September, 2015

From Black and White to Left and Right: Race, Perception of Candidates' Ideologies, and Voting Behavior in U.S. House Elections

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July 2014

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Abstract

While there is a strong scholarly consensus that race continues to play a central role in American politics, research on the effects of the race of candidates on electoral behavior has produced decidedly mixed results. Using American National Election Studies data, Cooperative Congressional Election Studies data, and a non-linear systems of equations approach to estimation, I show that race-based misperceptions of candidates' ideologies have a significant indirect impact on voting decisions in elections to the U.S. House of Representatives. The indirect effects of race on voting behavior outweigh any direct effects of racial prejudice by a substantial margin. More specifically, the results suggest that white citizens will tend to perceive black candidates to be more liberal than white candidates who adopt similar policy positions, and that these race-based misperceptions disadvantage black candidates at the ballot box.

Keywords: Race, Voting Behavior, Stereotypes, Candidate Characteristics

Introduction

> Does the race of candidates influence electoral outcomes? Like most questions concerning the impact of race in politics, this one is more difficult to answer than it seems at first.
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> <div align="right">Vincent L. Hutchings and Nicholas A. Valentino</div>

In an insightful review article, Hutchings and Valentino (2004) argue persuasively that race continues to play a central role in American politics. At the same time, they are quick to note that experimental studies (Reeves 1997; Sigelman et al. 1995; Terkildsen 1993) and studies of actual elections (Citrin, Green and Sears 1990; Sears and Kosterman 1987) have produced very mixed results regarding the effects that racial considerations have on electoral politics.[1] There is a disconnect in the literature, then, between the consensus that race is of great importance in American politics and the lack of definitive evidence that the race of candidates affects voting behavior. As voting is perhaps the most fundamental feature of democratic politics, the dearth of conclusive findings regarding the effects of the race of candidates on real-world electoral behavior is puzzling. Hence, developing a fuller understanding of how race affects the choices that citizens make in the voting both is a task that deserves considerable attention.

Prior research examining potential links between the race of candidates and electoral behavior has been hampered by a number of factors. Among these factors are a paucity of suitable survey data from electoral districts with black candidates, inadequate controls for the ideologies of candidates, and a failure to adequately account for survey respondents who place candidates on ideological scales without having much knowledge about the actual ideological location of those candidates. Perhaps most importantly, while some researchers have shown

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[1]An exception seems to be research on the election of Barack Obama to the presidency in 2008. Highton (2011), Jacobsmeier and Lewis (2013), Lewis-Beck, Tien and Nadeau (2010), Pasek et al. (2009), Piston (2010), Schaffner (2011), and Tesler and Sears (2010) all find that race had a significant impact on Obama's electoral fortunes. However, given the unique features of presidential election campaigns and the historic nature of Obama's election, it would be a mistake to make generalizations about the effects of the race of candidates on elections based solely on the 2008 presidential election.

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that race affects perceptions of candidates' ideologies and others have demonstrated that perceptions of ideologies affect voting decisions, scholars have failed to sufficiently describe how these two phenomena work together to affect electoral outcomes. The research described in this paper represents an attempt to overcome these limitations. In analyzing several years of American National Election Studies data, data from the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Studies survey, and Poole-Rosenthal DW-Nominate scores, I use a non-linear system of equations to examine both the direct and indirect effects of race on voting decisions. I find that race plays an important indirect role in determining voting decisions by influencing voters' perceptions of candidates' political ideologies. More specifically, the results suggest that white citizens tend to perceive black candidates to be more liberal than white candidates who adopt similar policy positions, and that these race-based misperceptions disadvantage black candidates at the ballot box.

Background

It is likely the case that most scholars of American politics would be very surprised if race did *not* affect electoral behavior to a substantial degree in cases where a black candidate is on the ballot. After all, voters in majority-white districts rarely elect black candidates to serve in the United States House of Representatives (Lublin 1997; Tate 2003), and the percentage of black citizens in majority-white districts far exceeds the percentage of majority-white districts that have black representatives.[2] While some scholars claim that the electoral chances of black candidates in majority-white districts have improved in recent years (Bullock and Dunn 2003; Swain 1995), the percentage of majority-white districts electing black representatives has increased by only a modest amount. In short, with few exceptions, majority-white

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[2]In 2004, five black representatives, all Democrats, were elected in majority-white districts. Eighteen black candidates ran in majority-white districts, including 13 Democrats, 3 Republicans, and 2 independents. The number of black representatives elected in majority-white districts actually decreased to four in 2006. In 2010, six black candidates were elected to Congress in majority-white districts, with two of those candidates being Republicans.

constituencies do not elect black candidates to the U.S. House.[3]

Given these facts, one might expect demonstrating that racial prejudice affects electoral outcomes to be an almost trivial task. The truth of the matter, however, is that the endeavor is far from straightforward. Racial considerations are thoroughly entwined with numerous features of the American political system. For example, black Americans tend to be significantly more liberal and Democratic than white Americans. Because of this, isolating the effects of race on electoral behavior is a difficult task. Controls for variables such as the ideological locations of candidates are often omitted from even the most thorough studies (see, for example, Highton 2004). Controlling for such factors is critical, as the question is not just whether race is important, but rather, as Hutchings and Valentino (2004) ask, "Does a candidate's race, above and beyond characteristics such as party, experience, or ideology, determine electoral success?" Indeed, even this question is oversimplified. It may be the case, for example, that *perceptions* of candidates' ideologies are affected by race, and that these perceptions in turn affect voting decisions. If one only looks for evidence of racial prejudice directly affecting electoral behavior, such indirect perceptual effects can easily be overlooked, much to the detriment of our understanding of racial and ethnic politics, and of voting behavior more generally. Moreover, if models of voting behavior include the ideological distance between voters and candidates as a predictor of voting decisions but fail to account for the influence of race on perceptions of that distance, the influence of race on electoral outcomes may be greatly underestimated.

The idea that racial stereotypes might affect perceptions of candidates' ideologies is not new. Additionally, while stereotyping often carries with it negative implications, some indirect effects of race on electoral politics may be, for the most part, normatively benign. If black candidates are typically quite liberal, using race as an informational shortcut in the evaluation of the political ideologies of candidates may be a useful and rational response to

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[3]Although African Americans have won a number elections in majority-white districts, most of these victories have been won by black incumbents in redrawn districts that were previously majority-minority districts (Lublin 1997).

situations in which information on candidates is costly to obtain (Bullock 1984; Feldman and Conover 1983; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1993; Swain 1995; Wright and Niemi 1983). Such stereotyping may help citizens make more informed voting decisions than they would otherwise make. Koch (2002, 2003), for example, shows that the accuracy of citizens' perceptions of candidates' ideologies is increased by the use of partisan stereotypes.

Unfortunately, voters can also be misled by stereotypes. In discussing the potential pitfalls of taking cues from political elites, Kuklinski and Hurley (1994) note, "we need to identify the conditions under which taking cues from elites does and does not serve the interests of the electorate." Identifying cases in which race-based ideological stereotyping might have negative consequences is similarly important. If black candidates are perceived to be more liberal than ideologically similar white candidates, some citizens might pass over black candidates that they would otherwise vote for. In this way, race would contribute to the *misperception* of candidates' ideologies, and have a normatively troubling effect on citizens' decision making processes.

The suggestion that white citizens might overestimate the degree to which black candidates are liberal squares well with social psychology research that illustrates how in-group/out-group biases affect perceptions of out-group members. As Duckitt (2003) notes, social categorization often accentuates in-group similarities and out-group differences.[4] When it comes to issues such as race, affect toward outgroups may be particulary important in determining perceptions of outgroup characteristics.[5]

Additionally, political actors campaigning against black candidates may have strong incentives to attempt to prime and strengthen stereotypes that work against those candidates.[6]

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[4]Brewer and Kramer (1985) provide a review of the causes of such accentuation.

