white and black citizens is greater in districts with African American representatives (Griffin and Flavin 2007). The finding that black respondents see black incumbents as less liberal than white respondents see them may be partially explained by the effects that descriptive representation has on the accuracy of political information amongst blacks in majority-minority districts.

Figures 1a and 1b present graphical representations of how the race of an incumbent affects the perceptions that white respondents have of that incumbent. These figures serve to reinforce the finding that *ceteris paribus*, white respondents will tend to perceive black incumbents to be more liberal than white incumbents with similar policy preferences. Of particular note is the fact that white respondents are much more likely to see black incumbents, as compared to white incumbents, as extremely liberal.

White Citizens and Black Candidates: The Case of Jesse Jackson

Implicit in the preceding analysis is an assumption that district demographics do not affect the perception of candidates' ideologies. The

FIGURE 1A
 Perceived Ideology of Moderately Liberal Incumbent
 (Predicted Probabilities)

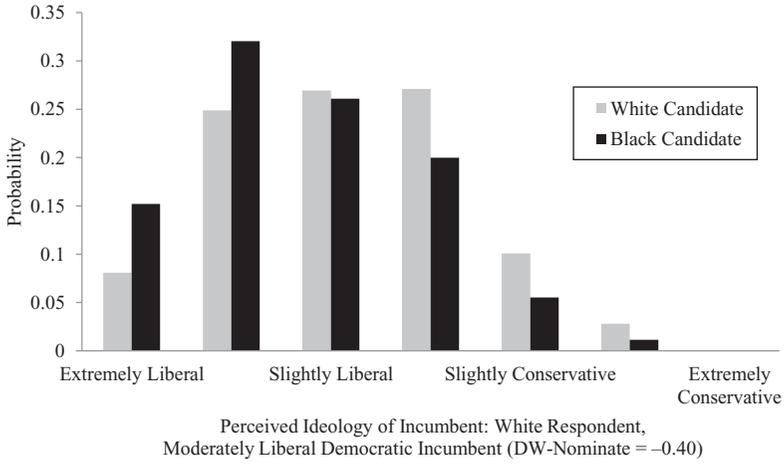
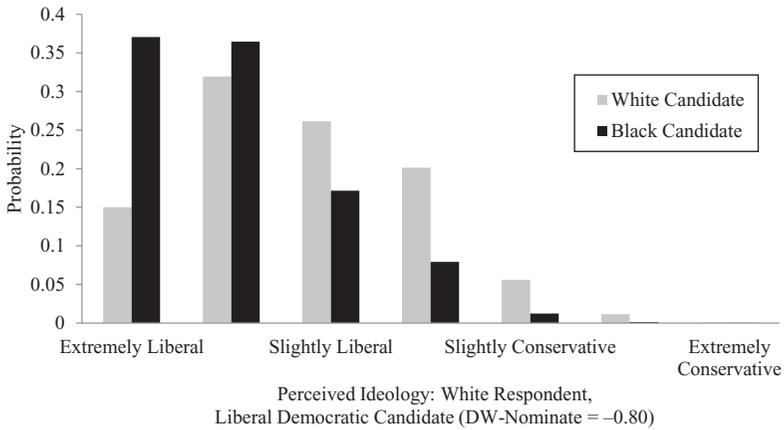


FIGURE 1B
 Perceived Ideology of Liberal Incumbent
 (Predicted Probabilities)



models I have employed until now do not allow for the possibility that white respondents in majority-white districts might evaluate black candidates differently than white respondents in majority-minority districts. One might hypothesize, however, that white respondents in majority-black districts are more familiar with black politicians than white respondents in majority-white districts and hence have more accurate perceptions of the ideologies of black candidates because of this. Alternatively, if conservative white citizens in majority-black districts felt that their political preferences were overwhelmed by those of African Americans, these citizens might assume that they are more ideologically distant from black candidates than they would assume if they lived in districts with fewer African Americans.

