

The Effectiveness of Implicit and Explicit Racial Appeals in a
“Post-Racial” America

by

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Dedicated to my mother, Artilda Collins

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CHAPTER 1

The Landscape of Racial Appeals in Contemporary American Politics

Introduction

For some time scholars have been documenting a political strategy referred to as “racial priming.” Racial priming occurs when political elites use subtle visual cues or coded language to link some policy proposal to ethnic and racial minorities without directly broaching the subject of race. Often this happens when politicians highlight particular issues that are ostensibly not about race, but have become associated over time with African Americans, such as crime or welfare (Gilens 1999; Gilliam and Iyengar 2000; Mendelberg 2001, 2008; Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002). Some political elites may use this strategy to appeal to the racially conservative views of White Americans and activate latent negative racial stereotypes, such that some whites will bring these racial predispositions to bear on their political decisions. Perhaps the most infamous example of racial priming is the airing of the “Willie Horton” ad, run by the National Security Political Action Committee (NSPAC) against Michael Dukakis during the 1988 presidential campaign. As documented by several scholars (1992; Mendelberg 2001; Hurwitz and Peffley 2005), the ad criticized the Democratic presidential nominee, Michael Dukakis, for a weekend furlough program he oversaw during his tenure as Governor of Massachusetts. The advertisement prominently featured a mugshot of Horton, who was African American, accompanied by a narration that informed the

viewer that during one weekend furlough Horton, “fled, kidnapping a young couple stabbing the man and repeatedly raping his girlfriend.” While the advertisement was ostensibly about Dukakis’ record on crime, Mendelberg (1997; 2001) convincingly demonstrates that the ad primed racial attitudes.

Political scientists have typically studied racial priming in a context similar to that of the Willie Horton ad. In other words, they examine White Republican candidates (or their surrogates) who for their political advantage, invoke race in contests against Democratic opponents. As documented by scholars, candidates have an incentive to run on issues for which they or their party have an advantage (Petrocik 1996). Since the Democratic Party is often perceived by white voters as being too beholden to African Americans (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Frymer 1999; Kinder and Sanders 1996), it is to the advantage of Republican candidates to invoke race or “play the race card.” Thus, much of the scholarly focus on racial priming has been devoted to the use of this strategy by White Republican candidates. However, I argue that this approach may be too narrow. That is, not only are there incentives—in my view, often overlooked in the literature—for a much broader range of politicians to engage in racial priming, but the array of appeals that constitute “racial priming” are also much larger than previously considered. In short, White Democratic candidates or black candidates of either party can also utilize this political strategy. Therefore, one of the aims of this dissertation is to offer a more comprehensive description and account of racial appeals. I contend (and later demonstrate) that by focusing on the Republican Party or white candidates, scholars are ignoring a significant proportion of political elites, and thus failing to explore the nuance and caveats associated with the theory of racial priming.

Central to the theory of racial priming is the notion that racial appeals are only effective when they are implicit, or are ostensibly not about race. According to the theory, if the racial appeal is explicit¹ in nature, voters will reject the appeal, because an explicit appeal is perceived as violating “the norm of equality,” or the prohibition against racist speech. However, much of the research in this area has focused on the use of racial appeals by white candidates, and as noted earlier, especially White Republicans. But, White Republicans face markedly different constraints than Black Republicans, White Democrats, and Black Democrats. Due to the parties’ respective reputations on race, as well as voters’ perceptions of black versus white candidates, there likely is not any presumption on the part of voters that White Republican candidates will be beholden to black voters. Unlike Democratic candidates who are often perceived as being too attentive to racial issues, White Republican candidates instead face the opposite problem, and are frequently perceived as racially insensitive (Philpot 2007). Therefore when making racial appeals, White Republican candidates may be more constrained and have less latitude to make appeals that are more explicit in nature, because they are more likely to suffer from the stereotype of being racially insensitive. Since the theory of racial priming has been largely tested in the context of White Republican candidates, the theory to date may have overstated the importance of racial appeals being implicit, rather than explicit in nature. In other words, by limiting the test of the theory to the group most constrained in their ability to use explicit appeals, the literature has not devoted attention to the contexts in which explicit appeals may actually be effective. Thus this dissertation revisits the theory of racial priming.

¹ An appeal is defined as “explicit” if it uses racial nouns, such as “black,” “white,” “African American,” etc.

Drawing on the race and politics literature, I develop and test a theory of “racial signaling,” which states that candidates seeking the votes of whites have an incentive to “signal” either implicitly or explicitly that they are not beholden to black voters, without also implying that they are racially insensitive. Specifically, I explore which types of appeals are effective under what circumstances, and compare the efficacy of these appeals by black candidates to the efficacy of the appeals by their white counterparts. Depending on the partisan and racial background of the candidate, their demographic characteristics can either constrain or facilitate their use of various racial appeals. My theory of racial signaling suggests that African American candidates may have more latitude than their white counterparts to use explicit racial appeals, but may be thwarted in their attempts to use implicit ones. That is, in the case of black candidates, their very presence may overwhelm some implicit racial cues because the cues may be *too* subtle to activate the racial predispositions that would benefit an African American candidate. In some instances a black candidate may have to “go explicit,” in order to overcome the stereotype that he will be the candidate concerned only, or at least primarily, with black interests. On the other hand, a white candidate—especially White Republicans, may benefit from the subtlety and plausible deniability associated with implicit racial appeals.

Implicit/Explicit Model

While many scholars have documented the ability of racial appeals to prime the racial predispositions of White Americans, Mendelberg (2001) provides the most detailed description of the theory of racial priming, in which she identifies four axioms: (1) White Americans are torn between the “norm of equality” and resentment toward blacks for their perceived failure to abide by the American creed of individualism and hard work. (2) Racial priming works because certain cues make racial schemas more accessible in memory so that they are automatically employed during subsequent political decision-making. (3) Becoming aware of the racial content of a message would lead most people to reject it because they would not want to violate the norm of equality. (4) Therefore, racial appeals are effective only if they are not recognized as such by the audience.

A key tenet of the theory of racial priming is the view that explicit appeals are less effective than implicit appeals, because explicit appeals are perceived as violating the “norm of equality.” According to Mendelberg (2001), the norm of equality is “The social prohibition against making racist statements in public acts...” (p.17). According to Mendelberg, “an implicit appeal is less likely to be perceived as having violated the norm of racial equality. It is likely to be perceived not as a statement that derogates blacks, but rather as a message that includes race only incidentally and neutrally. The same message made explicitly is likely to be perceived as having crossed the line of public acceptability, and it will be rejected” (Mendelberg 2001, p.20).

Typically, testing of the implicit/explicit model has relied on experimental research designs because they allow researchers to make strong causal inferences (Kinder and Palfrey 1993). These experiments investigate the efficacy of implicit appeals, as compared to explicit appeals, nonracial appeals (devoid of any racial content), and counter-stereotypical messages that either portray whites negatively, or portray blacks positively. However, since the implicit/explicit model has largely been tested in the context of White Republican candidates, who face a particular set of constraints, I argue that the efficacy of explicit appeals has been underestimated. The theory of racial priming has also largely relied on white subjects, so it is also unclear how the theory applies to African Americans, who are often the subject of these racial appeals (for an exception, see White 2007). Finally, it is worth noting that many of these experimental studies rely on student samples or nonstudent adult subjects from college towns, who may respond differently to explicit racial appeals, than a more representative sample of White Americans. For example, the norm of equality may be more rigorously enforced in a college town, where there are likely to be more White racial liberals. Thus, additional conceptual clarity is necessary to understand fully the nature and extent of racial priming in modern American politics.

In fact, much of the research related to the racial priming hypothesis, does not actually test the effectiveness of explicit appeals, but rather tests the effectiveness of implicit appeals relative to a control. For example, in an experimental study, Mendelberg (1997) tested the ability of racial images to prime racial attitudes without any verbal references to race (implicit appeal). She randomly exposed half of an undergraduate convenience sample to the 1988 Republican campaign advertisement entitled “Weekend

Passes,” which as noted earlier, criticized Democratic presidential nominee Michael Dukakis for the weekend furlough program he oversaw as governor of Massachusetts. Mendelberg found that subjects in the treatment group who viewed the ad were much more likely to bring their racial attitudes to bear on their race-related policy preferences than subjects in the control group who did not view the ad. As noted earlier, this particular experiment Mendelberg only compares subjects who were in the implicit condition to subjects in the control group. In other words, she does not actually test the efficacy of explicit appeals in this experiment. Thus, it is unclear from this particular experiment whether voters would have brought their racial attitudes to bear on their race-related policy preferences, had they been exposed to an explicit appeal in which verbal references to race were made. Thus, one of the modifications that my study makes to the racial priming hypothesis is to test the efficacy of explicit appeals relative to implicit appeals, among both white and black respondents.

It is worth noting that Hutchings and Valentino (2003) are less sanguine than Mendelberg (2001) regarding the presumed ineffectiveness of explicit appeals. They call for further conceptual clarity of the racial priming hypothesis by questioning whether explicit racial appeals are necessarily ineffective. They hypothesized that explicit appeals that reference racial group policy disputes might succeed in priming whites’ racial attitudes. Relying on a convenience sample of adult, nonstudent subjects they manipulated elements of a news story about a speech that Vice President Al Gore and Texas Governor George W. Bush gave before the NAACP convention in the summer of 2000. In one version the candidates were depicted as similar on “black issues” and in another version they were depicted consistent with party stereotypes. By Mendelberg’s

definition, both conditions were explicit, because racial nouns were used. However, in the “difference condition,” subjects endorsing the most negative stereotypes about blacks were some 50 percentage points more supportive of the Republican candidate than were similar individuals in the control group (Hutchings and Jardina, 2009). Thus, they demonstrate that an explicit appeal can be effective if the appeal highlights policy disputes. However, they do not examine whether an explicit appeal that also violates the norm of racial equality might have also generated similar results. Also of note is that Mendelberg (1997) and Hutchings and Valentino (2003) focus on the attitudes of only white respondents. One of the contributions of my study is that I examine the attitudes of black and white respondents.

However, in one of the first studies to examine how racial appeals operate among African Americans, White (2007) demonstrates that explicit appeals operate differently among blacks and whites. White conducted two experiments testing the implicit/explicit model. In one experiment subjects were exposed to a newspaper article about a politician who opposes the war in Iraq because it discriminates against African Americans (explicit), or because it prevents spending on programs to assist the poor (implicit), or for a nonracial reason (nonracial), or subjects were exposed to an off-issue control story. Among whites, only the implicit story increased the effect of anti-black feelings on opposition to the war relative to the off-issue control condition, which further confirms the theory of racial priming. However, among blacks, the response consisted of a stronger effect of pro-black feelings on opposition to the war, and it was strongest in the explicit condition, in line with the expectation that more explicit pro-black messages would better mobilize blacks’ in-group solidarity. Thus, White (2007) provides further

conceptual clarity about the theory of racial priming, by demonstrating that implicit appeals are not always more effective than explicit appeals at priming racial attitudes. In this case, African Americans were more effectively primed by an explicit appeal than by an implicit appeal, because among African Americans, explicit appeals are likely to mobilize their sense of in-group solidarity. However, prior to the White (2007) study, the implicit/explicit model had only been tested among white subjects. Therefore, African Americans' responsiveness to explicit appeals was previously unknown. White (2007) highlights the need to interrogate and potentially modify the racial priming hypothesis, by testing the implicit/explicit model outside of the white population.

In the second experiment, White also tests the implicit/explicit model among blacks and whites, but this time in a policy area that has been more racialized—funding for food stamps. Among whites the racial priming hypothesis was confirmed, with whites racializing their opinion on food stamps only in the implicit “inner city families” condition and not in the explicit “black and Hispanic,” implicit “poor,” or nonracial “working American” conditions. Again, lending support to Mendelberg's claim that implicit racial appeals are effective, because they do not violate the “norm of equality.” However, in stark contrast to their white counterparts, blacks were actually *more* responsive to the explicit message than the other messages, which again illustrates that explicit appeals can be effective under certain conditions. This also indicates that racial priming may operate differently among African Americans. Specifically for African Americans, it appears that explicit appeals are effective at mobilizing their sense of in-group solidarity.

However, this does not mean that implicit appeals are never effective at priming the racial predispositions of African Americans. In fact, similar to their white counterparts, the results from the food stamps experiment showed a negative response from blacks to the stigmatized subgroup represented by “inner-city.” Thus, White (2007) illustrates that even blacks are vulnerable to implicit anti-black appeals. Connecting blacks’ in-group attitudes and their positions on public policies hinges on a tension between belief in a common racial group interest and negative representations of some subsets of the group. Hence, “when an issue is linked to a marginalized subset of the in-group, the role of Black group identification in determining support for that issue is attenuated; the issue, despite implication of its racial meaning, is treated as beyond the ‘boundaries of Blackness’” (White 2007; Cohen 1999).

In other words, black voters tend to be ambivalent about which black subgroup interests deserve to be included in the “black political agenda” and may seek to distance themselves from marginalized subgroups, which may make them susceptible to negative cues about black subgroups. These results suggest that African Americans may even be vulnerable to anti-black *explicit* appeals, as long as they are connected to a marginalized sub-set of African Americans. However, to my knowledge, this proposition has never been empirically tested. Therefore, one of the goals of this study is to examine how African American respondents react to a negative *explicit* appeal about African Americans.

Finally, in the most recent work to challenge the efficacy of explicit appeals, Hutchings et al. (2010) demonstrate that on average, white women have internalized the norm of equality more completely than white men. Relying on a random sample of white

adults from Georgia, they exposed subjects to three similar, yet distinct newspaper articles about the confederate flag controversy. Specifically, subjects were exposed to an implicit racial frame, an explicit racial frame, and an explicitly racist frame. The explicitly racial frames, in particular, the racist frame, diminished support for the confederate flag, but only among white women. It is also worth noting that the explicit racial frames were also associated with a decline in identification with the Democratic Party, among white men. Thus these findings challenge notions about the inefficacy of explicit appeals, because for the white men in the sample, the explicit appeals prompted more support for the Confederate flag than the implicit appeal. In other words, it appears that the norm of equality was not embraced to the extent that may have been previously thought, prior to this study. These results highlight the need to test the implicit/explicit model outside of convenience samples from college-towns. In addition, their study suggests that there may be fewer concerns about violating racial norms in the South.

However, one area that is left unexplored is whether White Americans may be less concerned about norm violation if the messenger is a member of the in-group. For example, can an explicit appeal about African Americans prime the racial attitudes of White Americans, if the messenger is African American? However, since the implicit/explicit model has never been tested in a context where a member of the target group makes the negative explicit appeal, it is unclear how respondents would react to such an appeal. Finally, these findings suggest the need to explore whether there are other subsets of the population who have also unevenly embraced the norm of equality.

For example, Huber and Lapinski (2006) suggest that the norm of equality has not been fully embraced among low-education White Americans. According to Huber and

Lapinski (2006) low-education respondents make no distinction between implicit and explicit messages, and are slightly receptive to both types of messages. The Huber and Lapinski (2006) study is the largest study to test the implicit/explicit model, relying on a sample of over 6300 adults from Knowledge Networks WebTV survey panel. It is also one of the few studies that does not rely on a convenience sample.

However, Mendelberg (2008) calls into question the reliability of the WebTV survey module in Huber and Lapinski's study. She argues that because there was insufficient lag time between when subjects' racial predispositions were measured and when they were exposed to the experimental treatments, any priming effects were neutralized. Nevertheless, Huber and Lapinski (2008) maintain that implicit appeals are no more effective than explicit appeals at priming racial predispositions. They argue that low-education respondents do not differentiate between the two types of appeals, while high-education respondents are impervious to racial priming. While the results of Huber and Lapinski (2006; 2008) stand in stark contrast to the many studies that have concluded that implicit appeals prime racial attitudes (Nelson and Kinder 1996, Mendelberg 2001, Valentino, Hutchings and White 2001; White 2007; Hurwitz and Peffley 2007), they nevertheless highlight the need to test the implicit/explicit model in a nationally representative sample, as well as the need to explore sub-group differences in receptivity to racial appeals.

Source Cues

The literature on source cues would suggest that who delivers the message is just as, if not more important than the message itself. Since most people have limited political knowledge, the public tends to rely on heuristics or cues that they find trustworthy or informative (McCubbins and Lupia 1993). Important source cues include the messenger's race and partisanship.

In fact, research by Kuklinski and Hurley (1996) indicates that black respondents supported a conservative statement about racial inequality when it was attributed to black sources (Jesse Jackson or Clarence Thomas) and disagreed with it when attributed to white sources (Ted Kennedy or George H.W. Bush).² These results suggest that African Americans perceive conservative statements about racial inequality as more credible when they are attributed to black politicians, rather than their white counterparts.