[5]Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock (1993), for example, describe the use of the "likeability heuristic," by which one's feelings toward a group influence one's impressions of members of that group.

[6]There is little reason to think that the effects of race and ethnicity on perceptions of candidates' ideologies are limited to black and white citizens' views of black and white candidates. The perceived ideologies of Latino candidates, for example, may also be influenced by the ethnicity of those candidates. The perceptual effects of being a black candidate, however, are likely to be stronger given the particularly overwhelming identification of black Americans with the Democratic Party and liberal economic policies over the last several decades. The greater ideological and partisan variation among members of other racial and ethnic groups in the United States renders theoretical expectations regarding stereotypes of candidates from these

Moreover, in order to appeal to certain constituencies or subconstituencies, it may be in the interest of particular black politicians to use rhetoric that reflects ideological positions more liberal than their voting records would seem to indicate, or at least more liberal than the voting records of typical black candidates. If this is the case, the media's tendency to focus on public figures who hold more extreme positions might further contribute to race-based stereotypes.[7]

Prior Research on Race, Perceptions of Candidates' Ideologies, and Voting Behavior

Experimental Studies

Experimental research has contributed greatly to our understanding of the importance of race in the evaluation of candidates' ideologies. In experiments, the race of candidates can be manipulated while other factors are held constant.

Sigelman et al. (1995) find that when controlling for other pertinent factors, race is not a significant predictor of vote choice. They also find, however, that race affects perceptions of candidates' ideologies, with black candidates being viewed as more liberal than white candidates, even when the information provided about those candidates is identical. While Sigelman et al. find that candidates' issue positions affect voting decisions, they do not examine the possibility that the indirect effects of race bias perceptions of candidates' issue positions, which in turn affect voting decisions.

McDermott (1998) finds that the race of a candidate acts as a cue that affects voters' perceptions of that candidate's ideology. She does not, however, provide subjects with information about the policy positions or even partisan identification of the hypothetical

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groups much less straightforward. As such, and to avoid greatly complicating the analysis with the inclusion of many additional racial pairings and interaction terms, I focus on perceptions of black candidates in this paper and leave the analysis of perceptions of candidates of other races and ethnicities to future research.

[7]Zilber and Niven (2000) argue that the media contributes to stereotypical views of African American politicians as being focused on issues of race.

candidates, and hence her research design not allow her to determine whether voters respond differently to black and white candidates who are ideologically similar.

Finally, Terkildsen (1993) provides respondents with photographs of hypothetical candidates, and shows that white voters penalize black candidates. She does not examine the possibility, however, that conservative voters might perceive black candidates to be liberal, and vote against them for that reason, rather than voting against them because of simple racial prejudice.

While extremely valuable, the experimental studies described above have significant limitations. First, social desirability bias may moderate subjects' reactions to racial cues. Subjects may consciously attempt to avoid revealing any racial prejudices they may harbor. Especially when a candidate's race is one of only a few candidate characteristics that are described, subjects may infer that researchers are interested in racial attitudes. As a result, some subjects may avoid using race as an informational shortcut even if it would be rational to do so.

Second, it is difficult for experiments to approximate the complexity of actual election campaigns. The importance of racial stereotypes of candidates' ideologies may be influenced by factors such as the amount of information presented during a campaign and the ways in which that information is received. Setting issues related to social desirability aside, when race is one of only a few candidate characteristics that is provided to subjects, as is the case in (McDermott 1998), respondents may be *more* likely to use race as a cue in evaluating candidates' ideologies, because little other information about the candidates is available. In such contexts, which are common in experiments, researchers may overestimate the perceptual effects of race.

Third, while experimental research designs may be well-suited for determining whether white citizens view black candidates as being more liberal than white candidates, such designs are less ideal when it comes to determining whether white citizens misperceive black candidates as being more liberal than their voting records actually indicate. Whereas real-

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world politicians have voting records, run real campaigns, and take many policy stances, the fictional politicians described in experimental studies tend to be greatly simplified caricatures of hypothetical candidates. This fact makes it difficult for experiments to determine whether race serves as an informational shortcut that helps citizens make "good" voting decisions, or whether race causes citizens to avoid voting for candidates they would otherwise vote for. I address this issue in the present study by controlling for the ideologies of candidates, as measured by their Poole-Rosenthal DW-Nominate scores.

Lastly, voting is a hallmark of democratic governance. As such, the factors that influence electoral behavior in the real world are of significant interest to scholars and citizens alike. While they are typically considered to be the gold standard of scientific research, controlled experiments simply cannot determine the extent to which race affects voting decisions in actual elections. One might wish to know, for example, whether a voter's race or political ideology is more important in determining his or her vote choice when an African American candidate is on the ballot. Alternatively, one might ask how many white voters are likely to change their voting decisions due to a candidate being black rather than white. Questions such as these can not be answered through experimental means. One need not deny the great value of experimental research to agree that understanding what goes on in actual elections requires the study of actual elections.

Non-Experimental Studies

Few systematic empirical studies of the effects of the race of candidates on perceptions of candidates' ideologies and voting behavior in actual elections have been undertaken.[8]

Washington (2006) finds that even when controlling for other relevant factors, whites are less likely to vote for black candidates than white candidates. She hypothesizes that

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[8]One prominent study that examines the effects of the race of candidates on voting decisions without examining how race affects perceptions of candidates' ideologies is Citrin, Green and Sears (1990). In an analysis of state-wide races in California in 1982, when African American Tom Bradley ran for governor, the authors find that attitudes toward governmental support for blacks is a significant predictor of vote choice, while the race of candidates is not. Unlike the present study, which examines thousands of elections, Citrin, Green and Sears (1990) is also limited in that it examines only four elections.

race-based misperception of candidates' ideologies may contribute to black candidates being punished at the voting booth, but her empirical analysis does not support this hypothesis. Washington's data contain no direct measure of perceptions of candidates' ideologies; perceptions of the ideological positions of the major political parties are used as a crude proxy for perceptions of candidates' ideologies, and this may explain her negative findings. Moreover, even if Washington had found the perceptual effects of the race of candidates to have a significant effect on voting, she would not be able to determine whether white voters *misperceived* the ideologies of black candidates, as her analysis includes no measure of the actual ideologies of candidates. Using a model more suited to the examination of indirect effects, much more precise measures of candidates' and respondents' ideologies, and data on a much larger set of elections, I provide substantial empirical evidence that the race of candidates affects voting behavior by influencing perceptions of candidates' ideologies.

Empirical Analysis

In this study, I employ a spatial model of voting behavior and representation. The ideological proximity between citizens and candidates plays an important role such models (Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart 2001; Downs 1957; Enelow and Hinich 1982; Powell 1982, 2000). In these models, citizens are typically assumed to base their voting decisions on the utility they expect to receive if a given candidate is elected. For each citizen, this expected utility is often assumed to be a decreasing function of the distance between the citizen's ideal point and the position of a given candidate on a liberalism-conservatism scale, or dimension. For a citizen with a symmetric utility function, the maximization of expected utility entails voting for the candidate whose position on a liberalism-conservatism scale is closest to the citizen's own position on that scale.

In this scenario, if a citizen has perfectly accurate information about the position of each candidate on the liberalism-conservatism scale, the determination of the "correct" vote choice, in terms of the maximization of expected utility, is straightforward. In the real

world, however, citizens do not know the ideological positioning of candidates with certainty. Rather, to the extent that candidates' ideologies affect citizens' preferences, voting decisions are affected by the ideological distance between citizens' own policy preferences and the *perceived* positions of candidates on the liberalism-conservatism scale.[9] When citizens *misperceive* candidates' actual, or revealed, ideologies,[10] they are more likely to register "incorrect" votes. The occurrence of such errors increases the likelihood that the policy positions of winning candidates will be further from the policy preferences of their constituencies than the policy positions of losing candidates. Because of their potential impact on the degree of congruence between the preferences of citizens and the policy positions maintained by office holders, perceptions of candidates' ideologies are critical to the process of representation. The statistical model that I employ allows me to determine the extent to which perceptions of candidates' ideologies are determined by the revealed ideologies of those candidates, and to what extent a candidate's race affects perceptions of his or her ideology. Furthermore, I am able to estimate the effect that race-based perceptual inaccuracies have on voting decisions.