The inclusion of district demographics such as the percentage of the district population that is black in the preceding analysis is impractical due to multicollinearity, as the districts that have black incumbents tend to be the very same districts that have large black populations. If both the percentage of the district population that is black and *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* are included in a cross-district analysis of perceptions of candidates' ideologies, the statistical significance of each coefficient will be lower than it would be if only one of these variables were included in the analysis.²⁴ This problem is compounded by the fact that in the ANES survey data, there are typically only a few respondents from each congressional district, and in districts with large minority populations there are often no white respondents at all.

One way to address the problem of multicollinearity is to leave one of the collinear variables out of the analysis. Indeed, Grose (2005) notes that although omitting one of the collinear variables from regression analyses is both theoretically and statistically problematic, it is common practice among scholars of race and congressional politics. A more attractive alternative to simply ignoring the multicollinearity problem, however, is to incorporate new information into the analysis. The 1988 American National Election Studies survey provides the type of information needed to determine whether white respondents perceive of black candidates differently in districts that have different percentages of African American residents. The survey asked respondents to place Jesse Jackson, a prominent African American contender for the Democratic nomination for president, on a 7-point ideological scale. As 1,467 respondents from a wide range of districts placed Jackson on this scale, this data can be used to draw inferences about the impact of district characteristics on perceptions of his ideology.²⁵ The analysis of perceptions of Jesse Jackson's ideology also provides an opportunity to examine perceptions of a challenger rather than an incumbent.

TABLE 4
Perceptions of Jesse Jackson's Ideology in 1988

	Coefficient	Standard Error
Black Respondent	0.628**	0.130
Education	-0.142**	0.020
Black Respondent × Education	-0.055	0.066
Democratic Respondent	0.135	0.087
Republican Respondent	-0.084	0.075
Respondent Ideology	0.024	0.022
Age	-0.006**	0.002
Interest in Election	-0.143**	0.045
Percentage Black	-0.006	0.003
Black Respondent × Percentage Black	0.005	0.004
South	0.113	0.070
South × Black Respondent	0.171	0.156
N	1297	
Pseudo-R ² (Cox-Snell)	0.15	

Note: Ordered probit regression was used. The dependent variable is a 7-point scale from "Extremely Liberal" (-3) to "Extremely Conservative" (+3). Standard errors are robust and adjusted for clustering by district.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 4 presents the results of an ordered probit regression of the factors that influenced perceptions of Jesse Jackson's ideology. Note that the *DW-Nominate* variable is no longer used, as Jackson's ideology is constant across observations. As expected, and as the positive coefficient on *Black Respondent* indicates, white respondents clearly tended to perceive Jackson to be more liberal than black citizens did. The predicted probability that a white respondent with average levels of education and political sophistication perceived Jackson to be "liberal" or "extremely liberal" is 0.51, while the same probability among African American respondents is only 0.27. The coefficient on *Percentage Black* is negative, but fails to reach statistical significance at the $p < 0.05$ level. Moreover, the substantive effect is extremely modest. Even in moving from a district with no African American residents to a district with a small black majority, the probability that a white respondent with an average level of education will see Jackson as liberal or extremely liberal remains unchanged at 0.51. Hence, the conclusions drawn from the prior cross-district analysis are bolstered. The race of respondents and candidates has a substantively large impact on the perception of candidates' ideologies even when district demographics are controlled for.