In a similar vein, a 2007 study by Nelson et al. demonstrated the importance of the race of the messenger. This experimental study examined the effects of elite messages on perceptions of racism. A scenario was described in which a white policeman shot a black male. The description of the incident, which was held constant, was combined with a charge of racism made by a politician described in one of four ways: White Democrat, Black Democrat, White Republican, or Black Republican. The results

²The fictitious quote was attributed to one of four political elites: George H.W. Bush, Clarence Thomas, Ted Kennedy, or Jesse Jackson--respectively, a white conservative, a black conservative, a white liberal, and a black liberal. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the four sources, who for the purposes of the experiment was quoted in the New York Times as saying that "African Americans must stop making excuses and rely much more on themselves to get ahead in society."

indicate that white respondents were more likely to view the shooting as racist when the charge of racism was made by a white politician, suggesting that a white politician's claim of racism is seen as more credible than that of a black politician among white respondents. These findings suggest that some sources of information are more persuasive than others, and that the likelihood of a source being persuasive, is influenced by the race of the source. If whites believe that blacks exaggerate their experience of discrimination, such claims may be discounted.

On the other hand, black subjects were more likely to accept claims that the shooting was racist when such claims were made by a Black Republican, rather than by a Black Democrat. These results indicate that those black elites who diverge from prior expectations by not making claims of discrimination, may be perceived as more credible than black elites who conform to prior expectations by making claims of discrimination. Furthermore, the fact that the Black Republican was perceived as more credible than the Black Democrat, also demonstrates the importance of partisan cues.

While previous research has explored how partisan stereotypes, as well as racial stereotypes influence evaluations of candidates, there has been less attention paid to how partisan and racial stereotypes interact. For example, the public has perceptions of what it means for a politician to be a "Black Democrat," or a "White Republican." Thus, the extent to which politicians can overcome racialized partisan stereotypes remains unclear. Previous research indicates that voters frequently view candidates based on their stereotypes of the candidate's party, often ignoring or misinterpreting new information (Rahn 1993). However, it is unclear whether black or white politicians of either major party can effectively use racial appeals to overcome racialized partisan stereotypes of

their respective groups. Therefore, another contribution of my study is to test the effectiveness of counter-stereotypical appeals that challenge racialized partisan stereotypes.

Theory of Racial Signaling

Since Democratic candidates are often stereotyped as being too beholden to black interests (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Frymer 1999), Democratic candidates seeking office in majority white jurisdictions have been advised to use a “deracialization strategy.” The originator of the term “deracialization,” Charles Hamilton (1977), initially intended the concept as a strategy by which the Democrats could regain some of the ground they had lost to the Republicans during the 1972 presidential election. By then, the Republican Party had successfully rolled out its infamous Southern Strategy, in which Republican candidates, led by Richard Nixon, adopted coded language such as “antibusing,” and “pro-law and order” to appeal to whites, particularly Southerners, who were uncomfortable with the pace of integration, in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement. As a result, Hamilton advised the Democrats to pursue a deracialized electoral strategy, thereby denying their Republican opponents the opportunity of using race as a “polarizing issue.” Essentially, Hamilton was encouraging the Democratic Party to emphasize those issues that had broad appeal to the electorate across racial lines.

Although Democrats have been advised to adopt a deracialized approach, it still remains unclear whether explicit racial appeals can be as effective, if not more effective than deracialized appeals. My theory of racial signaling suggests that Democratic candidates do not have to avoid the issue of race to be successful among white voters. Racial signaling refers to a strategy for pursuing office in majority white jurisdictions, where candidates campaign in a manner that “signals” they are not beholden to black

voters, thereby reinforcing rather than undermining the role of race in electoral politics. Furthermore, racial signaling can include explicit racial appeals and still be effective at garnering votes, which challenges previous theories about racial priming (Mendelberg 1996; 2001) and theories about crossover strategies (Hamilton 1977; McCormick and Jones 1993). The extent to which a candidate can signal explicitly is constrained by the candidate's race and partisanship. For example, Democratic candidates may have more latitude to use explicit appeals, because they are typically stereotyped as being attentive to racial issues (Carmines and Stimson 1989), whereas Republican candidates may have less latitude to use explicit appeals, because their party is stereotyped as racially insensitive (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1994).

In the post-civil rights era, many whites may be ambivalent about black interests, but they also support the norm of racial equality, and thus are not supportive of candidates who may be perceived as racist. Therefore, candidates face a balancing act in which they must signal that they are not beholden to black interests, while also demonstrating that they are not racially insensitive. The extent to which they have to signal that they are not beholden to black interests, while simultaneously demonstrating that they are not racially insensitive, is constrained by their racial and partisan background. For example, due to partisan stereotypes, a White Republican candidate may have to place more emphasis on demonstrating that he is not racially insensitive, whereas a Black or White Democratic candidate may place more emphasis on demonstrating that they are not primarily concerned with black interests. Furthermore, Black Democratic candidates are likely to be afforded more latitude to signal via the use of explicit appeals, than their white counterparts, especially Republicans.

Similar to deracialization, racial signaling is a method for candidates to “enhance effectively the likelihood of white electoral support.” The major distinction between racial signaling and deracialization is that unlike deracialization, racial signaling does not necessarily entail the *avoidance* of the topic of race. In fact, candidates can talk openly about race to white voters, but this must be done in a manner that signals that their racial politics are conservative, and are not those of political figures associated with liberal racial politics, such as Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, or even Walter Mondale. Furthermore, unlike deracialization, racial signaling is not exclusively available to Democratic candidates

Arguably there are many elements that contribute to a racial signaling strategy, but for the purposes of this study, I focus on two—public distancing and racially conservative appeals. Public distancing is when candidates avoid appearances at public events or advertisements with particular demographic groups, in this case, African Americans. Public distancing would be classified as an implicit racial appeal, because while there are no verbal references to race, whom a candidate chooses to be associated with visually, sends a strong message. On the other hand, a racially conservative appeal could be either implicit or explicit in nature.

Public distancing is based on the premise that there are negative political consequences to being visually or publicly associated with African Americans. By limiting or avoiding public appearances with African Americans, the candidate sends a signal about the groups to which he will be responsive. Previous research has largely focused on the ability of white candidates to use implicit appeals to prime the racial predispositions of whites. However, less explored is whether African American

candidates can also use implicit appeals to signal that they are not beholden to black voters. Furthermore, I explore whether the mere presence of African American images serves as an implicit cue. Previous research indicates that it is not the mere presence of black images, but specifically the visual-narrative pairing that primes racial attitudes (Valentino, Hutchings, and White, 2001). Research has typically focused on the use of stereotypical images (e.g. the Willie Horton ad) to prime racial attitudes. However, drawing on the literature on group-centrism, I contend that voters view images of African American supporters or white supporters, as indicative of whom the candidate will support once elected to office.

Aside from the strategic use of racial imagery, public distancing may entail very public decisions to not attend high-profile events with the particular group, such as then-candidate Obama's decision to not attend the 2008 State of the Black Union forum. The forum was hosted annually from 2000-2010 by political pundit Tavis Smiley, and was designed to discuss and address issues of particular relevance to the African American community. In his very public decision to not attend the forum, Obama wrote an open letter to Smiley in which he stated, "The exchange of ideas raised at this annual symposium are invaluable as our nation strives to address the critical issues facing not just African Americans, but Americans of every race, background and political party."³ I contend that both Obama's letter and his decision to not attend the forum implicitly "signal" that he is not beholden to African Americans, as he used language that highlighted the importance of the forum to *all* Americans. As an African American Democrat, Obama in particular has an incentive to demonstrate that he is not primarily

³ "Tavis to Michelle Obama: Thanks But No Thanks."
http://www.npr.org/blogs/newsandviews/2008/02/tavis_to_michelle_obama_thanks.html
(accessed January 23, 2013).

concerned with black interests. Attendance at such a high profile “black event” was likely to have confirmed the stereotype of a black candidate primarily concerned with black interests.

The other element of a racial signaling strategy, racially conservative appeals, can be delivered either implicitly or explicitly. An implicit appeal conveys the message through coded language and imagery, whereas an explicit appeal entails the use of racial nouns. Racially conservative appeals emphasize personal responsibility over race-specific solutions. For Black Democrats in particular, these appeals may be especially important, because the appeal signals that the candidate is not beholden to black voters, and does not have the liberal racial politics that many voters associate with Black Democrats. This strategy is effective among whites, who often perceive black politicians as too liberal on racial issues. However, this strategy also plays well in black barbershops, churches, and backyard barbecues, where a unique brand of conservatism still runs strong (Harris-Lacewell 2004). Thus, racially conservative appeals may enable black candidates to talk openly about the topic of race, while still appealing to large swaths of both black and white voters. Again, as noted earlier, the degree to which candidates can use racial signaling may be constrained by their demographic characteristics such as race and party.

Overview

The study began in Chapter 1 with a discussion of the conceptual and methodological limitations of the racial priming hypothesis, particularly the need to test the theory beyond White Republican candidates. Therefore, I presented and outlined my theory of racial signaling, which offers an important modification to the theory of racial priming, by accounting for the use of racial appeals beyond White Republican candidates. I also highlight the need to test the theory outside the traditional convenience samples of white respondents drawn from college towns. Particular emphasis is given to the impact such limitations pose for assessing the impact of different messages by black candidates, as well as the dearth of studies that examine black attitudes.

Chapter 2 is a study of several cases of Congressional elections involving black and white candidates, Democrats and Republicans, who ran for seats in majority white jurisdictions. These case studies are designed to provide more direct evidence of the types of campaign strategies candidates use when trying to effectively enhance the likelihood of white support. Specifically, I offer an account of the use of implicit and explicit racial appeals in the following campaigns: Gwen Moore, an African American Democrat from Wisconsin (U.S. House, 2004), Keith Ellison, an African American Democrat from Minnesota (U.S. House, 2006), Harold Ford Jr., and African American Democrat from Tennessee (U.S. Senate, 2006), Allen West, an African American

Republican from Florida (U.S. House, 2010), and James Webb, a White Democrat from Virginia (U.S. Senate, 2006).

Chapter 3 discusses the results of Experiment 1, which tests the effectiveness of different types of racial appeals by both black and white candidates, with a focus on white respondents. In particular, special attention is devoted to whether explicit appeals can be effective under certain circumstances, especially when the messenger is African American. Contrary to the theory of racial priming, I find that explicit appeals have not been rejected to the degree that has previously been argued. White racial conservatives do not reject explicit racial appeals regardless of whether the messenger is black or white. In contrast, white racial liberals' rejection of explicit racial appeals is contingent on the race of the messenger, such that they reject the message when the candidate is depicted as white, but accept them when the candidate is depicted as black. The findings from Experiment 1 suggest that adherence to the norm of equality is contingent on the race of the messenger.

Chapter 4 also discusses the results of Experiment 1, but with a focus on black respondents. The results indicate that in contrast to their white counterparts, black respondents reject explicit appeals regardless of whether the messenger was depicted as black or white. However, the penalty is more severe for the white candidate with the explicit appeal than for his black counterpart.

Next, Chapter 5 discusses the results of Experiment 2, which tests the “public distancing” element of the racial signaling strategy. In other words, do Democratic candidates have an incentive to distance themselves from African American supporters? Specifically, are Democratic candidates penalized by whites for even a mere visual

association with African Americans? Experiment 2 also tests whether black candidates are evaluated more favorably when they are associated with a preponderance of white, as opposed to black images. Experiment 2 was in part designed to test whether African American candidates had an incentive to “go explicit” in order to effectively enhance the likelihood of white support. In other words, is the mild visual cue of white supporters sufficient to garner white support, or do African American candidates have to utilize more aggressive racial appeals to garner the support of White Americans? The results of Experiment 2 indicate that White Democrats are penalized for an association with black images. On the other hand, African American candidates regardless of their partisanship and the racial composition of their advertisements, were unable to alter respondents’ perceptions.

The dissertation concludes with Chapter 6, which provides a detailed discussion of the relevance of my findings. By summarizing the major findings of the previous chapters, and relating them to broader themes in politics and political science, I demonstrate the implications of this research for future studies of race, public opinion, and campaigns and elections.

Chapter 2

Implicit and Explicit Cues in Congressional Contests (2004-2010)

In the previous chapter, I outlined my theory of racial signaling, which states that candidates who are seeking the support of white voters have an incentive to “signal” that they are not beholden to African American interests, without also implying that they are racially insensitive. In this chapter I offer some examples of this behavior in Congressional campaigns. These cases are included for descriptive purposes and less with an intention to draw causal inference. Describing elections in this manner involves making some generalizations based on a small number of observations. Thus it is descriptive and perhaps less scientific, but it also provides a valuable opportunity to observe under real conditions, a glimpse at the behavior we will examine in later chapters in an experimental context.

In order to examine racial signaling in real campaigns, I rely upon a variety of journalistic sources as well as campaign materials. Working backward, I have attempted to reconstruct the events of the elections. Specifically, I have focused on local newspaper accounts and campaign advertisements. I will show that the statements politicians make on the stump, what their campaign ads claim and what they charge of their opponents, whom they choose to speak to and whom they avoid, and what vehicles they use to communicate with the electorate, are all avenues through which we can understand how

candidates can use racial cues. The cases have been selected from congressional election contests from 2004-2010.

I excluded any elections that were conducted in areas in which an African American had previously held the seat. For example, I excluded Emmanuel Cleaver's run for Missouri's Fifth Congressional District in 2004, because the district had previously been represented by another African American, Alan Wheat. I suspect that we are more likely to see the use of racial cues by both black and white candidates in areas where there is not previous experience with black leadership, because there is likely to be more uncertainty about black leadership (Hajnal, 2007), and thus a greater incentive to engage in "signaling." The elections that I have chosen are those that were most competitive. I also selected cases that offered some variation, with regards to racial composition, as well as the degree to which candidates engaged in signaling. I chose elections from different states, and unlike in the experiments, one of the elections includes a female candidate.⁴ Table 2.1 provides a list of the electoral contests that I examine in this chapter.

[TABLE 2.1 ABOUT HERE]

⁴ Future work will examine how gender stereotypes may inhibit or promote the ability of women candidates to use racial appeals.

2004 Race for Wisconsin's 4th Congressional District

In January 2004, when pro-labor Democrat and 20-year veteran of the House, Gerald D. Kleczka unexpectedly announced his decision to retire, he left Wisconsin's 4th Congressional District open for only the third time since 1948. The district includes the entire City of Milwaukee, which for decades had been divided into two Congressional districts, with the white south side of the city in one and the north side, where most of the black residents live, in the other. However, Wisconsin lost a House seat in the round of reapportionment prior to the 2004 election, which forced the majority-minority hyper-segregated city into a single Congressional district. The Fourth Congressional District also encompasses several mostly white working-class suburbs. Whites are the plurality in the district, constituting 50 percent of the district's residents. Wisconsin's Fourth Congressional district also has a large population of blacks (33 percent) and a significant population of Hispanics (12 percent). It is also worth noting that the fourth district is heavily Democratic (Al Gore won 66 percent of the district's vote in 2000), and the district is consistently ranked as the most Democratic district in Wisconsin. Thus, whoever won the Democratic primary in 2004 would be the likely winner of the general election.

Many potential candidates for the seat emerged, but the field eventually narrowed to six candidates—four Democrats and two Republicans. The four Democratic candidates included Tim Carpenter, an state senator from Milwaukee's South

Side; Matt Flynn, a former chairman of the Wisconsin Democratic Party and co-chairman of Senator John Kerry's presidential campaign in Wisconsin; Shirley Krug, a state senator and former leader in the State Assembly; and Gwendolyn Moore, another state senator, who if she won the race, would be the first African American to represent Wisconsin in the U.S. House of Representatives. Moore was also the first black woman elected to the state Senate. The Republican candidates included another African American, Corey Hoze former Health and Human Services regional director. The other Republican candidate was Gerald Boyle, a defense attorney and Iraq War veteran.

Initially the Democratic field was led by Matt Flynn, who many perceived as the establishment candidate. As noted earlier, he was the former chairman of the Wisconsin Democratic Party, and he had access to an organizing infrastructure as co-chairman of Senator John Kerry's presidential campaign in Wisconsin. Furthermore, there was speculation that Congressman Kleczka timed his announcement of his decision to retire to disadvantage potential candidates such as Carpenter, Krug, and Moore. Unlike Flynn, the other Democratic candidates would have had to forego re-election bids in order to run for Kleczka's seat. According to Moore, "I'm sure that's something he [Kleczka] knew when he timed his resignation."⁵

Several local leaders and pundits suggested in interviews and editorials that the timing of Kleczka's resignation was especially poor, because it might disrupt the best opportunity for Wisconsin to send an African American to the U.S. House of Representatives. The rationale was that potential black candidates would not have their infrastructure in place, as a result of the surprise announcement. Shortly after Kleczka's announcement, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* columnist, Eugene Kane wrote that

⁵ "New Open Seat! For Dems, That Is" *National Journal's Hot Race Hotline*, January 26, 2004.