The Statistical Model

Prominent studies that have found the race of candidates to be unimportant in determining voting decisions have included the perceived ideologies of the candidates as explanatory variables (Sigelman et al. 1995), or have implicitly depended on the perceived ideologies of candidates as factors that explain voting decisions (Citrin, Green and Sears 1990). As shown in this paper, however, perceived ideologies are in part determined by the race of candidates. Perceptions of candidate characteristics serve as an intervening variable between racial identification and voting decisions. Because of this, including only the perceived

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[9]At a theoretical level, this is true not only in proximity-based models of voting behavior, but also in directional models. See, for example, Rabinowitz and Macdonald (1989).

[10]In this paper, I use a candidate's DW-Nominate score, which is based on roll-call voting behavior, as a measure of his or her ideological preferences. I refer to this measure as a candidate's "revealed ideology." Revealed ideologies may be affected factors such as constituency preferences and partisan considerations as well as candidates' personal preferences, which cannot be directly observed. As candidates' revealed ideologies, as expressed through roll call votes, affect policy most directly, a strong argument can be made that representation is enhanced when citizens have accurate perceptions of those revealed ideologies.

ideologies of candidates in the analysis of voting decisions will lead to underestimates of the overall effects of race on electoral behavior.

Race and partisanship have the potential to affect voting decisions both directly and through their impact on perceptions of candidates' ideologies. As such, single-equation models cannot adequately capture the extent to which these independent variables influence voting behavior. The use of a two-stage estimation approach is appropriate in this context. The following three equations capture the hypothesized relationships between the main variables of interest:

1. *perceived ideology of incumbent = f(revealed ideology of incumbent, education, race, partisanship, respondent ideology, interaction terms, random error)*

2. *perceived relative ideological closeness to incumbent =*
   |perceived ideology of challenger - ideology of respondent|
   - |perceived ideology of incumbent - ideology of respondent|

3. *vote choice = f(perceived ideological closeness to incumbent, race, partisanship, interaction terms, random error)*

Equation 1, its specification described in more detail below, estimates the importance of factors that influence perceptions of candidates' ideologies. Because respondents who feel closer to the incumbent candidate are expected to be more likely to vote for that candidate, a measure of the perceived relative ideological closeness of the respondent to the incumbent is included in the system. As such, Equation 2 is an identity that defines how close a respondent feels to the incumbent candidate as compared to the challenger. Equation 3 represents the determinants of voting decisions, with the perceived ideology of the incumbent factoring into the equation through the perceived relative ideological closeness of respondents to incumbents. As citizens will rarely have perfect information about the revealed ideologies of the candidates, it is the *perceived* relative distance between citizens and candidates, rather than the *actual* relative distance, that will affect citizens' voting decisions. Importantly,

as the race of candidates appears in both Equation 1 and Equation 3, both the direct effects of race on voting decisions and indirect effects of race, working through perceptions of candidates' ideologies, can be estimated. The actual revealed ideologies of candidates affect voting only indirectly, through their effect on citizens' perceptions of candidates' ideologies, and hence the revealed ideologies of candidates appear only in Equation 1.[11]

These equations define a recursive mixed process system (Roodman 2007). The system is recursive in that dependent variables in lower-numbered equations appear as an independent variables in higher-numbers equations, while the converse is not true. In other words, the system does not allow for simultaneity, and causation is assumed to flow in only one direction. The system is defined according to a mixed process in that the limitations on the dependent variables differ by equation. Because the dependent variables in this system are not interval-level variables, it is inappropriate to use techniques such as two-stage least squares (2SLS) for estimation.

Consistent parameter estimates can be calculated for this system by running an ordered probit regression on Equation 1, using the predicted values generated by this estimation to calculate the perceived relative ideological closeness of voters to incumbents, and then using a probit model to regress vote choice on the predicted values of perceived ideological closeness and the other independent variables in Equation 3.[12] While the standard errors for the first-stage equation will be unbiased in this case, the standard errors normally calculated for the second-stage equation will be biased – typically downward – because an estimate (of perceived ideology in this case) is included as an independent variable. To address this issue, I drew from Hardin (2002) and Hole (2006), and wrote a Stata routine to calculate corrected Murphy-Topel standard errors (Murphy and Topel 1985) for the second-stage equation.

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[11]As noted below, the dataset that I use does not contain information on the revealed ideologies of challengers. Because of this, the factors that affect perceptions of challengers' ideologies cannot be modeled within this framework. Hence, challenger ideology does not enter into the system until the second equation.

[12]The inclusion of all of the excluded exogenous variables in the system in Equation 1 renders this estimation method very similar to the two-step version of 2SLS, with the main difference being that the equations in the system are non-linear.

Data

This analysis uses pooled survey data from the American National Election Study (ANES) as well as data from the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES). Beginning in 1978, the ANES survey included questions about respondents' perceptions of the ideologies of the general election candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives in their districts. Hence, my analysis includes cross-sectional data from all standard, biennial ANES general elections surveys performed between 1978 and 2004.[13] 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.[14] In recent years, the Cooperative Congressional Election Studies have produced datasets with much larger sample sizes than the ANES. As such, I also report results for a model estimated using data from the 2010 CCES.[15] I used data from various sources to identify the race of all incumbents.[16] I then merged the data with Poole-Rosenthal first dimension DW-Nominate scores as further described below.

Perceived Candidate Ideology.   The dependent variable in Equation 1, *Perceived Ideology of Incumbent*, is the response to an ANES survey question that asks each respondent to place the House candidates in that respondent's district on a 7-point scale, from extremely

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

[14]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. These results are available from the author.

[15]I also ran the analysis on the CCES data from 2006 and 2008, which contain a different, and somewhat less standard, measure of perceptions of candidate's ideologies than the ANES and 2010 CCES data. The results are available in Table OL1 in the online appendix, and they provide further support for the main hypothesis tested in this paper.

[16]Sources included Amer (2005), Library of Congress (2007), and Tong (2007). The subsequent analysis includes only white and black respondents in districts with white or black incumbents.

liberal (-3) to extremely conservative (+3). In the analysis that follows, I account for differences in candidates' ideologies across districts by including a measure of the actual revealed ideologies of candidates in a multivariate analysis.

Revealed Candidate Ideology. DW-Nominate scores (Poole and Rosenthal 1985, 1991) are are commonly used in contemporary scholarship dealing with representation (Griffin and Flavin 2007; Powell 1989; Schickler 2000; Shotts 2003). As they are based on roll-call votes, however, DW-Nominate scores are only available for incumbents. In this analysis, therefore, I only consider respondents' perceptions of incumbents.[17] In the data employed here, DW-Nominate scores range from -.84 (the most liberal) to +1.20 (the most conservative), with -.01 being the mean. Among Democrats, the mean DW-Nominate scores for black and white incumbents are -0.55 and -0.30, respectively. The means among Republicans are 0.51 for black incumbents and 0.39 for white incumbents.

I expect revealed candidate ideology, as measured by *DW-Nominate*, to be significantly and positively related to *Perceived Ideology of Incumbent*. This expectation reflects the assumption that, on average, respondents perceptions' of incumbents' ideologies will, to an imperfect extent, reflect the actual voting records of those incumbents.[18] In a world

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[17]Although it would be preferable to include both incumbents and challengers in the analysis, imputed measures of challengers' ideologies such as those developed by scholars such as Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart (2001) and Burden (2004) have not been widely adopted. Beyond the lack of scholarly consensus on the reliability of these measures, the efforts of Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart (2001) and others who derived challenger ideologies from the National Political Awareness Tests (NPATs) administered by Project Vote Smart in 1996 and 1998 have been hampered by the prohibitively large number of candidates refusing to fill out NPAT surveys in subsequent years. Additionally, 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 then challengers, the present analysis is at little risk of overestimating the importance of racial stereotypes in evaluations of candidates' ideologies. Nevertheless, while the sizes of important subpopulations of respondents from two years of NPAT-based data are not large enough for precise estimation of the coefficients of interest in this paper, I did use the 1996 data described in Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart (2001) along with data on the race of challengers from The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies' *Focus Magazine* to estimate the effects of race on perceptions of challengers' ideologies. The coefficients, while not statistically significant, are in the expected directions. The results are available in Table OL2 in the online appendix.