Discussion

Ultimately, perceptions of candidates' ideologies are important because the quality of information that citizens have about candidates has a large effect on the nature of representation that is afforded by any electoral democracy. Citizens will have difficulty voting for candidates who are ideologically like themselves if they do not know what candidates' ideologies actually are. Similarly, the ability of citizens to hold their incumbent representatives accountable at the ballot box is likely diminished if constituents have inaccurate perceptions of the policies that their representatives have supported. It is important to understand, therefore, the factors that affect citizens' perceptions of these ideologies. I have provided evidence that the race of candidates is one such factor. The results suggest that white citizens will perceive black candidates to be more liberal than white candidates with similar policy preferences. The degree of congruence between citizens' preferences and the policy positions of office holders is potentially diminished in cases where race-based misperception of candidates' ideologies causes citizens to refrain from voting for candidates that have the ideologies most similar to their own.²⁶

Misperception of the ideologies of minority candidates is also important in determining the level of descriptive representation that members of historically marginalized groups receive. The election of minority candidates to legislatures increases the extent to which members of these groups have their interests substantively represented (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Canon 1999; Grose 2005; Lublin 1997). Historically, race-based redistricting has greatly increased descriptive representation, as African American candidates are elected with great regularity in districts where minorities make up a majority of the voting population (Lublin 1997; Swain 1995). As many scholars have noted, however, there are simply very few areas in which new majority-minority congressional districts can potentially be drawn, even if the courts reaffirm the appropriateness of such redistricting processes.²⁷ If more blacks are to be elected to Congress, they will have to be elected in majority-white districts. While more direct forms of racial prejudice may adversely affect the electoral prospects of African American candidates in majority-white districts, perceptions of candidates' ideologies also have an important role to play in the electoral process. The fact that black and white respondents evaluate candidates differently also highlights the possibility that minorities may conceive of representation in a fundamentally different way than members of the racial majority.

Lastly, some previous studies that have found that the race of candidates has little or no effect on the voting behavior of citizens have

included the perceived ideology of candidates as an explanatory variable (Sigelman et al. 1995), or have implicitly depended on the perceived ideologies of candidates as a factor in explaining voting decisions (Citrin, Green, and Sears 1990). These studies verify that the perceived distances between respondents and candidates have a significant effect on voting decisions. As shown in this article, however, perceived ideologies are in part determined by the race of candidates. Because of this, including the perceived ideologies of candidates in the analysis of voting decisions while not accounting for the effects of race on these perceptions will lead to underestimates of the effects of race on electoral behavior.

Conclusion

Understanding how citizens form perceptions of candidates' ideologies is an important part of developing more sophisticated and complete explanations of voter behavior. The perception of ideologies is also an important determinant of the degree of congruence between the policy preferences of citizens and the policy positions of the candidates that they elect. Citizens that have more accurate perceptions of candidates' ideologies are better equipped to vote for candidates with preferences similar to their own.

In this article, I have shown that racial-group membership affects how citizens evaluate candidates' ideologies. The results suggest that, *ceteris paribus*, white citizens will tend to perceive African American candidates to be more liberal than white candidates who adopt similar policy positions. To the extent that such misperceptions cause citizens to refrain from voting for candidates they might otherwise vote for, the quality of representation is diminished. Moreover, the effects of racial-group membership on perceptions of candidates' ideologies may limit the amount of descriptive representation that minorities obtain in the U.S. Congress.

Additionally, it is unlikely that race is unique among group memberships in its impact on perceptions of candidates' ideologies. Indeed, McDermott (1998) and Koch (2002) have shown that voters perceive female candidates to be more liberal than male candidates. The analytical framework employed here is well suited to the nonexperimental examination of such effects. Furthermore, different types of group memberships are salient to varying extents in different electoral contexts. The framework used here should be applicable to the analysis of perceptions in elections for state and local offices and in elections in other electoral democracies.

The empirical analysis provided here avoids some of the problems that plague the largely experimental research in this area. Further work is needed to establish the extent to which perceptions of ideology serve as an intervening variable between race and vote choice. Additionally, as perceptions that are affected by race have an impact on voting decisions, it is reasonable to believe that the decisions made by strategic politicians take such perceptual effects into account. For example, if misperceptions disadvantage African American Democratic candidates, we might expect competing white candidates to attempt to reinforce such misperceptions. Future research might examine such a possibility.²⁸ Conservative members of Congress, for example, might mention African American members of Congress when criticizing liberal bills to an extent disproportionate to the number of black representatives among all of the bill's sponsors. In short, the finding that white citizens will perceive black candidates to be more liberal than ideologically identical white legislators leads naturally to several avenues for potential future research.