Klecza “punked an entire generation of African-American politicians who have long coveted Klecza's spot with eyes on becoming the first black congressman in Wisconsin history.”⁶ Implicit in this rationale is that the likelihood of electing the first African American to represent Wisconsin in the U.S. House of Representatives was highest in the state’s most Democratic and most racially diverse district.

The historic significance of sending an African American to Congress was frequently mentioned during the campaign, as Wisconsin was among a handful of states yet to send an African American to the U.S. House of Representatives. However, such framing can be detrimental to African American candidates. As Reeves (1997) demonstrates, “the press has the uncanny ability to shape race as a variable and thereby undercut one’s appeal as a candidate (p. 59)” In an experimental context Reeves (1997) found that when a fictitious African American candidate was described as “seeking to become the city’s first black mayor” whites evaluated the candidate less favorably than his identical white counterpart. However, Moore actually downplayed any discussion of the historic nature of her possible election. When she announced her decision to run for Congress, she said that she would run a “people’s campaign” uniting all races and nationalities. This language is in accordance with deracialization strategies, which suggest that African American candidates who are appealing to white voters should have a conciliatory style that appeals to the broader community (McCormick and Jones 1993). Media reports also frequently referred to Moore as “bridging Milwaukee’s racial divide,” and “regularly attracting the votes of white suburbanites.”⁷

⁶ Eugene Kane “Klecza’s Poor Timing Hurts Voters the Most.” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. January 27, 2004.

⁷ Joel McNally “Klecza Opens the Gates.” *Capitol Times* February 7, 2004.

According to her biography, Moore began college at Marquette University as “an expectant mother dependent on welfare to put food on the table⁸” when she was 18. Moore’s status as a former welfare recipient could have been a political liability, but instead she used it to her political advantage. In her biography and in interviews she emphasized that she “worked her way through school” with assistance from welfare. Although welfare is arguably a racialized policy, Moore’s opponents never made her status as a former welfare recipient an issue in the campaign. Raising the issue of Moore’s former status as a welfare recipient is likely to have been met with charges of race-baiting, especially in a district in which African Americans were a significant voting bloc. As Hurwitz and Peffley (2005) argue, the Horton ad has made it more difficult to “play the race card.”

It is also worth noting that prior to running for Wisconsin’s 4th Congressional District, Moore was a senator in the Wisconsin State Senate, where she represented a district that was majority white. Thus when questions arose about her ability to represent a majority white district, Moore was able to point to her previous experience representing whites. Jones and Clemons (1993) suggest that previously representing an area that is majority black can be a liability to black candidates running for office in majority white jurisdictions. Therefore, Moore’s previous experience representing a majority white district is likely to have worked to her advantage, because it suggested that she was not predisposed to supporting black interests at the expense of white interests.

Early in the campaign there was much speculation that race would be an issue, because the backdrop to the Congressional campaign was a racially divided electorate in the race for Mayor of Milwaukee. In April 2004, while the race for the 4th district was in

⁸ <http://gwenmoore.house.gov/biography/> (Accessed January 19, 2013).

its early stages, Tom Barrett, a white politician who had previously served in the U.S. House of Representatives defeated the acting mayor at the time, Marvin Pratt. Pratt is African American and was a former alderman from a mostly black district. Although Barrett defeated Pratt handedly (54-46 percent), exit polls revealed a highly racially polarized electorate with 83 percent of white voters selecting Barrett and 92 percent of black voters selecting Pratt.

Many Pratt supporters accused Barrett of running a racially charged campaign. Weeks before the election, Pratt was charged with five civil counts of violating various campaign finance rules, an investigation that the Pratt claims was initiated by Barrett's camp. In addition, Barrett ran several negative television advertisements against Pratt, in which Pratt was characterized as "He thinks he doesn't have to play by the rules like everyone else."⁹ Previous research indicates that one of the key elements of white racial resentment toward African Americans is the stereotype that African Americans violate the American ethic of hard work and obedience to the law (Kinder and Sanders 1996). While we do not have a counterfactual to know whether Pratt would have won the race absent the campaign finance charges, or whether Barrett would have raised similar claims about a comparable white candidate, the evidence suggests that Pratt made a crucial mistake by charging Barrett and the Milwaukee media with racism. Mendelberg (2001) suggests that having a third-party advocate or "racial ombudsman" of sorts might be the most effective way for a candidate to point out race-baiting in an electoral contest, but to my knowledge, this has not been empirically tested.

Although the African American candidate in the mayoral race (Marvin Pratt) was unsuccessful, some pundits speculate that Gwen Moore, who eventually won Kleczka's

⁹ Samuel, Terence "Uphill Battle" *The Crisis* March-April 2005, Vol. 112, Issue 2.

seat, benefited from the racially divisive loss. “That mayor’s race galvanized the Black populous,”¹⁰ said Eugene Kane, columnist for the *Milwaukee Sentinel Journal*. Kane believes Moore benefited from a need among some white voters to show that they are open-minded enough to vote for a black candidate. And according to political scientist, Thomas Holbrook, “The mayor’s race left a lot of people in the Black community stinging and activists were determined to not let it happen again in this race.”¹¹ Prior to the election, Pratt predicted that Moore’s bid for the U.S. House of Representatives would be more successful than his bid for the mayor’s office, because she had a broader based constituency than him. “I think she will be able to tap that and she has done well as far as fashioning a message that people think is less threatening,”¹² Pratt said. Also, unlike Pratt, Moore already had experience representing majority white districts in the state assembly and state senate. Pratt also speculated that race may not have seemed as important to voters in the congressional race because the winner is only one of eight U.S. representatives from Wisconsin, whereas “the city has only one mayor,”¹³ Pratt said.

While race was quite salient in the mayoral election, in the race for the fourth district, discussions of race were noticeably absent. Numerous media accounts actually contrasted the absence of racial discussions in the congressional race with the highly polarized mayoral race. Several media reports also characterized the candidates as “tip-toeing around the race issue.”¹⁴ Instead of discussions about race, on the campaign stump candidates tended to focus on the war in Iraq, jobs, and health care. However, there were

¹⁰ Kane, Eugene “Pratt Elects to Stay on Sidelines This Time” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* September 14, 2004

¹¹ Samuel, Terence “The Uphill Battle.” *Crisis* March/April 2005.

¹² Kane, September 14, 2004

¹³ Kane, September 14, 2004

¹⁴ *The Front Runner*. “WI4: Race May Become a Factor in WI4 Democratic Primary.” May 12, 2004.

a few symbolic attempts to demonstrate symbolic concern for racial issues. For example, during the late summer, Flynn started running a radio ad with an endorsement from an African American minister, highlighting his support for Pratt in the mayoral race.

Moore for the most part avoided discussions of race and frequently referred to herself as “the people’s champion,” which was in stark contrast to Pratt’s campaign slogan “It’s Time.” Many argued that “It’s Time,” was a not so subtle reference to the fact that Milwaukee had never elected an African American mayor. Moore on the other hand avoided discussions about the historic nature of her potential victory. She also avoided discussions about racial issues more generally. In fact when questioned about a potential racial divide in light of the mayoral race, Moore was quoted as saying, “I don’t see a racial divide. Everybody’s going to vote for me.”¹⁵

Nevertheless, Moore was accused of writing off the southern (mostly white) suburbs during her campaign. She was noticeably absent from the only campaign forum held in the southern suburbs. However, when insinuations were made that she was ignoring whites from the working-class southern suburbs, Moore rejected those claims. “I have been plagued with that insinuation throughout this campaign.”¹⁶ She said she was working hard in the southern part of the district, which was a claim supported by one of her white allies, John Hohenfledt, Mayor of Cudahy, a southern suburb.

Although there were concerns about Moore’s ability to represent whites, there were also concerns about Moore’s ability to turn out the black vote. Traditionally,

¹⁵ Sandler, Larry “Kerry, Moore Might Need Each Other to Win in Racially Split District.” *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, October 24, 2004.

¹⁶ Sandler, Larry “Kerry, Moore Might Need Each Other to Win in Racially Split District.” *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, October 24, 2004.

¹⁶

turnout has been higher on Milwaukee's south side than on the north side, which has long worked against black candidates. According to political analyst Walter Farrell, "Moore had to do what Pratt failed to do": "work on voter turnout, including new voters, many of them black." According to political analysts, "A disappointing turnout of black voters in the mayoral race proved to be Pratt's chief nemesis, as it has been for black congressional candidates in the past."¹⁷ Moore faced the dilemma of having to mobilize black voters, without alienating whites, which may explain why although she had Reverend Jesse Jackson appear at several of her rallies, his appearances were limited. For example, the rallies at which Jackson appeared were always in North Milwaukee, which is where most African Americans in the district resided. Furthermore, Jackson used language that was conciliatory and avoided the use of racial nouns. For example, when he appeared at a rally on August 20, 2004, a few weeks before the Democratic Primary, Jackson said, "it was important to support candidates like Moore because they reflected the kind of rainbow coalition he attempted to build."¹⁸

In the early stages of the campaign, Flynn appeared to be the likely winner of the Democratic primary, and subsequently the general election. Early on, Flynn outraised all of his rivals in fundraising in the campaign to succeed Representative Kleczka. He raised over \$246,000 during the first three months of the year, making him the only candidate to break the six-figure threshold. At that point in the campaign, the eventual winner of the election, Moore, had raised less than the other candidates with just over \$51,000.

However, the turning point in the campaign came several months later in June 2004,

¹⁷Sandler, Larry and Leonard Sykes Jr. "Run for Congressional Seat Will Cross Racial Lines." *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, August 25, 2004.

¹⁸Sykes, Leonard. "Jesse Jackson Backs Moore for Congress." *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, August 21, 2004.

when Moore received the endorsement of EMILY's list, which is a political action committee that recommends candidates to its 85,000 members nationwide. The group endorses female Democratic candidates who support abortion rights. Two weeks after the endorsement, State Senator Shirley Krug dropped out of the race, leaving Moore as the lone woman in the race.

As the acronym of EMILY's list suggests, "Early Money Is Like Yeast," the endorsement propelled Moore to the front of the pack. After the EMILY's list endorsement, 45 percent of her individual contributions came from people living outside of Wisconsin, a far greater percentage than any of her opponents. According to reports from the Federal Election Commission, during the reporting period following the EMILY's list endorsement, Moore raised \$354,000, which was more than her two Democratic primary opponents combined. The candidates in the Republican primary lagged behind. Corey Hoze raised \$24,000 and his opponent, Gerald Boyle, raised \$15,000. On the heels of Moore's EMILY's List endorsement, Moore was also endorsed by Wisconsin's largest teachers union and the Congressional Black Caucus, while Flynn received the coveted endorsement of outgoing Congressman Kleczka.

By the end of the summer, Moore was leading her opponents in the polls, and had also received an endorsement from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, the largest regional newspaper. On September 14, 2004 the primary was held, with Moore emerging as the winner with 65 percent of the votes. Flynn had 25 percent of the votes, and Carpenter won 12 percent of the votes. However, Flynn received significantly more votes than Moore in the southern half of the congressional district. In the southern and mostly white part of the district, Flynn racked up 49% of the vote to Moore's 28% and state Senator

Tim Carpenter's 23%. Political scientist, Mordecai Lee suggested that these voting patterns were indicative of a racial split, saying, "There are racial voting patterns, sadly, in Milwaukee, and the north-south split shows they're still in place."¹⁹

In the wake of Moore's victory, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's* Editorial Board applauded the absence of racial discussions from Moore's campaigning saying, "While she was the only African-American in the Democratic primary, Moore did not run on race. She ran on her support of social causes, which won the support of grass-roots organizations, and she won on her record, which is impressive."²⁰ This statement stands in stark contrast to the editorial's board discussion of Marvin Pratt, who ran a campaign that was far more racialized than Moore's. The editorial board's statements regarding the two campaigns, emphasizes the incentive structure that encourages African American candidates to pursue a deracialized or racial signaling strategy. If African American candidates who do not talk about race receive more favorable media coverage, then arguably it is to their advantage to avoid public discussions of race.

As the winner of the Democratic Primary, Moore effectively sealed her victory in the general election for the heavily Democratic district. On November 2, 2004 she became the first African American to represent Wisconsin in the U.S. House of Representatives, by winning 70 percent of the votes in her congressional race.

However, even after the election was over, Moore still avoided talking about race. As she did during the campaign, she deflected questions about race by talking about her coalition of African-Americans, women and progressives; her ability to work with people

¹⁹ Sandlery, Larry "Moore Rewrites History: Mainstream Appeal Makes Her State's First Black Congresswoman." November 4, 2004

²⁰ Sandler, Larry and Leonard Sykes "A Race in Which Race Didn't Matter: Wisconsin's First Black Congresswoman Steered Clear of Talk of Color" November 4, 2004

of all backgrounds, and her record of being elected to state and now federal office from districts in which most voters are white. “It’s a novelty to other people, but I’ve been black for 53 years,” said Moore. “It’s absolutely great to make history. It’s more important to make a difference. It’s by destiny for all of us to be united as a community and not to be separated.” Moore later went on to say, “We had a fundraising theme from an old African proverb: ‘Working together, the ants eat the elephant,’ “I’m very grateful, very humble, to the people of the 4th congressional district, and I enjoyed support across racial lines, cultural lines, language lines, and that’s the way I had done it as a state legislator for 16 years. When I decided to get in this race, I made the calculation that people would vote for someone who was fighter. I have fought for the rights of women, out of work men, and I calculated that people would look at that and prioritize that over what someone looked like.”²¹

²¹ Sandler, Larry “Moore Rewrites History: Mainstream Appeal Makes Her State’s First Black Congresswoman” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* November 3, 2004

2006 Race for Minnesota's 5th Congressional District

In March 2006, Representative Martin Sabo of Minnesota's Fifth Congressional District unexpectedly announced his retirement after 28 years of serving in the U.S. House of Representatives. Minnesota's 5th Congressional District encompasses the entire City of Minneapolis and several inner-ring suburbs. The 5th district is the state's most racially diverse district, with racial minorities comprising roughly 25 percent of district residents. Specifically, the district is 74 percent white, 5 percent Asian, 6 percent Latino, and 14 percent black—including one of the largest Somali Muslim populations in the United States. The district leans heavily Democratic and is consistently ranked as Minnesota's safest Democratic seat. Democratic presidential candidates Al Gore and John Kerry carried this district by more than 2-to-1 in 2000 and 2004 respectively.

Minnesota's safest Democratic seat generated much interest among many potential candidates. However, the timing of Representative Sabo's announcement left prospective candidates little time to organize for Minnesota's Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party²² (DFL) endorsing convention. Some speculated that the surprise announcement of Sabo was timed in order to give his chief of staff, Mike Erlandson an advantage in the DFL endorsing convention for the seat. The convention was being held only seven weeks after Sabo's announcement, and in this district, winning the DFL endorsement was often tantamount to winning the election because the district is so heavily Democratic.

²² The Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party (DFL is a major political party in the state of Minnesota and the state affiliate of the Democratic Party.

Twelve candidates emerged to run for the seat, but eventually the field was narrowed to five Democrats: Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, a University of St. Thomas professor; Sabo's chief of staff and former DFL Party chairman Mike Erlandson; Minneapolis City Council Member Paul Ostrow; Ember Reichgott-Junge, a former state senator and the only woman in the race; and State Representative Keith Ellison, an African American and Muslim candidate, who would eventually win the election to represent Minnesota's Fifth Congressional District.

Early in the race to replace Sabo, no one candidate had a clear advantage in the crowded field of candidates. Nevertheless, Ellison managed to win the endorsement of the DFL after three votes at the party's convention in May 2006. Upon winning the DFL endorsement, Ellison said, "I am going to run on peace. I am going to run on health care for all. I am going to run on environmental justice and cleaning up our air so we have a sustainable future."²³ Interestingly enough, racial matters were absent from Ellison's liberal platform.

Initially there was much speculation that if race was to be an issue in the campaign, it would be to Ellison's advantage, because of the racial diversity of the district. But from the onset of the campaign, Ellison downplayed the importance of race in his appeal. "Diversity is important," Ellison said. "But I am not going to be running as the black guy. I am running as the progressive candidate."²⁴ This language is typical of the universal, unifying language used by African American candidates running for office in majority white jurisdictions. Again, we see evidence of a black candidate

²³ Olson, Rochelle "DFLers Queue Up Quickly for the Chance to Fill Sabo's Seat" *Minneapolis Star Tribune* March 18, 2006.

²⁴ Olson, Rochelle "DFLers Queue Up Quickly for the Chance to Fill Sabo's Seat" *Minneapolis Star Tribune* March 18, 2006.

signaling that they are not primarily concerned with black interests. However, while Ellison tried to downplay the importance of race in his run for Congress, his racial identity, specifically his identity as a Black Muslim became an issue shortly after he won the DFL's endorsement.