[18]The DW-Nominate scores used here are first dimension DW-Nominate scores, which are often interpreted as representing an economic ideological dimension, the dimension that is typically dominant in American politics. It is reasonable to think, however, that candidates' policy positions on issues related to civil rights – positions which do not fall neatly onto the economic dimension – are important in determining both citizens' perceptions of candidates' ideologies and the quality of substantive representation that citizens

where reliable information about candidates was costless to acquire, citizens would have perfectly accurate information about the roll-call voting records of candidates, and knowledge of candidates' actual voting records, as represented here by DW-Nominate scores, would be the only thing that voters needed to look to in evaluating candidates' ideologies. There would be no need to make use of stereotypes in evaluating these ideologies.[19]

Education. Much of the literature on political knowledge portrays citizens as ill-informed (Converse 1964; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Research also suggests, however, that many citizens are able to correctly identify key voting decisions made by their representatives (Alvarez and Gronke 1996). Additional research shows that politically knowledgable citizens are more likely to be able to place candidates on ideological scales, and to do so accurately (Koch 2003; Powell 1989; Wright and Niemi 1983).

Powell (1989) finds that many respondents who are able to place candidates on the 7-point scale are reasonably accurate in their placements. She also notes, however, that if some of the respondents who do agree to place candidates actually answer randomly, or guess, estimates of population parameters, such as the mean perception of the ideology of a given candidate, will be driven towards the least extreme response available. The mean response among guessers will tend to be close to a moderate zero because guessers tend to cancel each other out in the aggregate.

To adjust for the effects of education and guessing, the specification of Equation 1 includes

receive (Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran 1996; Grose 2005; Swain 1995). As an alternative measure of candidates' ideologies, Leadership Council of Civil Rights (LCCR) scores might better tap such policy positions. While it is important to note that LCCR scores, like DW-Nominate scores, are based only on votes on bills that make it to the floor for roll call votes, and hence may also fail to ideally capture differences in legislators' preferences regarding race-related issues, Grose (2005) finds that with appropriate controls in place, black legislators have significantly more liberal DW-Nominate scores but do not have more liberal LCCR scores. Nevertheless, I did estimate models of perceptions of candidates' ideologies using LCCR scores in place of DW-Nominate scores. The results are available from the author. The substantive results described in this paper are robust to using this alternative measure.

[19]Although the approach that I employ here does not require direct comparison between incumbents' locations on the DW-Nominate scale and the perceived location of incumbents on the 7-point perceived ideology scale, some may question the degree to which the subsequent regression analysis can account for differences between the two scales. I refer readers to Powell (1989) for evidence that the regression approach yields reasonable results. Moreover, studies that do attempt to directly compare placements on the two scales, such as Griffin and Flavin (2007), often find that the results are robust to a variety of scaling procedures.

an interaction term, *Education x DW-Nominate*. Intuitively, when a respondent has little education (and is hence more likely to guess), education will affect reported perceptions to the greatest extent when candidates are ideologically extreme, as the distance between the revealed ideologies of these candidates and the median available response is the largest. In these cases, among respondents evaluating a given candidate, there will be large differences between the responses of highly educated and less well-educated respondents. Where *DW-Nominate* is closer to a moderate zero, differences in responses between guessers and non-guessers will be smaller.[20] As such, I expect the coefficient on *Education x DW-Nominate* to be positive and significant.

Accounting for the effects of education is critical. Given that all of the Democratic candidates in the dataset used here are on the left side of the political spectrum, the observed mean perception of Democrats 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 non-guessers correctly perceive liberal candidates to be liberal is masked by the less liberal perceptions that guessers tend to report. Because of this, the extent to which race affects the perceptions of non-guessers may be underestimated if guessing is not accounted for.[21]

Racial Pairings. I assign each respondent to a racial pairing based on that respondent's race and the race of the incumbent candidate in the respondent's district. This process results in four dummy variables: *White Respondent, White Candidate*; *White Respondent, Black Candidate*; *Black Respondent, White Candidate*; and *Black Respondent, Black Candidate*. In the regressions, *White Respondent, White Candidate* is omitted as the reference category.

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[20]Accounting for the role of education here also addresses, at least to some extent, the general advice of Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock (1993) that we not assume that stereotypes operate in the same way for all types of citizens.

[21]Education is clearly not the only variable that might affect the accuracy of respondents' perceptions. In Table OL3 the online appendix, I include the age of respondents and the levels of interest that they have in elections as additional measures of political sophistication, as well as interaction terms between each of these variables and DW-Nominate and interactions between education and race. I have omitted these variables from the present analysis to make it more tractable, and to simplify the presentation of the results of the two-stage model. The inclusion of these variables has little effect on the substantive results described below. Matsubayashi and Ueda (2011) provide an interesting analysis of the effects of information levels on the use of racial stereotypes.

If white citizens tend to perceive black candidates to be more liberal than ideologically identical white candidates, the estimated coefficient on *White Respondent, Black Incumbent* will be negative and statistically significant. This would also suggest that white citizens tend to perceive black candidates to be more liberal than their roll-call voting records actually indicate.

Party Identification and Respondent Ideology. Citizens use partisan stereotypes as informational shortcuts in evaluating the ideologies of candidates.[22] To control for this, I include a dummy variable, *Republican Incumbent*. Additionally, research in social psychology suggests that in-group members misperceive characteristics of out-group members for a number of reasons (Brewer and Kramer 1985; Duckitt 2003; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1993). For example, when group boundaries are explicit, as is the case when Democratic candidates are compared to Republican candidates, in-group members tend to perceive differences between themselves and out-group members to be larger than they actually are. This suggests that Democratic respondents will perceive Republican candidates to be more conservative than they actually are, and Republican respondents will perceive Democratic candidates to be more liberal than they actual are. Additionally, partisans may believe that candidates from their own party are more moderate, or more "normal," than they actually are. To control for these effects, I include dummy variables that pair partisan respondents with the party identifications of candidates. The omitted reference category consists of independent respondents in districts with Democratic incumbents.[23]

I also control for the self-reported ideologies of respondents. Ideological biases could shift perceptions of a candidate's ideology in either direction. On the one hand, respondents might perceive candidates with ideologies similar to their own to be more "normal," and hence more moderate, than they actually are, while perceiving the ideologies of candidates

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[22]Partisan identification has strong effects even on beliefs regarding factual information such as death counts in wars (Berinsky 2007).

[23]Partisan "leaners" are coded as independents. The substantive conclusions discussed below are unchanged if leaners are coded as partisans.

on the opposite side of the political spectrum to be more extreme than they actually are. In this case, the coefficient on *Respondent Ideology* would be negative. On the other hand, respondents may assume that other people, including political candidates, tend to hold views similar to their own (Conover and Feldman 1989; Koch 2002). This would pull perceptions of candidates on both ends of the ideological towards the respondent's own views. As a result of liberal respondents pulling most candidates to the left and conservative respondents pulling most candidates to the right, the coefficient on *Respondent Ideology* would be positive.