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NOTES

I would like to thank Lynda Powell, Dick Niemi, Valeria Sinclair-Chapman, Dave Primo, Stu Jordan, Nicole Asmussen, Marc Hetherington, Stephanie Stewart, Jon Sabella, and Lambert Jacobsmeier for their helpful suggestions.

1. Brewer and Kramer (1985) provide a review of various reasons that such accentuation occurs.

2. Washington uses voters' perceptions of the ideologies of *parties* as a proxy for perceptions of candidates.

3. The question on perception of House candidates' ideologies was asked in 1978, 1980, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, and 2004.

4. The downside of pooling the data over so many years is that if one wants to estimate regression coefficients with the greatest possible precision, those coefficients must be assumed to remain unchanged over the entire time period that is covered by the data. This assumption may be unreasonable in some cases. While it is certainly possible that levels of racial prejudice declined significantly between 1978 and 2004, the importance of race-based stereotypes in determining perceptions of candidate ideologies should be less variable over the same time period, as these stereotypes are not necessarily reflective of "simple" racial prejudice as it is commonly understood. Nevertheless, I did repeat the following analyses on two subsamples of data based on whether the survey year was between 1978 to 1986 or 1990 and 2004. The key results presented below hold within

each subset of the data, albeit at a less stringent level of statistical significance. The subsample coefficients for the main variable of interest are presented along with its full-sample coefficient.

5. As the focus of this article is on how white respondents perceive black candidates, the subsequent analysis includes only white and black respondents in districts with white or black incumbents.

6. Only two black Democratic incumbents were to the right of the third decile, and both of these were in the fourth decile.

7. Graphs of the hypothesized and actual relationships between the race of respondents and candidates, candidates' DW-Nominate scores, and perceptions of their ideologies can be seen in the online appendix.

8. The largest within-decile difference in means of DW-Nominate scores between black and white incumbents is approximately one-tenth of one standard deviation of the DW-Nominate scores in the dataset.

9. DW-Nominate scores represent revealed preferences and should not be interpreted as measuring the "true" ideology of legislators, which cannot be observed. However, assuming that legislators' roll-call voting records are strong predictors of future voting patterns, representation is enhanced when citizens have accurate perceptions of legislators' preferences as revealed by such roll-call votes. In this article, the phrase "actual ideologies" refers to incumbents' ideologies derived from prior roll-call voting behavior as opposed to respondents' perceptions of these ideologies.

10. While Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001) and others have derived challenger ideologies from the National Political Awareness Tests (NPATs) administered by Project Vote Smart in 1996 and 1998, a prohibitively large number of candidates have refused to fill out NPAT surveys in subsequent years.

11. While omitting challengers from the analysis is not ideal, it is likely that respondents make greater use of racial stereotypes when they know little about a given candidate. As respondents are also likely to know more about incumbents than challengers, the present analysis is at little risk of overestimating the importance of racial stereotypes in evaluations of candidates' ideologies. Moreover, Hajnal (2001) has shown that antiblack affect and racial resentment among white citizens is lower among those with experience living under black mayors. Here again, if race-based ideological stereotypes are driven by racial attitudes, including only incumbents in the analysis should lead to conservative estimates of the importance of these stereotypes.

12. The LCCR scores were rescaled to facilitate comparison to the DW-Nominate measure. I thank Timothy Groseclose for making his adjusted interest scores freely available.

13. It is, however, possible that the mean perception of candidates that are members of strongly stereotyped groups will not be close to 0. For example, if some guessers know that a given candidate is black, but know nothing else about that candidate, the mean perception of that candidate among guessers may be significantly to the left of 0 due to the stereotype that black candidates tend to be liberal. I examined this possibility through the inclusion of an additional interaction term in the models described below and by looking at subsets of data defined by the race of the candidate. The results described below were unaffected by these robustness checks.