In May 2006, Alan Fine, the Republican nominee for the seat released information about Ellison that linked Ellison to the controversial Nation of Islam and its leader Minister Louis Farrakhan. Founded in 1930 to improve conditions for blacks, the Nation of Islam has been criticized as having an anti-white, anti-Jewish and anti-gay agenda. In particular, Ellison's role as a local organizer for the Million Man March came under scrutiny, since it was organized by the Nation of Islam. Fine also noted that Ellison had written several articles in law school in support of Farrakhan, as well as other racially charged opinion pieces. For instance, in remarks Ellison says were satirical and intended to provoke discussion, he suggested that financial reparations and a separate state might be a better option, relieving whites of social programs and allowing self-determination for blacks. As the writings and Ellison's involvement with the Nation of Islam surfaced, Ellison appeared quite vulnerable, and many speculated that he was not vetted enough prior to the convention. Although he was the DFL endorsee in a heavily Democratic district, many voters may have been hesitant to vote for him in light of the allegations.

After the allegations surfaced, Ellison wrote a letter to the director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota, in which he denounced Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam as anti-Semitic. He also spoke at a local synagogue, saying that he

“learned to unite, not divide.”²⁵ Soon after penning the letter, Ellison received the endorsement of *American Jewish World*, a Minnesota based weekly newspaper. He also received support from several prominent Jewish DFL activists, including State Representative Frank Hornstein, fundraisers Samuel and Sylvia Kaplan, and State Representative Phyllis Kahn, who said it was “inconceivable that he [Ellison] could have ever been an anti-Semite.”²⁶ In light of the charges of Anti-Semitism, the endorsement from *American Jewish World* and prominent Jewish backers were especially crucial for Ellison. Liu (2003) finds that positive media exposure by white-controlled media outlets can provide legitimacy to African American candidates who run deracialized campaigns which, in turn, increases their level of white crossover support.

But by mid-summer, Ellison was hit by new allegations involving unpaid traffic and parking tickets, late payment of some taxes in the 1990s, failure to meet deadlines for financial reports in past election campaigns, and his defense of a gang leader while he was running the Legal Rights Center, a nonprofit law office. Ellison’s response was that he had taken care of these past tax and violation debts, and that these problems were behind him. He also said that he defended the gang leader, Sharif Willis, because Willis was working with local police to broker a gang peace. While his competitors never commented on Ellison’s race or religion explicitly, Ellison’s character was a theme throughout the campaign. For example, shortly before the primary, DFL rival, Mike Erlandson released a campaign mailer that included a black-and-white photo of Ellison

²⁵ Olson, Rochelle and Mark Brunswick “Ellison’s Past Views, Ties Draw Scrutiny” *Minneapolis Star Tribune* June 28, 2006.

²⁶ Olson, Rochelle and Mark Brunswick “Ellison’s Past Views, Ties Draw Scrutiny” *Minneapolis Star Tribune* June 28, 2006.

and the headline, “Does he think he is above the law?”²⁷ The argument could be made that the mailer was an attempt to play into whites’ fears about black men and crime. However, Ellison never made any such accusation. He responded by saying the pamphlet, “certainly conflicts with [Erlandson’s] public statements of no politics of personal destruction, so I’m a little disappointed in that.”²⁸ Recall, Mendelberg (2001) suggests that one way to undermine the effects of a potentially implicit racial appeal is to draw attention to the racial nature of the appeal. However, this suggestion fails to take into account the role of racial stereotypes and source credibility. For example, if white respondents are more skeptical when African American elites make charges of racism (Nelson et al. 2007), then such a charge by Ellison may have been met with backlash, particularly in a district that is so overwhelmingly white.

It was later revealed that the campaign manager of DFL rival, Paul Ostrow, was the source of the leaks about Ellison’s campaign finance violations. Unclear, is whether the scrutiny Ellison received was racially motivated. However, as noted previously, Ellison did not make any claims about racial bias. But, as suggested by Mendelberg (2001) he did have racial ombudsmen, who made the claim on his behalf. In a scathing letter to the editor, the President of the Minneapolis NAACP, Duane Reed contended that the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* dwelled on the past of only one candidate (Ellison), without doing the same for the other candidates in the race. According to Reed, this coverage was “unfair and racist.” Similar letters and editorials appeared in the newspapers, and as

²⁷ Olson, Rochelle “Erlandson’s New Mailing Takes Aim at Two of His Fifth District Opponents.” *Minneapolis Star Tribune* September 7, 2006.

Olson, Rochelle. “Ellison Letter Addresses Past Ties.” *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. June 3, 2006.

²⁸ Olson, Rochelle “Erlandson’s New Mailing Takes Aim at Two of His Fifth District Opponents.” *Minneapolis Star Tribune* September 7, 2006.

noted earlier, Ellison had the support of very prominent members of the Jewish community, who also disputed any notions about Ellison being anti-Semitic.

The various questions about Ellison's character made him quite vulnerable in the September DFL Primary. Therefore, for much of the campaign, he appeared to focus on shoring up support among what his campaign referred to as, "unlikely" primary voters, placing special emphasis on drawing people of color, gays and lesbians and war foes to the polls. Constituting 14 percent of the population, African Americans in particular represented an important voting bloc. Ellison was able to leverage his relationship in the black and Muslim communities. In particular, he had developed relationships with black clergy in his work to organize the Minneapolis delegation to the Million Man March. Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson also stumped for Ellison in North Minneapolis, the area where most of the district's African Americans reside.

It is worth noting that Ellison and his challengers all had similar stances on the major issues---they were all anti-war, in favor of universal healthcare, and supported at least a partial repeal of the Bush tax cuts. However, Ellison was able to distinguish himself from his rivals in the primary by taken the strongest anti-war stance of all of the candidates. Ellison called for an immediate withdrawal of the troops from Iraq, whereas his DFL rivals supported more gradual withdrawals. And in addition to the DFL endorsement, Ellison had the endorsements of key labor unions, including the AFL-CIO, Service Employees International, the National Education Association, and Teamsters. And while Erlandson had the endorsement of outgoing Congressman Sabo, Ellison had the endorsement of Minnesota political icon and former Democratic Vice-Presidential nominee, Walter Mondale.

On September 12th 2006, Ellison won 41 percent of the vote to win the Democratic primary in a three-way race. Erlandson won 31 percent of the vote, while Reichgott-Junge garnered 21 percent of the vote. Only 22 percent of registered voters participated in the Democratic primary, but Ellison managed to win with support from Minneapolis. His performance was noticeably poorer in the suburban parts of the district. Ellison won a majority of the vote in north, south and southeast Minneapolis. In south Minneapolis, where the highest percentage of registered voters in the district went to the polls, Ellison won 56 percent of the vote. In southwest Minneapolis, which has many of the city's most affluent neighborhoods, Ellison finished first with 45 percent of the vote. But Ellison won no more than 26 percent of the vote in any of the district's suburbs. While Ellison's poorer showing in certain parts of the district may have been indicative of a racial divide, he was still very likely to win the general election, due to the strong Democratic leaning of the district.

Nevertheless, shortly after winning the primary, Ellison faced very vocal criticism from Alan Fine, the Republican nominee for the seat. Fine said, "I'm personally offended that this person is a candidate for U.S. Congress. He is the follower of a known racist, Louis Farrakhan, who promoted division between the people of our nation, a person who believes that the white man is the anti-Christ, a person who called for the destruction of our nation, a person who believes that Jews are the scourge of the Earth. I'm personally offended as a Jew that we have a candidate like this running for U.S. Congress,"²⁹ said Fine. It is plausible that Fine's frequent references to his Jewish heritage, were an attempt to prime any anti-Muslim attitudes voters may have had, as

²⁹ "Warning—GOP Smear Campaign Ahead." *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, September 15, 2006.

well as to make more accessible any concerns they may have had about Ellison being an anti-Semite, such that voters would bring them to bear on their vote choice.

In response Ellison issued a statement that continued to tout inclusion, saying Fine's remarks are, "diametrically opposed to what our campaign is about... This campaign is about inclusion, not alienation." Eventually Ellison went on to win the general election with 56 percent of the vote, becoming the first African American to represent Minnesota in the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as the first Muslim member of Congress in the United States. However, it is worth noting that since Gore and Kerry each won this district by 2-to-1 margins, Ellison's showing may have been poorer than expected.

2006 U.S. Senate Race- Tennessee

The 2006 Senate race in Tennessee, in which Harold Ford Jr., the five term Congressman from Memphis lost to Bob Corker, the former mayor of Chattanooga, was one of the most watched races of the election season. The two men were competing to fill the seat of the retiring Republican Majority Leader, Bill Frist. If Ford had won the Tennessee Senate race, not only would he have been the first black senator to represent the South since Reconstruction, he would have also been the first African American Southerner elected to the U.S. Senate by a popular vote in U.S. history.³⁰ The race was also closely watched because it was one of six Senate seats that if the Democrats won, would increase their chances of wresting control of the Senate from the Republican Party. Instead, Ford lost by a slim margin of 50,000 votes in a contest that was infused with race. The evidence suggests that Bob Corker and his surrogates tried to invoke race throughout the campaign through the use of classic implicit racial appeals. However, the use of implicit racial appeals was not limited to the Republican in the race, as Ford also made implicit appeals as part of a “racial signaling” strategy.

Prior to running for the U.S. Senate, Ford was a five-term congressional representative from a majority-black district in Memphis. Although most members of Congress are typically not well known outside of their districts, Harold Ford Jr. had name recognition because he was a member of Tennessee’s most recognizable African

³⁰Prior to the ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment in 1913, most senators were selected by state legislatures.

American political family. Since the early 1970s, at least seven Fords have been elected to local, state, and federal offices. In fact, his father, Harold Ford Sr. was the first African American to represent Tennessee in the U.S. House of Representatives, previously holding the seat that Harold Ford Jr. held in Congress. Although name recognition in politics is typically advantageous, association with his family often worked to the disadvantage of Harold Ford Jr. during the campaign. For example, several members of the Ford family were previously involved in widely known political scandals. In fact, his uncle, John Ford was arrested on bribery charges during the same week that Harold Ford Jr. announced his senatorial candidacy. Although Ford made an effort to distance himself from his family's behavior, Corker frequently tried to associate Ford with the criminal behavior of his family and machine-style politics.

Another factor that worked to Ford's disadvantage was that he was a Democrat running in a conservative state that had not elected a Democrat to the Senate since 1990. Thus, part of Ford's strategy was to portray himself as a conciliatory and moderate Democrat. He supported President Bush's No Child Left Behind reforms and optional school prayer. He was also against gay marriage, a position that he articulated prominently on the campaign trail and in his advertisements. For example, he highlighted his vote for the congressional bill to ban gay marriage, and he supported Tennessee's constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage, which was also on the November ballot. His anti-gay marriage position played well with religious conservative, black and white alike, in a state that is often referred to as "the buckle of the Bible Belt."

Another issue on which Ford took a prominent stance was immigration. He frequently referred to having signed legislation to build a fence along the Mexican border

to keep “illegal immigrants” out, a measure condemned as anti-immigrant by many Democrats in Congress. Also, Ford frequently emphasized that his position put him at odds with his party and with President Bush, who pushed for legislation to grant legal status to undocumented immigrants. He also reminded voters repeatedly that federal agents raided his opponent’s business and found four undocumented immigrants working there.

It is not unusual for a Democrat trying to appeal to a conservative electorate to take very public and conservative stances on some issues. However, what distinguishes Ford’s strategy from a simple attempt to “move to the middle,” is that he also used racial signaling, by engaging in behavior that demonstrated that he was not beholden to black voters. For example, Ford appeared to distance himself from other African Americans, as African Americans were rarely featured in his television ads. This was especially curious, considering that prior to running for the Senate he represented a majority-black district. Research has suggested that it may be to the advantage of Democrats to avoid public appearances with African Americans, because Democrats are often seen as too closely aligned with African Americans (Frymer 1999). Nevertheless, Ford still needed a strong African American turnout because although only 16 percent of Tennesseans were black, blacks constituted a significant voting bloc in urban areas like Memphis and Nashville. Thus he tried to reach out to blacks in a manner that did not rely on many public appearances with African Americans. Instead, most of his outreach to African Americans was through aggressive phone banking, and appeals from political surrogates, such as African American clergy and labor activists (Gillespie 2010). Thus, Ford engaged in classic “public distancing.”

It is worth noting that Ford ran unopposed in Democratic primary, which gave him the opportunity to run an early general election campaign, and visit the more rural parts of the state. During one of these trips, he visited the “Little Rebel,” which is a roadside bar with a large Confederate flag displayed outside the establishment. The bar is known among Tennesseans to be an outpost for racial conservatives. Not only was Ford photographed outside of the Little Rebel, with the confederate flag displayed prominently in the background, but while on the campaign trail he often fondly reminisced on his visit to that particular establishment. I contend that this was an attempt to distinguish himself from the old guard of black politicians, who were probably more likely to picket than they were to patronize such an establishment.

Also during the campaign season, Ford was featured on the October 30th cover of Newsweek, which stressed his moderate politics and headlined the story, “Not Your Daddy’s Democrat.” In that interview, Ford mentioned that his paternal grandmother, Vera Ford, was white. Although generations of Fords had served in public office in Tennessee, this was the first mention that the matriarch of the family was white. The news shocked many in Memphis, who believed her to be the matriarch of the city’s most powerful black political family. In fact, there were some members of the family who maintained that Vera Ford was African American. They argued that Ford’s mention of white ancestry was an attempt to curry favor with whites. This is especially interesting, given that there are some indications that part of what made President Obama a viable black candidate was that he could point to his white ancestry (Ehrenstein 2007; Helman 2007). Thus, Fords’ revelation may have been both politically shrewd and prescient.

Although Corker initially lead Ford in the polls by double-digit figures, Ford was able to garner support from a wider swath of voters than originally predicted, by painting himself as a moderate Democrat. Two weeks before the election, the two candidates were in a virtual dead heat. The turning point of the election was the October 20th airing of a controversial television advertisement by the Republican National Committee, which implied that Ford had romantic ties with a white woman at a 2005 Super Bowl Party at the Playboy mansion. It played on the fact that the congressman once attended a party at the Super bowl sponsored by Playboy magazine, and received a campaign donation from a Hollywood company that turned out to make porn movies. He returned the donation and pointed out he was among 3,000 people who crowded into the Superbowl party, but the damage was arguably done.

The 30-second advertisement featured people who appeared to be participating in man-on-the street interviews about Ford. The script is as follows:

“Harold Ford looks nice,” the first person says. “Isn’t that enough?” “Terrorists need their privacy,” a second says. “When I die, Harold Ford will let me pay taxes again,” another says. “Ford’s right,” a fourth says, wearing what appears to be camouflage hunting gear. “I do have too many guns.” Then, in the part of the commercial that set off widespread attention, a scantily clad young woman says, “I met Harold at the Playboy party!” The spot continues with other remarks: “I’d love to pay higher marriage taxes.” “Canada can take care of North Korea. They’re not busy.” “So he took money from porn movie producers? I mean, who hasn’t?”

The advertisement ends with the scantily clad young woman who said she met Ford at the Playboy party. She winks and says, “Harold, call me.” Also near the end of the spot, the words “Harold Ford—He’s just not right” appear in white letters against a black screen.

After the ad aired, an angry debate ensued over whether the ad exploited, as the NAACP argued, “a powerful innuendo that plays to pre-existing prejudices about

African-American men and white women.”³¹ Mr. Corker eventually criticized the ad as tacky and not part of his campaign, asking that it be killed. But according to news reports, the ad ran on television for another week, before it was finally removed.

Ford failed to authoritatively condemn Republicans of invoking race after the ‘Bimbo’ ad was first aired on October 20th. When asked to respond to the ad, he called it “smutty,” and later explained his reason for attending the Playboy party as, “I like football, and I like girls.”³² Furthermore, he never called the ad racist and said about Republicans, “You have to ask them about race. I don’t focus on those things.”³³ Again, we see reluctance on the part of an African American candidate to make a charge of racism. This may be due to a fear of backlash for “playing the race card.”

After the election, many pointed to the “Bimbo” ad as the reason for Ford’s loss. According to some reports, voters shifted after the first airing of the “Bimbo” advertisement. As noted earlier, two weeks before the election, the race was a virtual dead heat, yet after the ad was aired, Corker’s favorability rating over Ford increased by eight percentage points (UC Berkeley 2008). Corker eventually went on to win the election with 50.7 percent of the vote, as compared to 48 percent of the vote for Ford.

While it is difficult to ascertain with certainty that Ford’s loss was due to the advertisement, it appears that the ad was not the only attempt to play to whites’ racial fears and predispositions. For example, a political action committee, Tennesseans for Truth also sponsored a radio ad that said: “[Ford’s] daddy handed him his seat in Congress and his seat in the Congressional Black Caucus, an all-black group of

³¹ Johnson, M. Alex “Tennessee Ad Ignites Internal GOP Squabbling.” MSNBC, October 25, 2006.