Results

Regression results are reported in Table 1. Two models were estimated with the ANES data. In the first model, race is only allowed to affect voting decisions directly. Perceptions of candidates' are assumed to be exogenous to the model. If direct racial prejudice was affecting voting decisions, we would expect to see a negative and significant coefficient on *White Respondent, Black Incumbent*. The coefficient, however, while of the expected sign, attains only a modest level of statistical significance.[24] This result obtains even though much more data has been marshalled here than in previous studies that examine the electoral effects racial considerations. When it is assumed that race can only affect voting decisions directly, the results here are similar to those reported by Sigelman et al. (1995) and others who find that race has no effect on vote choice once the ideological positioning of voters and candidates is accounted for.

[Table 1 about here]

The story is much different, however, when one allows for the possibility that perceptions of candidates' ideologies serve as an intervening variable between race and voting decisions. In the model that allows race to affect vote choice both directly and indirectly, the coefficient on *White Respondent, Black Incumbent* in the voting equation does not even approach

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[24]The coefficient on *White Voter, Black Incumbent* is statistically significant at the p=0.10 level, or at the p=0.05 level if a one-tailed test is used.

standard levels of statistical significance. This indicates that when other theoretically relevant variables are controlled for, racial prejudice does not seem to have a direct effect on voting decisions. Race does, however, affect voter behavior indirectly by affecting voters' perceptions of the ideologies of black candidates. The coefficient on *Perceived Ideological Closeness* is highly significant and substantively large, suggesting that voters place a good deal of weight on how close their own ideological positions are to the perceived ideological positions of candidates. These perceptions are in turn affected by race, as indicated by the statistically significant negative coefficient on *White Respondent, Black Incumbent* in the perception equation. Indeed, the indirect, perceptual effects of race on voting decisions appear to greatly outweigh any direct effects of racial prejudice.[25]

The coefficient on *DW-Nominate* in the perception equation is highly significant and in the expected direction.[26] Voters, then, do seem to have some degree of knowledge about candidates' revealed ideologies. Race, however, is important in determining perceptions of candidates' ideologies even when the revealed ideologies of candidates are controlled for. White voters are predicted to perceive a black candidates to be more liberal than ideologically identical white candidates. Such race-based misperceptions, in turn, filter through *Perceived Ideological Closeness* to disadvantage African American candidates at the ballot box.

The coefficients on the other variables largely conform with expectations. The highly significant positive coefficient on *Education x DW-Nominate* underscores the importance of controlling for guessing when perceptions of candidates' ideologies are being analyzed.

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[25]Systematic differences between white respondents in districts with black incumbents and white respondents in districts without black incumbents could also affect perceptions of black candidates' ideologies, biasing the coefficient on *White Respondent, Black Incumbent*. In prior work (Jacobsmeier 2014), I use various methods, including coarsened exact matching (Iacus, King and Porro 2012), to show that the race of respondents and candidates has a substantively large impact on the perception of candidates' ideologies even when district demographics such as the percentage of citizens in each district that are black are controlled for. Multicollinearity renders including district characteristics in the ANES models impractical. In the 2010 CCES data, including the percentage of a district's population that is black in the model (as well as a term that interacts this percentage with *White Respondent, Black Candidate*) does not significantly change the substantive results.

[26]All variables are centered at their mean or median values; as such, statistical significance is indicated for situations in which variables that are interacted with *DW-Nominate* in the model are at their mean or median values.

Without the inclusion of this term, estimates of the other causal variables of interest will typically be biased downward. In the voting equation, the coefficients on the partisan pairing variables indicate, unsurprisingly, that voters are less likely to vote for candidates that are members of the opposing political party. Additionally, the significant coefficients on the partisan pairing variables in the perception equation indicate that partisanship has indirect effects on voting behavior in addition to direct ones. Lastly, The positive coefficient on *Respondent Ideology* in the perception equation suggests the presence of projection effects, by which respondents tend to perceive candidates of all types to be ideologically closer to themselves than they actually are.

While the vast majority of estimated coefficients are in line with prior expectations, one minor surprise is the positive and significant coefficient on *Republican Respondent, Republican Incumbent.* This suggests that Republican respondents tend to perceive Republican candidates to be somewhat more conservative than they actually are.

The coefficients estimated with the 2010 CCES data provide further support for the contention that race-based misperceptions of candidates' ideologies have important indirect effects on voting behavior – effects that are not uncovered by analyses that use perceptions of candidates ideologies as an independent variable while leaving the determinants of these perceptions out of the statistical model. The coefficient on *White Respondent, Black Incumbent* is again negative and statistically significant, although it's magnitude is somewhat smaller than when it is estimated using the ANES data. In the CCES data, *Perceived Ideological Closeness* is somewhat less important in determining voting decisions than it is when estimated with the ANES data. Especially when taken together with the larger coefficients on the partisan identification variables in both equations, this is likely the result of the particularly partisan, polarized congressional elections of 2010; elections that put a number of Tea Party candidates in office and returned control of the House to the Republican Party.[27]

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[27]Although the coefficient on *DW-Nominate* is quite a bit larger in the CCES model, this is due in part to the education measure being different from the one used in the ANES. The distribution of the CCES measure also affects *DW-Nominate x Education* term, and this accounts for some of the difference in the *DW-Nominate* coefficients. The substantive effects of *DW-Nominate*, in terms of predicted probabilities,

From Voting Decisions to Election Returns

While the importance of race-based misperceptions of candidates' ideologies in determining voting decisions at the micro level has been established, it is also important to think about the macro-level effects that result from voters having inaccurate perceptions of black candidates. One might wish to know, for example, how often these perceptual inaccuracies will cause a voter to alter his or her voting decision, or how often the actual outcome of a House race might be affected by such inaccurate perceptions.

[Figure 1 about here]

Figure 1 provides a schematic representation of how race-based perceptual inaccuracies would affect a hypothetical white voter's decision making process. Assuming that perceptions are accurate and that a black Democratic candidate has a revealed ideology of *BDR*, a voter that falls within the hatched area to the left of the indifference point, *IA*, on the ideological dimension is expected to vote for the Democratic candidate, as that voter perceives the Democratic candidate's ideology, *BDR*, to be more similar to the voter's own ideology than *R*, the Republican candidate's ideology. However, when a white voter has an inaccurate perception of the African American candidate, the perceived ideology of that candidate moves to *BDP*, and the indifference point shifts from *IA* to *IP*. In this scenario, only voters in the shaded area to the left of *IP* are expected to vote for the black candidate. That is, the percentage of white voters who will fail to vote for the black candidate due to perceptual inaccuracies is equal to the percentage of voters with ideologies that fall in the area that is hatched but not shaded. The percentage of voters in this area will depend on the distribution of voters across the ideological spectrum.

An obvious but important observation is that, regardless of the specific shape of the distribution, when a majority of white voters lie to the right of the Democratic candidate, which is likely the case in the vast majority of House districts, race-based misperceptions

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are, on average, slightly larger in the CCES than the ANES model.

of candidates' ideologies will work to the disadvantage of black Democratic candidates.[28] While white voters to the left of the midpoint between BDP and BDR will actually prefer the black Democratic candidate to a greater extent when they *do* mispercieve the ideology of that candidate, as long as the median white voter lies to the right of this midpoint, the aggregate effect of race-based perceptual inaccuracies will be to advantage the white Republican candidate.[29]

A second and perhaps more interesting observation is related to the mode of the distribution of voters. The solid curve in Figure 1 represents a district in which white voters are, on average, moderate, whereas the dashed line represents a more conservative district. It can easily be seen that the number of voters that switch their votes due to race-based perceptual inaccuracies is larger in the more moderate district. All else equal, black candidates will actually be disadvantaged by their race to a *greater* extent in *less* conservative districts. While a typical black candidate may be quite unlikely to win in a conservative district in the first place, the idea that the aggregate *race-based* disadvantage faced by African American candidates is more significant in moderate districts than in conservative ones is likely to strike some readers as counterintuitive. The exact size of the disadvantage will depend on the shape of the distribution of voters and the positions of BDR, BDP, and R, but at least for approximately unimodal and symmetrical distributions, conservative districts will not be the districts in which raced-based electoral disadvantages are at their worst. This point is of particular significance in that future efforts to elect additional African Americans to Congress are likely to occur in moderate, as opposed to conservative, districts.[30]

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[28]Voters need not be roughly normally distributed for this conclusion to hold. The normal distributions shown in the figure are used for illustrative purposes only.