14. This is illustrated in Figure A1 in the online appendix.

15. In order to include racial attitudes in a regression with a larger sample size, I also used a single survey question measuring respondents' support for government aid to blacks as a measure of racial attitudes. The substantive results were unchanged.

16. The substantive conclusions discussed below are unchanged if leaners are coded as partisans.

17. Thirty-eight percent of survey respondents agreed to place incumbents on 7-point ideology scales, and those with higher levels of education were more likely to do so. As such, the possibility of selection bias was a concern. Heckman selection models were also estimated, and the results are available from the author. The substantive conclusions described in this article remain unchanged.

18. To account for the possibility that racial stereotypes affected perceptions of incumbents' ideologies to a greater extent in earlier years, when levels of overt racial prejudice were higher (Kinder and Sanders 1996), I also estimated models on subsets of the data from two time periods. Whereas the full-sample coefficient for *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* is -0.364 , the coefficients for the 1978–86 and 1990–2004 subsamples are -0.433 and -0.308 , respectively. Both coefficients are statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, with the latter being significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

19. A respondent's interest in the campaign is potentially a function of perceived incumbent ideology. Dropping the interest variables from the analysis as a robustness check does not change any of the substantive conclusions described here.

20. The substantive effects of the racial pairing variables remain essentially unchanged if the analysis is limited to Democratic incumbents.

21. This idea comports well with the work of Lau and Redlawsk (2001) and Ansolabehere and Jones (2010).

22. These can be found in Table A2 in the online appendix.

23. Depending on the number of variables that are matched on, the coefficient is somewhat smaller or slightly larger than the coefficient using the unmatched sample. The coefficient is slightly larger when more variables are matched on, suggesting that matching on additional variables, if it were practically feasible, would be unlikely to greatly reduce the coefficient.

24. Including the percentage of the district that is black and this percentage interacted with the racial pairing dummies in Model 2 renders the coefficient of *White Respondent/Black Incumbent* statistically insignificant at typical levels, but the coefficient remains substantively large and of the expected sign.

25. Respondents were asked to place Barack Obama on a 7-point ideological scale during the 2008 ANES time-series survey. This question was asked, however, during the general election campaign, meaning that respondents were exposed to coverage of Barack Obama to an extent far beyond that of a typical candidate for the U.S. House. Because of this, the factors influencing perceptions of Jesse Jackson during the presidential primary season in 1988 are likely to more closely approximate the factors that affect perceptions of House candidates. I did, however, run an identical regression on perceptions of Barack Obama's ideology, and the key result held; district characteristics had little impact on perceptions of Obama's ideology. The results of this analysis are available from the author.

26. Perceiving African American candidates to be more liberal than they actually are may make voters to the left of African American candidates *more* likely to vote for

these candidates and hence more likely to vote for the candidate to which they are ideologically closest. In the aggregate, however, if one makes the reasonable assumption that the median voter in a district is rarely to the left of the more liberal candidate, the perceptual biases described above can be expected to work to the disadvantage of black candidates.

27. Redistricting based predominately on racial considerations was proscribed by the 1995 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Miller v. Johnson*.

28. Zilber and Niven (2000) argue that the media contributes to African American politicians being stereotyped as being focused mainly on issues of race, while in actuality these same politicians try to portray themselves as having broad policy interests.

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Supporting Information

Additional Supporting Information may be found in the online version of this article at the publisher's website:

Figure A1. Hypothesized Relationships

Figure A2a. Perceived and Actual Ideologies of House Incumbents (White Respondents)

Figure A2b. Perceived and Actual Ideologies of House Incumbents (Black Respondents)

Table A1. Factors Influencing the Perceived Ideologies of U.S. House Incumbents

Table A2. Effect of Black Incumbent on Perceived Ideologies (Coarsened Exact Matching)