³² Leibovich, Mark. “From Star Power to Blood Sport, Tennessee Race Has It All” *NY Times*, November 5, 2006.

³³ Leibovich, Mark. November 5, 2006.

congressmen who represent the interest of black people above all others.”³⁴ This radio ad in particular was an attempt to depict Ford as a politician who would only look out for the interests of African Americans, which as noted earlier, is a stereotype of African American politicians. In addition, some political observers believed that a Republican Party-sponsored circular in eastern (and largely white) Tennessee counties, which urged residents to vote in order to “preserve your way of life,” was also racially coded. Other forms in which race was invoked included a radio commercial criticizing Ford with African drums beating in the background, and a campaign flyer that darkened the skin color of Ford³⁵.

The details of this campaign suggest that both black and white candidates alike employ implicit racial appeals. Also of note is that while racial priming may not be the only factor in a successful campaign, it can be employed to make a difference in a close contest.

³⁴ Kauffman, Elisabeth “Campaign ’06: The G.O.P. Gets Nervous in Tennessee” *Time Magazine*, October 20, 2006.

³⁵ Kauffman, Elisabeth “Campaign ’06: The G.O.P. Gets Nervous in Tennessee” *Time Magazine*, October 20, 2006.

2006 U.S. Senate Race-Virginia

Less than a year before the 2006 November election to represent Virginia in the U.S. Senate, it seemed unlikely that the Democrats could unseat Republican and one-term incumbent, Senator George Allen. Nevertheless, in March 2006, former Secretary of the Navy under President Reagan, Jim Webb, announced his intention to challenge George Allen. Webb was encouraged to run by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Chairman Charles Schumer, who saw in Webb an opportunity to cut into the conservative vote. Although the race involved two white candidates, race was invoked both implicitly and explicitly during the course of the campaign. In fact, both campaigns were beset with charges of racism, in a contest where a widely publicized racial remark by Senator Allen, was seen by many as the turning point of the election.

Allen ran unopposed in the Republican Primary, while Webb competed in the Democratic Primary against Washington lobbyist and Democratic loyalist, Harris Miller. Prior to running for the U.S. Senate, Webb had never run for political office, and perhaps more importantly, Webb was a lifelong Republican. As noted earlier, Webb previously served as a Reagan appointee, and in 2000 he even endorsed his eventual opponent, George Allen in his Senate run. Thus, Miller tried to distinguish himself as the “true Democrat” in the race. However, Webb attempted to turn his status as a former Republican into a political strength, stating that he had left the Republican Party due to his disillusionment with the party’s handling of the war in Iraq. He also frequently

referred to himself as a “Reagan Democrat,” which is the moniker given to working class whites, who left the Democratic Party for the Republican Party in the ‘70s and ‘80s largely out of anger for Democratic support for policies such as affirmative action and welfare (Edsall and Edsall 1992). Thus, by identifying as a Reagan Democrat, Webb may have been able to implicitly signal to voters that he did not fit the stereotype of a traditional Democrat on racial issues, and perhaps other policies as well.

Aside from questions being raised about Webb’s status as a former Republican, Webb’s opponent in the primary, Harris Miller, also voiced concern about views Webb had previously expressed, which suggests that race can also be invoked in a campaign to court liberal voters. For example, Webb in the past authored writings that were critical of affirmative action. In a book review for the Wall Street Journal in 2000, Webb referred to affirmative action as, “a permeating state-sponsored racism that is as odious as the Jim Crow laws it sought to countermand.” Webb’s position on affirmative action did nothing to engender him to Virginia’s black political establishment. Instead, many prominent black leaders endorsed Harris Miller, citing Webb’s views on affirmative action. Surrogates for Webb said that Miller was engaged in “race-baiting,” and subsequently Webb’s campaign manager wrote a memo on Webb’s behalf, entitled “Fighting Against Divisive Politics.” The memo argued that affirmative action applied only to blacks is divisive, and that affirmative action should be expanded to include other groups, including poor whites. Again, this may have been a signal to voters that the candidate did not fit the stereotype of a Democrat who was too attentive to racial issues, particularly “black interests.”

For the most part, Webb's surrogates handled the discussions regarding affirmative action. However, when the issue continued to be raised by Miller, as well as by reporters, Webb offered a more nuanced position than he had previously. Webb said he believed that affirmative action is rooted in the 13th Amendment, and as such it should be reserved for blacks. However, he also said that in recent years affirmative action has been diversified to include other disadvantaged minority groups, and "if that's the case," Webb said, it should also include "white cultures that have had disadvantages as well."³⁶ According to Webb, "If you are going to do diversity programs in order to help people who have had disadvantages, you should include poor whites. That's my position."³⁷ Webb's nuanced approach to affirmative action allowed him to reach out to blacks, while not alienating "Reagan Democrats," who were free to cast a vote for him in Virginia's open primary.

Aside from the issue of affirmative action, some voters in the Democratic base were skeptical of Webb because of other past writings. For example, he authored a 1979 article that was critical of admittance of women to the U.S. Naval Academy, saying they could not lead men in combat and were destroying discipline. While Webb apologized for the tone of the article, he still defended the article as an important addition to a 1970s debate about women in uniform. Webb also came under scrutiny for his novel, "Fields of Fire," which included occurrences of a racial epithet used against blacks. When asked on the campaign trail whether he had ever used the term personally, Webb's response was "I don't think that there's anyone who grew up around the South that hasn't had the word

³⁶ Adams, Mason. "U.S. Senate Hopeful Webb Campaigns in Roanoke." *The Richmonder*. April 28, 2006.

³⁷ Adams, Mason. April 28, 2006.

pass through their lips at one time or another in their life.”³⁸ While Webb did not endorse the use of the term, his statement did not denounce its usage either. Arguably, Webb’s response may have even been interpreted by some as tacit endorsement of the use of the epithet, which would again signal that he was not beholden to African American voters.

However, Webb was not the only candidate to face questions about his racial sensitivity, as Miller was also critical of Senator Allen on racial issues. Miller characterized Allen as having had a “troubling record on minority issues,” citing Allen’s issuance while governor of a “highly divisive Confederate history and heritage month proclamation” and his vote, while a member of the House Delegates, against a Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. News accounts also mentioned that Allen had Confederate flag decorations, as well as a noose in his office. Again, Miller’s discussion of racial matters indicates that race can also be invoked in a campaign, to court liberal voters.

Typically, such accounts about a racially insensitive Republican would be great political fodder for a Democratic challenger. However, the Webb camp took a decidedly different stance from that of the Miller campaign. Webb claimed that he had not read news stories about George Allen’s choice of a noose and Confederate flag as decorations in his office, which seems highly unlikely, given the considerable attention that the issue received in the press. Interestingly enough, Webb was lauded by the press as “refreshingly frank,” whereas Miller was criticized as someone who, “leaps at the chance to list Allen’s other racially insensitive acts.” This highlights the role of the media in creating an incentive structure for candidates to avoid a discussion of racial issues. In other words, if candidates who avoid racial issues receive more favorable media coverage, then candidates will likely avoid the discussion of racial issues.

³⁸ Espo, David “Webb Dodges Question on Racial Epithet.” *Washington Post*. September 26, 2006.

Allen faced additional fallout after a May 2006 article by the liberal magazine, *The New Republic* quoted witnesses as saying that as a high school student in California, Allen drove a car with Confederate flag imagery. The magazine also reported that Allen wore a Confederate flag pin on his shirt collar in his high-school yearbook photo. In a written response to the magazine, Allen said, “As a high school student in California, I generally bucked authority and the rebel flag was just a way to express that attitude.”³⁹ Allen also went on to discuss his belief in equal opportunity, his learning from participating in a civil-rights history tour to Alabama several years ago and his proposed Senate legislation to aid minority colleges. Again, while Miller was highly critical of Allen, Webb did not offer any criticism of Allen. Instead Webb’s press secretary said, “Webb thought the *New Republic* article hit below the belt.” She went on to say that Webb wanted a “campaign about issues, not one filled with personal attacks.”⁴⁰

But, shortly before the June 13th primary, Webb was accused of making his own personal attacks against his Democratic opponent, Harris Miller. A Webb campaign flier titled “Miller the Job Killer,” depicted Miller, who is Jewish, with a hooked nose and cash spilling out of his pockets. In the cartoonlike flier, Miller orders an assistant to find ways to export jobs overseas. The flier was distributed at a labor union event in southwest Virginia, which is a rural, conservative area that is more culturally associated with Appalachia than with other parts of Virginia. Miller said that the drawing exploited stereotypes and was “despicable,” but stopped short of calling it Anti-Semitic, although the media made such speculations. This incident also illustrates how White Democrats can engage in a priming strategy, even against other Democrats. Webb denied any

³⁹ Lizza, Ryan. “Pin Prick.” *The New Republic*. May 8, 2006.

⁴⁰ Espo, David “Webb Dodges Question on Racial Epithet.” *Washington Post*. September 26, 2006

charges of Anti-Semitism, but apologized if anyone was offended. On numerous occasions thereafter, Webb accused Miller of “playing the race card,” and distorting his views on affirmative action.

Despite the charges of Anti-Semitism and racism, Webb defeated Miller in the low-turnout primary, in which only 3.4 percent of the state’s 4.5 million voters cast ballots. Results from the Virginia State Board of Elections showed that Webb won more than 53 percent of the vote to Miller’s 47 percent. However, Miller outperformed Webb in the black districts.⁴¹ While Webb managed to win the primary without much black support, their votes would be instrumental for a general election win, as 20 percent of Virginia’s electorate was African American, the vast majority of whom, identified as Democrats. But, despite the importance of the voting bloc, after the election, Webb was criticized as slow to reach out to Virginia’s black political establishment. According to State Senator Charles J. Lambert III, an African American Democrat from Richmond, “He [Webb] acts like he doesn’t want the nod [from the black political establishment]”⁴². This perceived distancing from African Americans may have been strategic. I hypothesize in Chapter 5 that even something as innocuous as a visual association with African Americans can undermine support for white candidates. As explored more fully in Chapter 5, other scholars have also speculated about this but no one has demonstrated it in an experimental context nor have they demonstrated how these effects are often contingent on the race and partisan identity of the candidate.

⁴¹ Virginia State Board of Elections. *Commonwealth of Virginia, June 13th, 2006-Primary Election*, Virginia State Board of Elections (http://www2.sbe.virginia.gov/web_docs/Election/results/2006/JunePrimary/1_025.htm) (accessed Aug 10 2012).

⁴² Whitley, Tyler. “Blacks Moving Toward Webb?” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. August 27, 2006.

Aside from his lukewarm reception from the black political establishment, by mid summer Webb was consistently trailing Allen by double-digit figures in the polls, and he was nearly out of money. However, the turning point in the election came in August 2006 when Allen used a racial epithet “macaca” to mock an Indian American volunteer for Webb, who had been videotaping Allen at a campaign appearance. The word “macaca” is a slur that refers to a monkey. “This fellow here, over here with the yellow shirt, macaca, or whatever his name is,” Mr. Allen said at a campaign rally in August. “Let’s give a welcome to macaca, here. Welcome to America and the real world of Virginia.” Subsequently, Allen denied that he knew that “macaca” was a racial slur. However, college classmates of Allen’s came forward with new allegations he had used a common racial epithet to describe African Americans when he was a student, and may have stuffed a severed deer head into a black family’s mailbox after a hunting trip. These accusations only further solidified Allen’s image as racially insensitive, an accusation which had plagued him for a good part of the campaign.

Although I contend that explicit racial appeals are not necessarily universally rejected, the use of a racial slur marks a clear violation of the norm of racial equality, from which Allen was never able to recover. Furthermore, it is plausible that impact of the racial epithet may have been especially detrimental for Allen, due to his status as a White Republican candidate. Recall, my theory of racial signaling contends that White Republican candidate are particularly constrained in their ability to use explicit racial appeals, and are especially susceptible to charges of racial insensitivity. Unfortunately, we do not have a counterfactual to determine if a Democratic candidate, particularly a Black Democrat, would have been able to survive the charges of racial insensitivity.

In any case, the video of Allen using the racial epithet went viral on the Internet and subsequently became a political lightning rod. Nationwide donations to the Webb campaign increased and Webb was able to close the gap in support. By mid-September, the two were in an extremely close race. Interestingly enough, Webb generally avoided commenting on the controversy, telling reporters it was irrelevant to his attempt to illustrate differences in leadership styles.

The 2006 Virginia Senate race offers a clear illustration of the use of an explicit racial appeal in contemporary American politics. Although the use of a racial epithet may be an anomaly, voters' reactions illustrate that even in contemporary American politics, explicit racial appeals are not universally rejected, as many voters still supported Allen.⁴³ Admittedly, the "macaca moment," was not the only issue in the campaign. Furthermore, Allen had considerable popularity as an incumbent and former governor of the state. In the end, the race was still very close, with Webb winning by 9,000 votes, 49.6%-49.2%. An Associated Press Exit Poll showed while Webb trounced Allen in Northern Virginia, Webb trailed badly across the rest of the state and would have decisively lost the election without his Northern Virginia support.

⁴³ Allen is currently running (2012) for the U.S. Senate seat to represent Virginia against Democrat Tim Kaine. Polls indicate that the two candidates have been in a virtual deadlock for much of the race, which suggests that uttering racial slurs does not necessarily translate to lifetime political unviability.

2010 Race for Florida's 22nd Congressional District

On November 02, 2010, Republican Allen West made history as the first African American Republican elected to Congress from Florida since Reconstruction. West was elected to represent Florida's 22nd Congressional District, which is 76 percent white, 15 percent Latino, and six percent black. Florida's 22nd Congressional District includes parts of Palm Beach and Broward counties and has the 14th highest Jewish population of any congressional district in America. The district is characterized as a "classic swing district" with a roughly even split of Democratic and Republican voters. And at 26 percent, the concentration of independents is one of the highest in the state of Florida. The district is also rather affluent, with a median income of \$63,000, which is roughly \$10,000 above the United States median income. Prior to Allen West winning the seat in 2010, the district was represented for two years by business lawyer and longtime state legislator, Ron Klein. In 2006 Klein wrested the seat from longtime incumbent Republican Clay Shaw with just 50.9 percent of the vote.

When Allen West defeated Ron Klein in 2010, it was actually the second time West had challenged Klein for the opportunity to represent Florida's 22nd Congressional District. West first challenged Klein for the seat in 2008—Klein won 54.7 percent of the vote, while 45.3 percent of the vote went to West. Although West was defeated in 2008, his challenge exposed Klein's vulnerability. Klein had significantly more money than West, and many Republicans thought West did well given his financial disadvantage and

lack of name recognition. When West was defeated in 2008, he made it clear that he planned to challenge Klein again. Subsequently, West was named one of the National Republican Congressional Committee's Young Guns, a designation given to newcomers whom the committee considers viable.

Although West was a relative newcomer to politics, he was able to parlay his previous experience in the military into political success. Prior to running for Congress in 2008, West, a former lieutenant colonel in the Army, spent 22 years on active duty. A veteran of the Iraq War, West resigned after standing trial for assaulting an Iraqi detainee he said he believed had information about imminent attacks. According to accounts, West fired his weapon near the head of the prisoner to frighten the detainee into divulging information about a planned ambush. While challenging Klein, West was able to transform what could have been a political handicap into a political advantage. For example, West's campaign distributed a mailer to voters telling them "if Allen West can stand up to Al-Qaeda, he can stand up to the special interests in Washington."⁴⁴ In numerous interviews, he cited his 30-month tour on Afghan battlefields and experience in the Middle East as evidence that he was a stronger candidate on terrorism and better suited to help defend Israel, than his rival.

Klein on the other hand, attempted to paint West as too extreme for the moderate 22nd district. For example Klein ran a television ad late in the campaign that featured a video clip of West telling a crowd of supporters, "I'm just honored to be here today with all my fellow right-wing extremists." Klein also depicted West as a threat to Social Security and Medicare, in order to appeal to the district's senior citizens. In short, the

⁴⁴ Wallman, Brittany. "Klein-challenger Allen West Says Experience Fighting Terrorists Would Help Him in DC." *Sun-Sentinel*. October 6, 2008.

two candidates differed on just about all of the major issues. For example, Klein voted for the financial bailout bill, saying it was needed to protect taxpayers from an economic collapse, while West advocated a free-market solution, and called the bailout a waste of taxpayer money.