[29]It is worth noting here that black *Republican* candidates may actually be advantaged by race-based perceptual inaccuracies, although the analysis here should not be taken to indicate that voters misperceive black Democrats and black Republicans in the same way. Additionally, while voters to the left of the midpoint of BDP and BDR may actually prefer black candidates over ideologically identical white candidates, their voting decisions will not be affected.

[30]An important caveat here is that when looking across districts, more conservative districts are very likely to be more Republican districts as well. The "all else equal" qualification is particularly important to keep in mind here, as is evident below.

Estimating the Race-Based Electoral Disadvantage

Perceptions of candidates' ideologies, whether influenced by the race of candidates or not, are important in determining the voting decisions that citizens make. According to the ANES results, for a typical independent white voter with an ideology to the right of a Democratic incumbent, a one-category leftward shift in the perception of that incumbent's ideology causes the probability of voting for that incumbent to drop by approximately 0.16. In comparison, shifting the partisanship of that voter from independent to Republican causes the same probability to drop by approximately 0.25. As partisanship is widely recognized to be the single best predictor of voting behavior, the fact that a one category shift in perceived ideology can be nearly two-thirds as strong as the effects of a change in partisanship is a testament to the importance of perceptions of candidates' ideologies.

I have argued that perceptions of ideologies also serve as an intervening variable between the race of candidates and voting decisions. Indeed, the effects that race has on the perceived ideologies of candidates seem to outweigh any direct effects of race on voting decisions. A precise estimate of the aggregate impact of race on electoral outcomes, however, has not yet been provided. Estimating this impact is complicated by use of the two-stage model described above, and by the fact that many of the independent variables in each equation are correlated with each other to a substantial degree. To overcome these difficulties, I employed a simulation approach to determine the percentage of white votes that a black candidate can expect to lose due to race-based perceptual inaccuracies.

Simulated datasets consisting of 1000 white voters in hypothetical congressional districts were generated.[31] In the first simulated dataset, the distribution of partisanship was designed to reflect the distribution of partisanship among white citizens in the original ANES dataset. In the other simulated datasets, various distributions of partisanship were assumed. I then assigned values of education and respondent ideology to the simulated observations

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[31]Black voters are not considered, as the race of candidates was not found to have a significant effect on their perceptions of candidates.

in a manner that reflected the distributions of these variables, conditional on party identification, in the original dataset.[32] In the first simulated dataset, I set the candidates' revealed ideologies equal to the mean ideological scores for candidates of each party in the original ANES data. More extreme candidate ideologies were assigned to a number of the other simulated datasets.

Based on the ANES estimates from the first-stage equation, which determines perceptions of candidates' ideologies, each voter's perception of each candidate was predicted. These perceived ideologies were then related to the voter's own ideology, and the result was included in the voting equation as an independent variable. In this manner, predicted voting decisions were calculated for each hypothetical voter and subsequently aggregated into district-level results. The results of these simulations are provided in Table 2.

[Table 2 about here]

In the district composed of typical voters and candidates, the Democratic candidate is expected to win 67.0% of the white vote when that candidate is white.[33] However, when the Democratic candidate is black, even though that candidate's revealed ideology is identical to that of the white Democratic candidate, the expected Democratic vote share among white voters is reduced to 60.4%. In other words, in a district with these characteristics, black candidates can expect their share of white votes to be 6.6% smaller than the share that an ideologically identical white candidate can expect to receive.

How large of a change in vote share is 6.6%? In comparison to other factors that influence voting decisions, the effect of race on vote share is quite large. For example, if rather than changing the race of the Democratic candidate, the Republican candidate is shifted further from the median voter by being given a DW-Nominate of .59, one standard deviation greater

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[32]Values of ideology, while reflecting the conditional distribution of ideology by party in the original data, were assigned to observations randomly within party affiliations. This ignores the modest correlation between level of education and ideology, but is preferable to artificially creating a strong correlation between the two variables by assigning, for example, lower values of education to more liberal respondents.

[33]The Democrat is the incumbent in all of the districts described here, and hence the large vote shares for Democrats to some extent reflect the incumbency advantage.

than 0.39, the predicted Democratic vote share is only increased by 0.5%. Additionally, a 6.6% disadvantage among white voters would clearly be large enough to swing many a close election in the Republican direction. Lastly, if black politicians are expected to face an electoral disadvantage of 6.6% of the white vote if they run for the U.S. House, many potential black candidates may decline to run in the first place, and local Democratic organizations in heavily white districts may hesitate to recruit even well-qualified African-Americans to run for office.

Table 2 also makes clear that district ideology is not the only factor that determines the size of the electoral disadvantage faced by black candidates. If it were, we would expect to see a greater disadvantage in the district with typical voters and candidates than in the district with identical candidates, but more conservative voters. This is obviously not the case, as the disadvantage in the latter district is 9.7%, which is 3.1% greater than the disadvantage in the former district. This is possible because district partisanship is highly correlated with district ideology. Table 3 shows the percentage of voters who would switch their votes due to race based on race by party identification and ideology.

[Table 3 about here]

Perhaps the most striking thing about the table is the fact that only certain kinds of voters, namely moderate Republicans and moderate independents (along with a few anomalous strongly conservative Democrats) are at all likely to switch their votes. Intuitively, most Democrats will not switch their vote based on race, as they will vote for the Democrat in either case. Moderate Republicans and independents are more likely than other voters to be willing to vote for a white Democrat, but not an ideologically identical black Democrat. As the percentage of Republicans increases, the absolute number of moderate Republicans increases as well, at least in the simulated datasets generated in this study. Hence it is possible for African American candidates to face larger disadvantages in a conservative district than in a more moderate district with identical candidates. In the real world, when a district's ideological composition changes, "all else equal" rarely applies.

Discussion

Perceptions of candidates' ideologies are important in that the accuracy of these perceptions can have a substantial impact on the process of democratic representation. Citizens will have difficulty voting for candidates with ideological positions similar to their own if they are mistaken about candidates' actual ideological positioning. As such, it is important to understand any factors that cause citizens to misperceive candidates' ideologies. The race of candidates is one such factor.

Misperception of the ideologies of minority candidates may also affect the degree to which members of historically marginalized groups are descriptively represented. In addition to the benefits of descriptive representation that are not directly related to policy (Mansbridge 1999), the presence of minority representatives in legislatures enhances the substantive representation of minority interests (Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart 2001; Canon 1999; Grose 2005, 2011; Lublin 1997). Although race-based redistricting has led to greatly increased levels of descriptive representation for minorities, there are very few geographical areas in which new majority-minority congressional districts can potentially be drawn, even if the constitutionality of such redistricting processes is reaffirmed by federal courts. The number of black representatives in Congress will not increase significantly unless black candidates win elections in majority-white districts.

Examining race-based misperceptions of candidates' ideologies is critical to the development of a better understanding of why it is exceedingly rare for black candidates to be elected in majority-white districts. While more direct forms of racial prejudice may hurt the electoral chances of African American candidates in majority-white districts, perceptions of candidates' ideologies also play an important role. The results presented here suggest that if white citizens were to more accurately perceive the ideologies of black candidates, the number of black candidates elected in majority-white districts would increase. Such electoral gains could substantially increase the level of descriptive and substantive representation that black citizens receive.

Conclusion

In summarizing the state of research on how the race of candidates affects voting behavior Hutchings and Valentino (2004) write:

> In the area of race, partisanship, and voting behavior... we still are unsure why whites do not support black political candidates. Is it merely out-group animus or is it the belief that black candidates are more likely to advocate liberal policy preferences?