West's success is largely attributed to his ability to ride an anti-Obama and anti-incumbent wave that eventually resulted in the Democrats losing control of the House. Throughout 2009, West gave speeches at Tea Party rallies that transformed him into a hero of the movement and a YouTube superstar. In a speech in October 2009, he rallied his audience, to "get your musket, fix your bayonet." According to YouTube estimates, this speech received over 2.2 million views during the campaign. In December 2009, West's national profile was raised even further when he was interviewed on the Hannity Show on the Fox News Channel. Hannity's nationwide audience, just shy of one million voters was especially important for someone like West, because viewers of the show could easily become financial contributors to the candidate's campaign. In March 2010, West received the endorsement of former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin, which further raised his nationwide profile and attracted more donations, many of which were from outside of the district. By April 2010, West had raised almost \$840,000, which was more than he raised during his entire campaign in 2008, and almost twice what the incumbent Ron Klein raised during the same time period.

Aside from the differences in fundraising totals between the 2008 and 2010 campaigns, West's rhetoric appeared to be different as well. While West did not take any different stances on the issues, he appears to have emphasized race more during his second run for Congress. In 2008, West adopted the classic deracialized approach, where

he downplayed any issues of race. For example, when he was asked whether race would be a factor in the election to represent the majority white district, West said, “Race won’t be much of a factor.” According to West the election would come down to, “character, values, and ideology.” He also went on to say, “If people notice that I have a really nice permanent tan, that’s nice, but I don’t talk that. I’ve very proud of my heritage and who I am and what my family has achieved, [but] the true measurement of a person is their character and how they carry themselves.”⁴⁵

However, West did in fact “talk that.” Although conventional wisdom would suggest that an African American candidate who is trying to win election in a majority white jurisdiction should avoid the topic of race, by 2009, West was talking about race openly and frequently. During his first run for Congress, many of his arguments focused on his pro-Israel stance and his military experience. However, the second time he ran for Congress, West devoted more attention to his conservative positions on racial matters, which likely engendered him to Tea Party supporters. For example, in an interview with *The Washington Times*, West expressed his disdain for affirmative action and argued that Democrats’ social welfare policies have enslaved the “mind and will” of blacks. West also said, “Republicans have allowed black communities to be taken over by a voice of victimization, a voice of dependency.”⁴⁶ These statements would be classified as “explicit racial appeals,” because they used racial nouns. They were also derogatory in nature and invoked stereotypes of African Americans as lazy and dependent on government. Through his use of rhetoric, West was able to distinguish himself from

⁴⁵ Reid, Joy-Ann. “For Black Republicans, Race Complicates the Campaign.” *South Florida Times*.

⁴⁶ McLaughlin, Seth. “Minority Hopefuls Add Color to Monochrome GOP.” *Washington Times*. October 5, 2010.

other black politicians, who are typically expected to highlight racial inequality, and build support for liberal policies to address this inequality. Also West's status as a Republican only helped to further distinguish him from other black politicians, since the vast majority of African American politicians identify as Democrats.

In another instance, in an interview with the conservative *Weekly Standard*, he is quoted as saying, "I hate big-tent. I hate inclusiveness. And I hate outreach," which is language that runs contrary to the universal language of the classic deracialized approach. Again, West's language is counter-stereotypical, as black elites are often expected to raise the public's consciousness about racial inequality. Also, the Democratic Party is often perceived as the party of "big-tent inclusion."⁴⁷ Therefore West is distinguishing himself from most African American politicians, the overwhelming majority of whom are affiliated with the Democratic Party.

West also took decidedly conservative positions on immigration, which is an issue ripe with racial implications. For example, he told a crowd of Tea Party protesters outside a day-labor center in Jupiter, Florida, "You must be well-informed and well-armed, because this government we have right now is a tyrannical government. And it starts with illegal immigration." He further went on to say, "We cannot allow them [immigrants] to come here and depress our wages."⁴⁸ The racial priming hypothesis would suggest that such rhetoric could make immigration more accessible in voters' minds (Mendelberg 2001), and thus an important part of their decision calculus.

Throughout the campaign West, also depicted Klein as being "soft on immigration," and

⁴⁷ Weinstein, Jamie. "The Second Battle of Boca Raton." *The Weekly Standard*. December 16, 2009.

⁴⁸ Gibson, William E. "Immigration Issue Could Sway Key Races in Florida." *Sun-Sentinel*. October 11, 2010.

“supporting amnesty for illegal immigrants.” Although Klein disputed any such claims, West’s incendiary rhetoric helped him to frame Klein and the election.

The results from the 2010 election to represent Florida’s 22nd Congressional District offer evidence that an African American candidate does not necessarily have to adopt a deracialized approach to win elections in majority white jurisdictions. In fact, because the district was overwhelmingly white, West did not have to worry about appealing to both black and white voters. Instead he could adopt very conservative positions on racial positions, without fear of offending black voters, or sparking a counter-mobilization effort by a significant number of African Americans. Although members of the Congressional Black Caucus, John Lewis and Alcee Hastings did campaign for Klein, the district’s African American population was so small that they did not constitute a significant voting bloc in the district. Furthermore, a lack of support from the Congressional Black Caucus likely only solidified West’s anti-establishment persona, and further distinguished him from “traditional” (i.e. liberal) African American politicians.

Also of note is that West’s very presence on the ballot, arguably made race an issue in the election. As an African American Republican and Tea Party affiliate, West was the polar opposite of the most prominent African American politician and face of the Democratic Party, President Barack Obama, who West once described as, “the dumbest person walking around in America.”⁴⁹ Arguably, West was uniquely positioned to garner support from a movement that was frequently characterized as having racist motivations, because he could be used as an example of their inclusiveness and diversity. Previous research (Philpot 2007) illustrates that the Republican Party has made efforts to highlight

⁴⁹ Savage Nation, April 20, 2009;

the racial diversity of their party through the use of racial imagery. Thus it is plausible that the Tea Party may also have been interested in highlighting the diversity of their party, and West may have provided an opportunity to achieve this goal.

West acknowledges the centrality of race to his political appeal. In a recent interview he said, “If I were still that inner-city young black man in Atlanta, maybe...on drugs, with a bunch of children from different mothers, not out working, I would be their [Democrats] poster child.”⁵⁰ Instead he is a black man who’s left what he refers to as the “21st-century plantation.” Aside from using the term “plantation,” West frequently makes other references to slavery. At rallies, he has often told supporters, “President Obama does not want you to have the self-esteem of getting up and earning, and having that title of American ... he'd rather you be his slave.” He is also fond of referring to social programs as “slavery,” and in a recent floor speech in honor of Black History Month, he said that “Democratic handouts” were an “insidious form of slavery.” Thus, West demonstrates that an African American candidate can talk about race openly, but in a manner that signals that he is not beholden to “black interests.” An African American candidate on the ballot is likely to make race salient in the campaign. West’s behavior suggests that rather than avoiding the topic of race altogether, African American candidates can use racial rhetoric strategically and preemptively, as part of a signaling strategy.

In the case of the 22nd Congressional District, there is some evidence that the White Democrat in the race, Ron Klein, may have also used racial appeals. For example, Klein made an effort to associate West with criminal behavior in the weeks leading up to the election. Specifically, Klein’s camp made an effort to associate West with the

⁵⁰ Murphy, Tim. “Allen West’s Rise from the Florida Fever Swamps.” *Mother Jones*. July/August 2012.

Outlaws, a motorcycle gang with ties to drug trafficking and prostitution. In order to connect West to the motorcycle gang, Klein's campaign pointed out that he was a contributor to *Wheels on the Road*, a publication that covers the Outlaws' Florida clubs. This connection appeared to be tenuous at best. While West's campaign disputed the charges, neither he nor his supporters decried the insinuation as racially motivated.

Also, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee sponsored a television advertisement, "Allen West Rides With Gangs," that also linked West to criminal behavior. The spot starts with the rumbling of a motorcycle, followed by a narrator who says, "Guns. Prostitution. Murder. That's who Allen West rides with." The words, "Guns," "Prostitution" and "Murder" also flash across the screen in bolded letters. Subsequently the narrator says, "Congress is supposed to write our laws, we don't need a politician who rides with gangs outside of them." While neither the media nor West ever suggested that the advertisement was racially motivated, research suggests that an attempt to link an African American candidate with criminal activity could have unobtrusively stoked some voter's subconscious racial fears and reaped their votes (Hurwitz and Peffley 2010; Mendelberg 2001; Valentino 1999). However, West's status as a Republican may have made him more impervious to such charges, because the Democratic Party is more likely to be perceived as being soft on crime (Petrocik 1996).

In the end, regardless of whether it was racially motivated, Klein's offensive did little to stop West's momentum. This time, West won by eight percentage points, beating Klein 54% to 46%. Shortly after winning the 2010 election, in keeping with the language typical of African Americans running in majority white jurisdictions, West said in an interview, "I did not want to run as a black candidate; I did not want to run as a

military candidate. I wanted to run as an American candidate and win the respect of the people.”⁵¹ While West’s statement downplays the role of race in the election, part of his success is arguably due to the racially charged rhetoric and symbolism he employed throughout the campaign.

⁵¹ Steinhauer, Jennifer. “Black and Republican and Back in Congress.” *NY Times*. November 5, 2010.

Lessons Learned

These cases offer some insight into how and when candidates are likely to invoke race in a campaign. However, the discussion thus far has been largely speculative, as I did not have the appropriate data to make causal claims. Thus, the remainder of the dissertation offers empirical evidence from the experimental context on the effectiveness of various racial appeals used by black and white candidates in electoral contests. However, before we turn to the experimental data, let us examine some of the themes that emerged from these cases.

Gender

Only one of the cases included involved a female candidate. Perhaps this speaks to the case selection method, but it might also be indicative of the landscape of racial appeals. Are women more constrained in their ability to use racial appeals? Research on gender suggests that women are less receptive to explicit racial appeals (Hutchings et al. 2010), and thus women candidates may be constrained in their ability to use such appeals. The most prominent example of a female candidate invoking race is Hillary Clinton during the 2008 presidential campaign, when in an interview with USA Today, she cited an Associated Press poll “that found how Senator Obama's support among working, hard-working Americans, white Americans, is weakening again, and how whites in both states who had not completed college were supporting me.” It has been suggested that Clinton’s reference to “hard-working Americans, white Americans,” was an example of an explicit appeal, but it’s unclear to what extent this appeal helped or hurt her candidacy.

Thus an avenue for future research is to examine whether a candidate's gender facilitates or constrains their use of different types of racial appeals.

It is worth noting that Gwen Moore, the lone woman examined in this chapter, ran a classic deracialized campaign. As discussed previously, Moore had experience representing a majority white district in State Senate, so her incentive to engage in "racial signaling," may have been different from a black candidate who previously represented a majority-minority district (e.g. Harold Ford Jr.). But it is also plausible that women are constrained in their ability to use racial appeals, relative to their male counterparts. However, that question is beyond the scope of this particular study.

Geographic Context

Evidence from previous research suggests that the norm of equality has been unevenly adopted, and that explicit appeals may be more effective in the South (Valentino and Sears 2005; Hutchings et al. 2010). The selected cases support the notion that candidates may in fact have more latitude to use explicit appeals in the South. For example, although George Allen had his "macaca moment," it is unclear whether that was detrimental to his re-election bid in the southern and more conservative parts of the state. And although we are dealing with a limited number of cases, the appeals in the Southern cases (Florida, Virginia, Tennessee) trended toward the more explicit end of the racial appeal spectrum than the cases from the Midwest (Milwaukee and Minneapolis). Perhaps the landscape of racial appeals will be one in which explicit appeals are more likely to be utilized and more effective in the South. However, given the growing demographic diversity of the South, it is unclear whether these explicit appeals will continue to be effective in the future.

Racial Composition

In a similar vein, the racial composition of a jurisdiction may present a significant constraint on the types of racial appeals a candidate can make. For example, West made a series of explicit racial appeals, which may have in part be attributed to him campaigning in an overwhelmingly white district, in which the African American population was only six percent. Therefore, he did not have to be concerned with backlash or a counter-mobilization effort by an African American community, although, in theory, the African American community does not have to be the only group to counter-mobilize. On the other hand, Harold Ford Jr. faced a greater prospect of counter-mobilization effort by the African American community, as 20 percent of the electorate in Tennessee was African American. In the case of Ford, his appeals were implicit, and while the African American community never mobilized against Ford, their turnout on Ford's behalf was limited. Several accounts suggest that prominent members of the African American community were unwilling to mobilize black voters on Ford's behalf, as they found his implicit appeals off-putting.

Race and Partisanship

Central to the theory of racial signaling is the notion that a candidate's racial and partisan identity constrains their ability to use different types of racial appeals. Democratic candidates, particularly African American Democratic candidates may have more latitude to use explicit racial appeals, whereas White Republican candidates have less latitude, due to perceptions of their party as racially insensitive.

In the two U.S. House races involving an African American Democratic candidate (Gwen Moore and Keith Ellison), the candidates ran classic deracialized campaigns. While African American candidates may have more latitude to use explicit appeals, these

Democratic candidates may have been inclined to avoid the topic of race altogether, in order to prevent the appearance of being too attentive to racial matters. In contrast, the other African American Democratic candidate discussed in this chapter (Harold Ford Jr.) talked about race, but in a way that signaled that he was not beholden to black interests. Ford did not face backlash from white respondents for the use of these appeals. However, election returns suggest that Ford may have turned off African American voters. As a “captured minority,” African Americans, who are generally to the left of the Democratic Party, did not have an alternative candidate to support. But, African American turnout was lower than expected, considering the historical significance of a potential Ford victory. Thus, the Ford case illustrates that while African American candidates may not be punished by white voters for using negative racial appeals, African American candidates may lose support from African American voters (as measured by turnout).

Allen West is the African American candidate discussed in this chapter, who used the most extreme racial rhetoric. He won the election in an overwhelmingly white district, in which he did not have to contend with backlash from a voting bloc of African American voters. It is also worth noting that relative to the 2008 election, West performed better in 2010, which was a campaign marked by more extreme racial rhetoric. The West case challenges the idea that African American candidates have to adopt a deracialized approach. Instead it appears that African American candidates can talk about race openly, as long as their message signals that they are not overly concerned with black interests. Furthermore, African American candidates, by virtue of their race, may be insulated from charges of being racially insensitive.

Finally, in the race involving two white candidates (James Webb and George Allen), we see that both candidates suffered from charges of being racially insensitive. However, these charges were both more extreme and more detrimental in the case of the White Republican (George Allen). As noted previously, the theory of racial signaling suggests that White Republican candidates in particular, are constrained in their use of explicit racial appeals.

Table 2.1 Case Studies of Congressional Elections Involving Implicit and Explicit Racial Cues

Year	District	% White Electorate	Democratic Candidate	Republican Candidate
2004	WI-4	50	<i>Gwen Moore</i>	Gerald Boyle
2006	MN-5	74	<i>Keith Ellison</i>	Alan Fine
2006	TN	84	<i>Harold Ford Jr.</i>	Bob Corker
2006	VA	76	James Webb	George Allen
2010	FL-22	76	Ron Klein	<i>Allen West</i>

Note: Italicized names indicate that the candidate is African American.

Chapter 3

“Beyond the Pale”—Whites Americans’ Conditional Response to the Norm of Racial Equality

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed five cases of Congressional campaigns, in which a variety of racial appeals were utilized. Of particular interest to me is the use of explicit racial appeals, which according to the theory of racial priming are ineffective. However, if explicit racial appeals are so ineffective, then why do politicians (black and white alike) continue to use them in contemporary American politics? Thus, in this chapter I use an experiment to test the efficacy of explicit versus implicit appeals. I also test whether receptivity to explicit appeals is moderated by the race of the messenger.

A wealth of research has demonstrated that voter preferences can be influenced by candidate race (Piston 2010; Reeves 1997; Terkildsen 1993; Williams 1990). When evaluating a black candidate, voters may not engage in a costly information search to assess whether the candidate’s positions on issues align with their own, but instead rely on stereotypes.⁵² According to Hajnal (2007), white voters in particular, “Expect a black

⁵² This is not to say that black voters are not also susceptible to stereotypes about black candidates. However, the existence of a black counterpublic (see Dawson 2003 and Harris-Lacewell 2004) makes it likely that the average black voter has been exposed to more individuating information about black elites, than the average white voter.

leader to redistribute income, encourage integration, and generally channel resources toward the black community” (3). However, if black candidates take counter-stereotypical positions with regards to matters of race, by making racially conservative appeals, will citizens recognize it and adjust their evaluations accordingly? And, just how far can these candidates go? Is it enough that they espouse racially conservative positions, or can they also directly criticize the black community? In other words, if black candidates take counter-stereotypical positions by making explicit racial appeals rather than implicit appeals which subtly suggest criticisms of the African American community—will they succeed in generating greater support among whites?

Throughout much of the 20th century whites had no qualms about expressing their preference for a white candidate over a black candidate. However, such expressions of individual level bigotry began to fall out of favor in the political culture of the 1940s and 1950s. But despite whites becoming more racially tolerant in the second half of the twentieth century, many continue to embrace negative, albeit less crude, views about Black Americans (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Schuman et al. 1997). As a result, some scholars have argued that political elites can appeal to these racially conservative views and activate whites’ latent negative racial stereotypes, (Gilens 1999; Peffley and Hurwitz 2010; Reeves 1997; Valentino et al. 2002). Instead of employing direct references to racial minorities, some political elites use coded language, and highlight issues that are ostensibly not about race, but that have become associated with African Americans, such as crime or welfare (Gilens 1999; Gilliam & Iyengar 2000; Mendelberg 2001, 2008; Valentino 1999). This strategy is known as racial priming.

As noted in Chapter 1, Mendelberg (2001) offers arguably the most comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the effects of racial priming on the opinions of White Americans. At work, Mendelberg argues, is a conflict within the minds of White Americans between their genuine belief in the norm of equality on one hand and their lingering resentment toward blacks on the other. According to the theory of racial priming, “An implicit appeal is less likely to be perceived as having violated the norm of racial equality. It is likely to be perceived not as a statement that derogates blacks or suggests a threat from blacks, but rather as a message that includes race only incidentally and neutrally. The same message made explicitly is likely to be perceived as having crossed the line of public acceptability, and it will be rejected” (Mendelberg 2001, 20). In sum, implicit racial appeals are effective because whites are not conscious of the racial content in the message. Conversely, conventional wisdom holds that explicit racial appeals are *ineffective* in contemporary American politics, because they “violate the norm of racial equality” (Mendelberg 2001; although see Hutchings et al. 2010).

The racial priming hypothesis has been confirmed by a number of scholars (although see Huber and Lapinski 2006 2008). However, most of this literature has focused on contests featuring two white candidates (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Mendelberg 2001; Valentino et al. 2001). When researchers have examined bi-racial contests, the emphasis is invariably on how African American candidates might be *disadvantaged* when racial issues are made salient in the campaign (Reeves 1997; Terkildsen 1993). Left unexamined is whether African American candidates can actually benefit by making race salient in a campaign, by doing so in a manner that signals that they are not beholden to other African Americans. Also unexplored is whether voters

will embrace the norm of racial equality and reject an explicit racial appeal as being “too racist” when it is delivered by a member of the group in question. In fact, the literature on intergroup relations has shown that the comments of those who are thought to speak against their apparent self (or group) interest are seen as especially credible, while those who are perceived as having self-interested motives are often discounted (Kelley 1973). Arguably, black candidates who adopt positions that are critical of their racial group may be perceived as speaking against their group interest, and subsequently viewed more favorably by white voters than black candidates who use other types of appeals.

Therefore, in this chapter I discuss the results of an experiment that examines the impact of different types of racial appeals on likely vote choice. The results from this experiment challenge the notion that White Americans universally adhere to the norm of racial equality. Specifically, the experiment tests whether adherence to the norm of racial equality is contingent on the race of the messenger. I examine whether the combination of a black messenger coupled with a racially conservative message—indeed racially inflammatory message— is more effective at garnering white votes than other combinations of message and messenger. I also determine whether explicit appeals are at least as effective as implicit appeals, under certain circumstances, and what factors might moderate receptivity to these appeals. Drawing from the literature on source cues, intergroup relations, black politics and racial priming, I develop and test a theoretically grounded account about the moderating effect of candidate race on four different types of racial appeals—deracialized, racially liberal, and racially conservative messages that are either implicit or explicit in the derogatory nature of their appeal.

Deracialized appeals refer to when candidates avoid using any “explicit reference to race-specific issues, while at the same time emphasizing those issues that are perceived as racially transcendent” (McCormick and Jones 1993, 76). The originator of the term “deracialization,” Charles Hamilton (1977), initially intended the concept as a strategy by which the Democrats could regain some of the ground they had lost to the Republicans during the 1972 presidential elections. Hamilton, advised the Democrats to pursue a deracialized electoral strategy, thereby denying their Republican opponents the opportunity of using race as a polarizing issue.

When running a deracialized campaign, McCormick and Jones (1993) suggest that black candidates, should avoid using explicit references to issues such as welfare, affirmative action, and set-asides. In sum, this research maintains that it is necessary for black candidates to project a reassuring image to the white electorate in order to generate support. Conversely, platforms based on racially liberal messages generate far more controversy because they necessarily highlight racial disparities. These appeals explicitly discuss race, and offer racially redistributive solutions for racial disparities. These messages are consistent with white voters’ stereotypes of African American elites (Hajnal, 2007; Nelson et al. 2007).

Finally, racially conservative messages may focus on racial self-uplift, and eschew demands for race-conscious, government-based strategies to address inequality. Racially conservative messages from black elites are “counter-stereotypical” because black elites are typically expected by the public to highlight racial injustice and inequality (Nelson et al. 2007). Racially conservative messages may take the form of negative in-group commentary about other African Americans, while offering individualistic or

cultural explanations for racial disparities. These appeals are often explicit because they openly refer to African Americans without the use of coded language. However, these appeals can also be implicit by using imagery, or coded language that implicates African Americans, but is ostensibly not about race (e.g. inner-city, “tough on crime,” etc.). Furthermore, these appeals need not be characterized by the categorical derogation of African Americans as a group, but can focus upon certain subsets of “doubly marginalized” African Americans, such as drug users, inner-city youth, or absentee fathers (Cohen 1999; White 2007).

As noted earlier, to date much of the research on racial appeals have focused on the use of these messages by white candidates. However, how do white voters respond to racial appeals by black candidates? Also, do black candidates have an incentive to use racial appeals—particularly explicit appeals? Finally, are explicit appeals universally rejected, or are their subsets of the white population who are not perturbed by these appeals? In light of these questions, I test the following hypotheses:

Hypotheses

H1: Implicit appeals are more effective than explicit appeals when a candidate is white. But, when a candidate is black, white voters will not distinguish between the two types of appeals.

H2: White respondents will be more inclined to support a black candidate with an explicit message, relative to a white candidate with the identical message.

H3: Racial conservatives will be more receptive to explicit racial appeals than racial liberals.

Experimental Design

To evaluate how different types of racial appeals influence public attitudes, I designed and conducted an Internet-based survey experiment of a nationally representative sample of 1,808 adults (906 African Americans and 902 Whites) in June 2011.⁵³ The design was a 2 x 4 factorial plus control. All participants read a mock news article involving a recent speech about education, delivered by a fictitious Democratic candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, named Greg Davis. This contest involved an open House seat in Ohio's third congressional district. As indicated by Table 3.1, respondents were randomly assigned to one of eight treatment conditions in which Davis' race was manipulated (black or white), and the type of appeal was manipulated (racially liberal, deracialized, implicit, explicit). In the control condition, race was not cued and the appeal was racially neutral.

[TABLE 3.1 ABOUT HERE]

Each treatment condition included two photos—one of the candidate, and a second photo that depending on the condition, was either a picture of a black audience or a picture of a book. The photograph of the candidate accompanying the article was used

⁵³ The survey was conducted under the auspices of Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS). TESS provides high-quality survey data at an affordable cost by working with *Knowledge Networks*, a survey firm that recruits panelists using traditional address-based and random-digit dialing (RDD) sampling methods. From the TESS website www.tessexperiments.org: "To achieve a representative sample, Knowledge Networks uses a random RDD sample. When a person agrees to participate, they are provided with free Internet access and are given the necessary hardware for as long as they remain in KnowledgePanel. Most research to date comparing this kind of sample with telephone RDD samples suggest they are equally representative, and some suggest that the data obtained via probability-based internet surveys are somewhat more reliable than what is obtained by phone."

to manipulate the candidate's race (black or white). However, to avoid cueing race in the control condition, instead of a photo of the candidate, respondents saw a campaign banner with the candidate's name (Greg Davis).

In all of the conditions, the candidate is calling for a need to reform the public education system, but the reason varies by condition. In the racially liberal version⁵⁴, government is held responsible for "black students falling behind." In the deracialized version, government is held responsible for "*American* students falling behind," thus emphasizing the issue in a manner that would have broad appeal to the electorate across racial lines. In the explicit version, black parents are held responsible for "black students falling behind." Furthermore, black parents are admonished to "start parenting," and "stop blaming the government," which plays on stereotypes of African Americans as lazy and as dependent on assistance from the government. Conversely, in the implicit version "parents" are held responsible for "students falling behind" with no mention of race. Although there is no mention of race in the implicit version, race is implied, because the article is accompanied by a photo of an exclusively black audience. Therefore, the photo of the black audience may act as a useful symbol for connecting failing students with beliefs respondents may have about black parenting and black culture, without actually ever mentioning stereotypes about black parenting.

The work of previous scholars (Gamson, 1992; Mendelberg, 2001; Nelson and Kinder, 1996) suggests that these visual cues can also be important for conveying messages regarding which considerations citizens should draw upon. This occurs because visual images act as useful symbols for connecting "the issue with deeper values,

⁵⁴ This message is more liberal than the other messages, but it does not maximize the liberal message, as it does not call for government intervention to remedy the problem. A genuinely liberal message was avoided in order to maximize similarity across conditions.

principles, beliefs, and emotions that the individual may not even consciously recognize as directly relevant” (Nelson and Kinder, 1996, p. 1073). By incorporating both explicit (textual) and implicit (visual) cues I am able to more realistically capture the nature of political communication. As noted earlier, the experimental conditions are described in much greater detail in Table 3.1.

It is worth noting that the articles were all roughly the same length, ranging in length from 176 words to 205 words. The language was consistent throughout the articles, with the exception of the appeal and the headline. Although the newspaper articles were fictitious, all of the arguments and information presented in them were accurate representations of commonly used frames regarding education reform. I patterned the comments from commonly used elite frames that I previously identified in a content analysis of approximately 200 articles about educational disparities. By systematically altering the way in which the problem of educational disparity is framed, I hope to mimic elite discourse. Copies of the treatments are available in Appendix A.

Respondents answered questions about their racial predispositions in a pre-test questionnaire. Specifically, all participants answered questions from the racial resentment scale⁵⁵ (Kinder and Sanders 1996), consisting of four agree/disagree statements: “Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class”; “Most Blacks who receive money from welfare programs could get along without it if they tried”; “Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less of the good things in life than they deserve”; and “Irish, Italian,

⁵⁵ The racial resentment scale has been validated as a measure of anti-black predispositions (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Tarman and Sears 2005) and has proved to be a powerful predictor of opposition to policies and candidates viewed as pro-black (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Mendelberg 2001; Valentino et al. 2002).

Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.”

In order to avoid any priming effects from the pre-test questionnaire, there was a one-week lag time between the first and second wave of the study. During the second wave of the study, subjects received the experimental treatment (mock news article) and the post-treatment questionnaire. After reading the article, participants were asked how likely they were to vote for Greg Davis. Finally, all subjects were thoroughly debriefed after completion of the study so that they understood the article they read was fictitious and that “Greg Davis” was actually not running for the U.S. House of Representatives in Ohio’s 3rd Congressional District.

This study builds on previous work and contributes to the extant literature on racial appeals in a number of ways. First, in contrast to many previous studies that have relied on convenience samples, this design contains a nationally representative sample, allowing us to make more confident generalizations to the broader electorate. Furthermore, by relying on a representative sample I am able to evaluate the effects of racial appeals on salient subgroups, such as racial conservatives, who have typically been underrepresented in the convenience samples of earlier experimental work (Mendelberg 2001; Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002). Third, by utilizing a self-report interview mode over the Internet, social desirability effects are likely to be diminished (Baker, Bradburn and Johnson 1995; Tourangeau and Smith 1996). Moreover, the privacy and anonymity of this research context should diminish misreporting, non-response, and neutralize race of interviewer effects (Berinsky 1999; Davis 1997). Finally, most studies of racial cues focus on the use of these appeals by white elites, with little attention paid to

the use of racial appeals by African Americans. Thus, this study is among the first to test whether responses to racial appeals are contingent on the race of the messenger. It is also among the first to examine whether highlighting racial issues with explicit appeals might actually work to the advantage of black candidates.

Manipulation Check

I first checked that the manipulation worked as intended by seeing whether respondents were able to accurately identify the content of the article. Respondents were given a list of five statements about the article that depending on the respondents' condition may or may not have been true.⁵⁶ Respondents were asked to check as many statements as they believed to be true. They also had the option of not selecting any of the statements. The evidence suggests that the manipulation worked as intended. For example, only seven percent of the respondents in the sample incorrectly agreed with the statement that the article “was about the environment.” Therefore, it appears that respondents were not simply agreeing with all of the statements presented, thus diminishing concerns about acquiescence bias.

Eighty-six percent of the respondents in the sample correctly stated that the article dealt with education. Of the 14 percent who did not think the article dealt with education, approximately 75 percent of those were in conditions in which race was openly discussed (racially liberal or explicit conditions). It is plausible that those respondents would be less inclined to state that the article dealt with education, since those particular messages included such an explicit discussion of race. Unfortunately respondents were not given

⁵⁶ Respondents were asked whether the article dealt with education, whether the article showed a Black candidate, whether the article dealt with the environment, whether it showed a candidate wearing glasses (which was never true) and whether the article dealt with a candidate who tried to appeal to racial feelings. The statements were coded as dummy variables, with ‘1’ indicating agreement with the statement. For a more detailed description, see the Appendix.

an option to state whether the article was about race. Therefore, it is not possible to verify whether the 14 percent of respondents who rejected the statement that “the article dealt with education,” did so, because they thought the article was about race.

Nevertheless, respondents were given an option to agree that the article “dealt with a candidate who tried to appeal to racial feelings.” It is worth noting that one’s presence in the racially liberal or explicit conditions was a statistically significant predictor of agreeing that the article “dealt with a candidate who tried to appeal to racial feelings,” relative to the control condition (each $p < .01$).

Main Effects on Candidate Evaluation

Table 3.2 displays the results of four ordered logistic regression models, where the dependent variable is always the likelihood of voting for the candidate. The likelihood of voting for the candidate is measured on a four-point scale, 0-1, (0=Very Unlikely, .33=Unlikely, .67=Likely 1= Very Likely). The model includes indicator variables for each treatment, but the omitted condition, or baseline condition varies depending on the model. The baseline condition is altered across the four models to facilitate comparisons relevant to the various hypotheses. All of the models include controls for party identification, political ideology, employment status, marital status, and household income.⁵⁷ And in order to discuss the results from Table 3.2 in more meaningful terms, Figure 3.1 displays the predicted probability of voting for the candidates depicted in the various conditions.

The first column of Table 3.2 displays the results of Model 1. In Model 1, the omitted condition is the control group (in which race is not cued and the appeal is racially neutral). Thus, Model 1 enables us to see how likely voters were to support Greg Davis in each condition, relative to a baseline in which respondents did not know the candidate's race and the message was racially neutral.

[TABLE 3.2 ABOUT HERE]

[FIGURE 3.1 ABOUT HERE]

⁵⁷ Some statistically significant differences in the distribution of these variables were observed across cells. However, excluding these controls does not alter the direction or magnitude of these results.

As indicated by Model 1, exposure to either the white or black racially liberal treatment was associated with a decrease in the likelihood of voting for Greg Davis. Specifically, Figure 3.1 indicates that while the likelihood of being very unlikely to vote for the candidate depicted in the control condition was only 26 percent, the likelihood of being very unlikely to vote the white and black candidates depicted in the racially liberal conditions was much higher, at 75 and 72 percent respectively. Thus, the message that called attention to racial disparities and attributed blame to government for these disparities was very unpopular. Of course, as noted earlier, this is not an entirely genuine liberal message, because it did not call for government intervention to remedy the disparity.

The candidates depicted in the deracialized conditions were also unpopular. Exposure to either of the deracialized conditions is associated with a decrease in the likelihood of voting for the candidate that is both substantively and statistically significant, relative to the control condition. As Figure 3.1 indicates, there is a 43 percent chance of being very unlikely to vote for the white candidate with the deracialized message, and a 42 percent chance of being very unlikely to vote for the black candidate with the deracialized message. Thus, these messages were unpopular regardless of the candidate's race, as the black and white candidates were evaluated almost identically.

However, race is a significant factor in the case of explicit appeals. Recall, H2 states "Relative to the white explicit condition, respondents in the black explicit condition will be more inclined to support candidate Davis." The results from Model 1 offer some confirmation of this hypothesis. Exposure to the explicit appeal when Greg Davis was

depicted as white was associated with a decrease in the likelihood of voting for this candidate, relative to the candidate in the control condition. Although this result was not statistically significant, the direction of the coefficient is in accordance with my hypothesis. Conversely, white subjects were *more likely* to vote for the candidate in the explicit condition when he was depicted as black, relative to the candidate in the control condition, although this result was also not statistically significant. These results suggest that a white candidate who makes an explicit appeal will be penalized by white voters, whereas an identical black candidate was not penalized. This lends some support to my supposition that there is something especially effective about the combination of a black messenger with an explicit racial (albeit conservative) message. Models 2, 3, and 4 will more rigorously test this hypothesis.