This paper provides a qualified answer to that question. Perceptions of candidates' ideologies serve as an intervening variable between the race of candidates and voting decisions. I have shown that racial group membership affects how citizens evaluate candidates' ideologies, and that race-based misperception of candidates' ideologies hurts the electoral chances of black candidates. The results suggest that white citizens tend to perceive African American candidates to be more liberal than white candidates who adopt similar policy positions. Because of this, a significant number of white voters will fail to vote for black candidates even if those black candidates are more ideologically similar to those voters than opposing white candidates. Indeed, these indirect effects of race on voting decisions outweigh any direct effects of racial prejudice.

This answer is qualified, however, by the fact that the present study does not address the question of *why* African American candidates are seen to be more liberal than similar white candidates. It is not the belief that black candidates are liberal, but the belief that they are more liberal than ideologically similar white candidates, that is troubling in a normative sense. On the one hand, it is possible that voters simply lack accurate information about the policy positions of black candidates. If this is the case, providing voters with more accurate information about the ideologies of black candidates should lessen the electoral disadvantage that these candidates face.[34] On the other hand, beliefs that black candidates are more liberal

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[34]It should be noted however, that scholars such as Berinsky (2007) have found that perceptual errors resulting from following elite and media cues are not always remedied by the subsequent provision of factual

than their records indicate may result from the rationalization of prejudiced white voters' unwillingness to vote for African American candidates, regardless of their policy positions. In this case, overcoming the electoral disadvantage that black candidates face may not be such a simple matter. Whichever the case may be, the effects of racial group membership on perceptions of candidates' ideologies may limit the amount of descriptive representation that minorities obtain in the United States Congress, as the race-based perceptual inaccuracies described in this paper currently serve to disadvantage black candidates at the ballot box.

The results presented here also serve as a reminder of the importance of identifying the indirect effects of social group identifications on political behavior more generally. In addition to having important perceptual effects, race certainly affects voting in other indirect ways, with the tendency of African American citizens to identify with the Democratic party serving as an obvious example. It is also possible that some whites identify themselves with political conservatism in part because they harbor prejudicial attitudes towards blacks. If we find that race does not affect a certain type of political behavior directly, then, we should not necessarily conclude that race is not important in shaping that behavior. As Hutchings and Valentino (2004) note:

> One should... remember that political ideology in America is often tied up with racial concerns (Carmines & Stimson 1989). To argue, then, as Swain (1993) does, that whites penalize candidates because they are liberal and not because they are black may be to make a distinction without a difference.

Furthermore, race is not unique among group memberships in its impact on perceptions of candidates' ideologies and voting behavior. The overall effects of even the most commonly used independent variables on voting decisions, such as those of partisan identification, may be underestimated if these variables affect voting behavior indirectly by influencing perceptions of candidates' ideologies. The analytical framework employed in this paper is well suited to the empirical examination of such effects. Moreover, various types of group

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information contrary to those errors.

memberships may be more or less salient different electoral contexts, and the framework used here can be applied to the analysis of state and local elections as well as elections in other nations. Evidence that race-based misperception of candidates' ideologies disadvantages black candidates in congressional elections suggests that additional research on perceptions of candidates' ideologies is warranted.

Acknowledgements

Online Appendix

[Table OL1 about here]

[Table OL2 about here]

[Table OL3 about here]

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Table 1: The Effects of Race on Vote Choice

| | 1978-2004 ANES | | | | 2010 CCES | |
| | Only Direct Effects Assumed | | Direct and Indirect Effects | | Direct and Indirect Effects | |
	Coeff.	Std. Err.	Coeff.	Std. Err.	Coeff.	Std. Err.
Vote Choice						
Perceived Ideological Closeness	0.41**	0.03	0.32**	0.03	0.17**	0.01
White Respondent, Black Incumbent	-0.43	0.22	-0.11	0.25	-0.31	0.19
Black Respondent, White Incumbent	-0.06	0.20	-0.03	0.19	-0.09	0.14
Black Respondent, Black Incumbent	0.56	0.34	0.47	0.32	0.72**	0.21
Republican Incumbent	0.10	0.12	0.13	0.11	0.85**	0.14
Dem. Respondent, Dem. Incumbent	0.76**	0.15	0.83**	0.14	1.27**	0.10
Dem. Respondent, Rep. Incumbent	-0.84**	0.14	-0.84**	0.13	-1.57**	0.12
Rep. Respondent, Dem. Incumbent	-0.55**	0.14	-0.69**	0.13	-0.81**	0.11
Rep. Respondent, Rep. Incumbent	0.79**	0.15	0.90**	0.15	1.42**	0.14
Constant	0.29**	0.08	0.12*	0.08	-0.52**	0.09
Perceived Ideology of Incumbent						
DW-Nominate			0.50**	0.10	1.15**	0.11
Education			0.00	0.02	-0.02**	0.01
Education x DW-Nominate			0.49**	0.04	0.19**	0.01
White Respondent, Black Incumbent			-0.32**	0.10	-0.22**	0.08
Black Respondent, White Incumbent			-0.01	0.06	0.03	0.06
Black Respondent, Black Incumbent			0.05	0.09	0.30**	0.09
Republican Incumbent			0.25**	0.08	0.45**	0.13
Dem. Respondent, Dem. Incumbent			0.21**	0.05	0.36**	0.05
Dem. Respondent, Rep. Incumbent			0.15*	0.06	0.48**	0.06
Rep. Respondent, Dem. Incumbent			-0.39**	0.05	-0.63**	0.05
Rep. Respondent, Rep. Incumbent			0.12*	0.05	0.13*	0.05
Respondent Ideology			0.12**	0.01	0.01	0.01

Notes: The dependent variable in the vote choice equation is dichotomous, with 1 indicating a vote for the incumbent. The perceived ideology of the incumbent is measured on a 7-point scale from "Extremely Liberal" (-3) to "Extremely Conservative" (+3). The N's for the voting models are 1,773 and 1,825 for the ANES models and 21,868 for the CCES model. The pseudo-R^2 values for the voting models are 0.40 and 0.34 for the ANES voting models, and 0.62 for the CCES model. The model including both direct and indirect effects was estimated by runing an orderied probit regression on *Perceived Ideology of Incumbent*, and then using the predited values from this estimation in a probit regression of *Vote Choice*. The two equations estimated above are linked by a third equation that defines *Perceived Ideological Closeness* based on the endogenously determined *Perceived Ideology of Incumbent*. See the main text for details. The ordered probit cutpoints are omitted. Standard errors are robust and adjusted for clustering by district, and the standard errors for the stage-two model are Murphy-Topel standard errors. * indicates p<0.05; ** indicates p<0.01.

Table 2: Estimated Percentage of White Votes Lost by African American Incumbents Due to Race in Simulated Districts with Various Characteristics

District Characteristics	District Partisanship			Ideology (DW-Nominate)		Democratic Vote Share		% of White Votes Lost
	% Dem.	% Indep.	% Rep.	Democratic Incumbent	Republican Challenger	White Incumbent	Black Incumbent	
Typical Voters (Mean values within the dataset)	34.3%	30.9%	34.8%	-0.33	0.39	67.0%	60.4%	6.6%
Liberal District 1 (Mean candidate positions)	45.0	30.0	25.0	-0.33	0.39	75.7	69.9	5.8
Conservative District 1 (Mean candidate positions)	25.0	30.0	45.0	-0.33	0.39	58.9	49.2	9.7
Typical Voters (Highly polarized candidates)	34.3	30.9	34.8	-0.50	0.50	63.1	56.2	6.9
Liberal District 2 (Highly polarized candidates)	45.0	30.0	25.0	-0.50	0.50	71.3	65.9	5.4
Conservative District 2 (Highly polarized candidates)	25.0	30.0	45.0	-0.50	0.50	59.4	46.6	12.8

Table 3: Characteristics of Voters Predicted to Change Vote Based on Race

Typical Voters and Candidates

| Party | Ideology (7-Point Scale) | | | | | | |
	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Democrat	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.6%
Independent	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Republican	-	-	-	92.4%	-	-	-

Conservative District, Highly Polarized Candidates

| Party | Ideology (7-Point Scale) | | | | | | |
	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
Democrat	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.3%
Independent	-	-	-	-	29.7%	-	-
Republican	-	-	5.5%	62.5%	-	-	-

Figure 1: Voting Decision of White Voter Based on Perceived
Ideology of Black Democratic Candidate

| liberal | BDP | BDR | IP | IA | R | conservative |
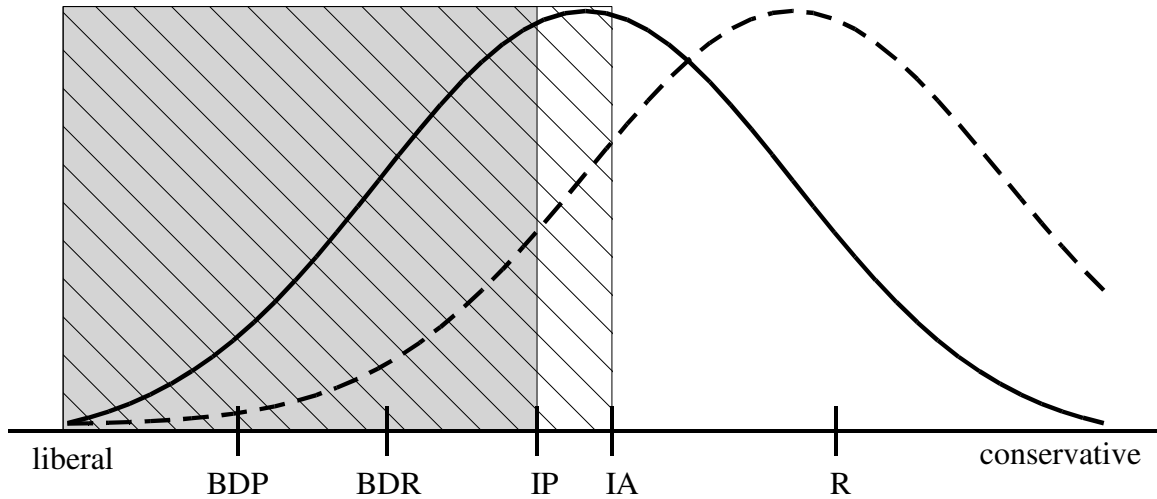
BDR: Revealed ideology of black Democratic candidate
BDP: Perceived ideology of black Democratic candidate
R: Ideology of Republican candidate
IA: Indifference point when perception is accurate
IP: Indifference point when perception is inaccurate
——————————— Median white voter is moderate
— — — — — — Median white voter is conservative

Table OL1: Race and Perceptions of Candidates' Ideologies in the 2006 and 2008 CCES (OLS)

	2006		2008	
	Coeff.	Std. Err.	Coeff.	Std. Err.
DW-Nominate	28.29**	2.82	21.90**	2.13
Education	0.07	0.14	-0.16	0.16
Education x DW-Nominate	1.83**	0.24	3.05**	0.30
White Respondent, Black Incumbent	-6.41**	1.48	-6.82**	1.04
Black Respondent, White Incumbent	0.10	0.78	-1.85	1.31
Black Respondent, Black Incumbent	4.28**	1.33	3.55*	1.75
Republican Incumbent	1.78	3.02	4.47	2.79
Dem. Respondent, Dem. Incumbent	1.58	1.08	1.57	1.44
Dem. Respondent, Rep. Incumbent	11.46**	1.13	10.84**	1.39
Rep. Respondent, Dem. Incumbent	-15.41**	1.17	-14.89**	1.58
Rep. Respondent, Rep. Incumbent	4.35**	1.05	4.31**	1.30
Respondent Ideology	0.02	0.01	0.068**	0.02
Constant	0.63	1.48	-3.25*	1.62

Notes: The perceived ideology of the incumbent is measured on a 101-point thermometer scale from most liberal to most conservative. Standard errors are robust and adjusted for clustering by district. * indicates $p<0.05$; ** indicates $p<0.01$.

Table OL2: Race and Perceptions of Candidates' Ideologies in 1996,
Open Seats and Challengers Included (Ordered Probit)

	Democratic Candidates		Republican Candidates	
	Coeff.	Std. Err.	Coeff.	Std. Err.
Candidate Ideology/Imputed Candidate Ideology	2.01**	0.41	0.20	0.32
Education	-0.17	0.13	-0.13	0.08
Education x DW-Nominate	-0.02	0.39	1.33**	0.34
White Respondent, Black Candidate	-0.16	0.31	-0.81	0.77
Black Respondent, White Candidate	-0.02	0.27	-0.22	0.19
Black Respondent, Black Candidate	0.01	0.17	-0.21	0.48
Incumbent	0.07	0.12	0.15	0.17
Democratic Respondent	0.42**	0.12	0.15	0.15
Republican Respondent	-0.43*	0.20	0.40**	0.14
Respondent Ideology	0.12*	0.06	-0.02	0.05

Notes: The ideology measure is based on Asolabehere, et al. (2001), and makes use of National Political Awareness Test (NPAT) data. The perceived ideology of the incumbent is measured on a 7-point scale from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Standard errors are robust and adjusted for clustering by district. * indicates p<0.05; ** indicates p<0.01.

Table OL3: The Effects of Race on Vote Choice (with Additional Variables)

	Only Direct Effects Assumed		Direct and Indirect Effects	
	Coeff.	Std. Err.	Coeff.	Std. Err.
Vote Choice				
Perceived Ideological Closeness	0.41**	0.03	0.32**	0.02
White Respondent, Black Incumbent	-0.43	0.22	-0.11	0.24
Black Respondent, White Incumbent	-0.06	0.20	-0.03	0.20
Black Respondent, Black Incumbent	0.56	0.34	0.47	0.32
Republican Incumbent	0.10	0.12	0.13	0.11
Democratic Respondent, Democratic Incumbent	0.76**	0.15	0.83**	0.14
Democratic Respondent, Republican Incumbent	-0.84**	0.14	-0.84**	0.14
Republican Respondent, Democratic Incumbent	-0.55**	0.14	-0.70**	0.11
Republican Respondent, Republican Incumbent	0.79**	0.15	0.90**	0.16
Constant	0.29**	0.08	0.12	0.20
Perceived Ideology of Incumbent				
DW-Nominate			0.43**	0.10
Education			-0.02	0.02
Black Respondent x Education			0.03	0.07
Education x DW-Nominate			0.50**	0.04
Black Respondent x DW-Nominate x Education			-0.08	0.06
Age (logged)			-0.09*	0.04
Age (logged) x DW-Nominate			0.30**	0.10
Interest in Election			0.05**	0.02
Interest in Election x DW-Nominate			0.24**	0.05
White Respondent, Black Incumbent			-0.31**	0.10
Black Respondent, White Incumbent			-0.04	0.08
Black Respondent, Black Incumbent			-0.03	0.11
Republican Incumbent			0.30**	0.08
Democratic Respondent, Democratic Incumbent			0.22**	0.04
Democratic Respondent, Republican Incumbent			0.13*	0.06
Republican Respondent, Democratic Incumbent			-0.37**	0.05
Republican Respondent, Republican Incumbent			0.10*	0.04
Respondent Ideology			0.12**	0.01

Notes: The dependent variable in the vote choice equation is dichotomous, with 1 indicating a vote for the incumbent. The perceived ideology of the incumbent is measured on a 7-point scale from "Extremely Liberal" (-3) to "Extremely Conservative" (+3). The ordered probit cutpoints are -2.14, -1.33, -0.65, 0.16, 0.90, and 1.92. Standard errors are robust and adjusted for clustering by district, and the standard errors for the stage-two model are Murphy-Topel standard errors. * indicates $p < 0.05$; ** indicates $p < 0.01$. See the main text for additional details.