Next, Model 2 (second column of Table 3.2) compares the effect of being in the various treatment conditions, relative to viewing the article with the black candidate who uses the racially conservative-implicit appeal. Recall that in the implicit versions, race was never mentioned, but it was implied, as there was a black audience pictured. The aim of Model 2 is to examine whether respondents make a distinction between the implicit and explicit message when the candidate is black. If in fact, respondents make a distinction between the implicit and explicit messages of the black candidate, it would support previous research that White Americans have embraced the norm of equality, by rejecting messages when they are aware of their racial content (explicit), but embracing messages when they are ostensibly not about race (implicit). As shown in Model 2, this is not in fact the case, as levels of support for the African American candidate across the implicit and explicit conditions are not significantly different. White respondents view

the implicit and explicit appeals of black candidates as essentially equivalent. These results offer confirmation that the black candidate with an explicit appeal did not suffer a loss in support from white respondents. It also suggests that respondents' rejection of explicit racial appeals is contingent on the race of the messenger, as the black candidate who violates the norm of equality is not penalized.

In contrast, results from Model 3 (third column of Table 3.2) indicate that when the explicit appeal is linked with the white candidate, he is penalized, relative to the white version of the candidate with the implicit appeal ($p < .01$). Figure 3.2 indicates that while 47 percent of the respondents are either "very unlikely" or "unlikely" to vote for the white candidate depicted in the implicit condition, the percentage jumps 20 percentage points higher, to 67 percent of respondents expressing unwillingness to vote for Greg Davis, when he is depicted as a white candidate with an explicit message.

Thus, in the case of a white candidate, respondents were significantly more receptive to the implicit appeal than to the explicit appeal, consistent with most previous work in this literature. These findings suggest that White Americans do make a distinction between implicit and explicit messages, but only when the messenger is white. This has troubling implications for race relations in contemporary American politics, as it seems to suggest that the norm of equality may not be fully embraced. These results imply that white respondents are not necessarily rejecting explicit racial appeals that advance stereotypes about African Americans. Instead, it is the combination of the explicit racial appeal and a *white* messenger that respondents have traditionally rejected. Respondents make a distinction between implicit and explicit appeals when the

messenger is white (Figure 3.3), but make no such distinction when the messenger is black, which confirms H1.

Further evidence that violations of the norm of equality do not necessarily lead to lower levels of candidate support is provided in Model 4 (fourth column of Table 3.2). Recall that the message in the black explicit condition is identical to the message in the white explicit condition. The only difference between the two conditions is the race of the candidate pictured. But despite having the same message, the black candidate with the explicit appeal is significantly more popular than his white counterpart. As indicated by Figure 3.3, there is a 27 percent difference in likely support for the candidates ($p < .01$), with significantly more support for the black candidate. In other words, while the likelihood of respondents being “very likely” or “likely” to vote for the black candidate with the explicit message is 60 percent, only 33 percent of respondents agree that they would be “very likely” or “likely” to vote for the white candidate with the explicit message.

[FIGURE 3.3 ABOUT HERE]

Again, these results suggest that White Americans do not necessarily view violations of the norm of equality as unacceptable. An explicit appeal delivered by a white messenger is likely to be perceived as an unambiguous norm violation by most whites. However, the fact that subjects respond differently to the very same message delivered by a black candidate, indicates that it is not necessarily the *message* that is perceived as unacceptable, but that social norms make it unacceptable for a white person

to deliver the message. Whereas the white candidate who used the explicit appeal always lost support in all of the models estimated, the black candidate with an explicit appeal never lost support at a statistically discernible difference, and depending on the baseline condition, even gained support at some times. The evidence presented suggests that when a member of the in-group in question makes an explicit appeal about the group, white voters will not penalize the messenger. Perhaps by virtue of being a member of the in-group, the speaker is perceived to have some measure of “legitimacy.” These results confirm H2, which suggested that relative to the white explicit condition, respondents in the black explicit condition would be more inclined to support candidate Davis

Since previous research related to the implicit and explicit racial appeals has typically focused on white messengers, to date we have been unable to detect that the rejection of explicit appeals is moderated by the race of the messenger. As a result of this study, we learn that explicit appeals that endorse stereotypes of African Americans are not rejected solely because of their content. Receptivity to racial appeals is influenced by the race of the messenger. While it is “beyond the pale,” for white elites to endorse stereotypes of blacks, these results suggests that appeals that endorse stereotypes of blacks are not rejected, as long as another African American is making the appeal. Perhaps, whites on average have not embraced the norm of equality to the degree that was previously thought. However, it is also plausible that whites do not perceive an explicit appeal from a black messenger as a norm violation. Perhaps a conservative message from an African American candidate is perceived as a message of “self help,” rather than as a violation of the norm.

Conditional Effects on Candidate Evaluation

The results presented thus far suggest that in general, messages that blame government for disparities are not well received. In fact, messages that attribute blame to the government for disparities are even more unpopular than messages that endorse stereotypes about blacks in an explicit manner. The results also indicate that the explicit racial appeal is rejected when Greg Davis is white, but not when Greg Davis is black. However, these results do not show which subjects are likely to accept particular messages. For example, do whites universally reject explicit racial appeals from white candidates—as much of the literature suggests—or are only white racial liberals rejecting explicit racial appeals? Recall that H3 states, “Racial conservatives will be more receptive to explicit racial appeals than racial liberals.” Therefore, I estimated a model, in which I assess the impact of racial resentment on the likelihood of voting for Greg Davis in the liberal, implicit, and explicit conditions when the candidate is depicted as white. Racial resentment is coded from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating higher levels of racial resentment.⁵⁸ Individuals with scores above .5 on the racial resentment scale are classified as “racial conservatives,” whereas those individuals with scores below .5 are classified as “racial liberals.” The results are presented in Table 3.3.

[TABLE 3.3 ABOUT HERE]

Similar to the results presented in Table 3.2, the dependent variable is the likelihood of voting for U.S. House of Representatives candidate Greg Davis (coded 0-1)

⁵⁸ It is worth noting that the mean racial resentment score for the sample was .64, and approximately 70 percent of the sample scored above the midpoint of the scale.

with higher values indicating more support for the candidate. The baseline is the control group (in which race is not cued and the appeal is racially neutral). Each interaction term represents the interaction between the racial resentment measure and the indicator variable for the treatment condition in question. These interaction terms help us to capture the slope shift associated with exposure to each treatment. To guard against the possibility that differences in the distribution of sociodemographic variables across cells of the design might account for differences observed, ideology, partisanship, household income, marital status and employment status were also included (although not displayed).

In the case of the white candidate with the explicit message, differences emerge between racial liberals and racial conservatives as hypothesized. The results in Table 3.3 indicate that among respondents who were exposed to the white candidate with the explicit message, the impact of racial resentment was such that those individuals who scored low on racial resentment were notably less likely to vote for the candidate than those who were high on racial resentment ($p < .05$). In other words, the effects of racial liberalism were negligible in the control group, but in the white explicit condition, support for candidate Davis drops precipitously among respondents who scored low on the racial resentment scale. Clearly, violating the norm of equality was viewed as especially troubling for this group of respondents. In contrast, respondents who scored high on the racial resentment scale were mostly unaffected by exposure to the explicit appeal. As indicated by Table 3.3, the sum of the coefficient associated with the white explicit condition (-5.22) and the coefficient for the interaction of the white explicit condition and racial resentment (6.64) is close to zero.

These results contradict conventional wisdom that whites, from across the ideological spectrum, will reject racial appeals that are explicit in nature. As evidenced by these results, I find that whites who scored high on the racial resentment scale were almost entirely unperturbed by the explicit racial appeal and it was only whites who scored low on this scale who seemed to object to the message. Therefore, we can conclude that the aggregate decrease in the likelihood of voting for the white candidate with the explicit racially conservative message (displayed in Table 3.2) was driven mostly by those individuals who had low levels of racial resentment. Figure 3.4 offers a clear illustration of this relationship. Contrary to the racial priming hypothesis, I find that there are whites who are not perturbed by explicit racial appeals.

[FIGURE 3.4 ABOUT HERE]

Figure 3.4 displays an interaction plot in which the conditional effect of racial resentment on “very likely” to vote for Greg Davis is displayed for individuals in the control condition and for individuals in the white explicit condition. As Figure 3.4 indicates, as racial resentment increases, voters are more likely to vote for the candidate in the white explicit condition. It appears that the norm of equality may not influence all individuals equally. While white racial liberals—a decided minority in my dataset and in most other nationally representative samples—were less likely to vote for the white candidate with the racially explicit appeal, whites at the highest levels of racial resentment whites had few qualms supporting the white candidate with the explicit racial appeal. However, does this same pattern hold true when the candidate is depicted as

African American? Next we examine the influence of racial resentment on receptivity to the very same explicit racial appeal when candidate Greg Davis is depicted as black.

I estimated two models, in which I assess the impact of racial resentment on the likelihood of voting for Greg Davis in the black liberal, black implicit, and black explicit conditions. The first column of Table 3.4 is Model 1. In Model 1, the baseline is the control group (no race cue, racially neutral appeal). This model enables us to compare the conditional effect of racial resentment in the black racially liberal, black implicit and black explicit conditions relative to the control. Each interaction term represents the interaction between the racial resentment measure and the indicator variable for the treatment condition in question. These interaction terms help us to capture the slope shift associated with exposure to each treatment. As in previous models, controls for ideology, partisanship, household income, marital status and employment status were also included (but not displayed).⁵⁹

[TABLE 3.4 ABOUT HERE]

Of most interest to my hypotheses are interaction between racial resentment and exposure to the black racially liberal and black explicit conditions. As Model 1 demonstrates, the impact of racial resentment is not substantially greater in the black racially liberal condition. The interaction between the attitudinal scale and the relevant treatment is substantively small, and falls well short of statistical significance. This suggests that white racial liberals were not more likely to embrace the candidacy of Greg Davis when he is associated with a more liberal message—and white racial conservatives were not more likely to oppose his candidacy—even when he is also depicted as an African American. More importantly, I also find that whites who score low on the racial

⁵⁹ Full results are available from the author upon request.

resentment scale do not significantly penalize candidate Davis, even when he espouses a racially explicit and conservative appeal. The coefficient of -1.26. does indicate some loss of support among liberals in the explicit condition, relative to the control, but the absolute value of the standard error is even larger, suggesting that we cannot confidently distinguish this effect from zero. Additionally, there is some indication that respondents who score high on racial resentment are, relative to the control, somewhat *more* supportive of Davis. Again, however, this result falls short of statistical significance.

Next, the second column of Table 3.4 is Model 2. Model 2 is more parsimonious. With the exception of the black explicit condition, all of the black conditions have been eliminated from the model in order to compare the conditional effect of racial resentment in the black explicit condition relative to the white explicit condition. The aim here is to determine how whites, depending on levels of racial resentment, respond to the explicit appeal, when the only thing that varies across conditions is the race of the candidate.

As demonstrated in Table 3.4, racial liberals on average were far more likely to support the black candidate with the explicit appeal, relative to the white candidate with the identical message. Indeed, the magnitude is substantial, as indicated by the coefficient of 4.21 on the main effect of being in the black explicit condition. Again, these findings have troubling implications for acceptance of the norm of racial equality. Racial liberals (those with low racial resentment scores) are ideally the subgroup that we would anticipate to most strongly subscribe to the norm of equality. However, it seems that their embrace of the norm of equality is actually the most malleable, as they are more likely to penalize a white candidate with an explicit appeal than they are to penalize the black candidate with the identical message. Figure 3.5 offers a clear visual depiction of

this result, as it presents a plot that displays the conditional effect of racial resentment on “very likely” to vote for Greg Davis for respondents in the black explicit condition and respondents in the white explicit condition. Notice the gap in the response of racial liberals in their support for the white candidate with the explicit message and the black candidate with the explicit message. Racial liberals are far more likely to say that they are “very likely to vote for Greg Davis,” when he is depicted as an African American candidate with an explicit message, than when he is depicted as a white candidate with an explicit message.

[FIGURE 3.5 ABOUT HERE]

As indicated by Figure 3.5, racial conservatives are likely to express a willingness to vote for a candidate with an explicit message, regardless of the race of the candidate. This runs contrary to the racial priming hypothesis, which suggests that the norm of equality has been wholly embraced, regardless of one’s racial conservatism. Instead, we see that racial conservatives generally embrace explicit racial appeals, while racial liberals have a markedly different response to the explicit appeal when the candidate is black as compared to when the candidate is white. Thus, this result offers further confirmation that whites—and in particular, white racial liberals, are not wholly rejecting messages that are explicit in nature, but rather they are rejecting explicit messages when the messenger is white.

Discussion

My analysis builds on previous work that seeks to understand the direct and conditional effects of racial predispositions on opinions across exposure to different political messages. In particular, the results of this experiment inform our understanding of what types of racial appeals are effective, and who is allowed to use these appeals. We learn that in the case of white candidates, implicit appeals are acceptable and are preferred to explicit racial appeals. In contrast, in the case of black candidates, white voters do not make a distinction between implicit and explicit racial appeals—the support that the black candidate with an explicit appeal received was equivalent to that of a black candidate with an implicit appeal. These results are consistent with Hypothesis 2, which expected that race would moderate receptivity to racial appeals, such that white respondents in the aggregate would reject explicit appeals when the candidate is white, but accept them when the candidate is black. While explicit racial appeals are “beyond the pale” for white candidates, the findings presented here suggest that the same does not hold true for African American candidates.

The findings from this study also offer insight about subgroup differences in receptivity to racial appeals. We see that racially resentful whites have no qualms in supporting a white candidate with an explicit appeal, relative to the control condition. Thus the loss in support in the aggregate for the white candidate with the explicit appeal

was driven mostly by racial liberals. In short, the prohibition on white candidates violating the norm of racial equality seems to be enforced only by white racial liberals.

However, racial liberals' response to explicit appeals is contingent on the race of the messenger. As noted earlier, respondents had a differential response to the identical explicit appeal, such that the white candidate received a greater penalty for making an explicit appeal than the black candidate with the identical message. Thus, the very respondents who one might expect to be most consistent in their rejection of explicit appeals, actually have the most malleable response.

These results have important implications for the practice of politics, opinion formation and campaign strategy. In particular, these findings suggest that partisan elites interested in maximizing the vote for their party may have an incentive to recruit candidates from stigmatized minority groups so as to deliver – at least for some white voters – a more effective racial appeal without fear of generating a backlash.

Conclusion

In sum, there are several conclusions that can be drawn from these results. First, Mendelberg's (2001) theory of implicit racial appeals does not appear to apply when the messenger is African American. As one of the first studies to test Mendelberg's theory in the context of a black messenger, voters do not distinguish between implicit and explicit appeals when the messenger is black. Second, consistent with the work of Hutchings et al. (2010) not all Americans respond with aversion to explicit appeals. Racially resentful whites were unaffected by the explicit appeal, whether the candidate was black or white. Also, it would seem that racial liberals in particular, might not fully embrace the norm as one might expect. Racial liberals penalize the white candidate with the explicit appeal to a greater extent than the black candidate with the identical message. One possible interpretation of this result is that whites have not fully embraced the norm of racial equality, while another interpretation is that whites do not perceive a black candidate with an explicit appeal as violating the norm. Finally, in accordance with my theory of racial signaling, we see that candidates have an incentive to signal that they are not beholden to black interests. Once the implicit/explicit model is tested outside the traditional context of White Republican candidates, we see that Black Democrats in particular can use explicit racial appeals with very little reprisal from white voters, as they can appeal to racial conservatives without turning off racial liberals. Furthermore, even White Democrats have some latitude to use explicit appeals as they are penalized mostly by

white racial liberals, who are a decided minority in my dataset, as well as in other nationally representative samples, such as the American National Election Study and the General Social Survey.

Next, in Chapter Four, we will explore how African Americans reacted to the various racial appeals. As one might expect African Americans respondents reacted somewhat differently than whites, given the longstanding racial divide in American politics.

Table 3.1: Experimental Manipulations-Experiment 1

Appeal	Headline	Quotes	Photos
Racially Liberal	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “It’s Government’s Fault Black Kids are Falling Behind.”	“Government is responsible for your children failing to achieve in school. It’s because of government neglect that your kid doesn’t pick up a book or finish his or her homework. I’m tired of the government blaming black students for problems when it’s government’s fault that black students have fallen behind. Stop blaming the victim!”	First Photo: Black or White Candidate Second Photo: Book
Deracialized	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “It’s Government’s Fault American Kids are Falling Behind.”	“American children are failing to achieve in school. It’s terrible that not enough kids in our country pick up a book or finish their homework. I’m tired of the government blaming students for problems when it’s government’s fault that students have fallen behind. Stop blaming the victim! “American students are falling behind. It’s unacceptable! Government needs to start governing!”	First Photo: Black or White Candidate Second Photo: Book
Implicit	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “It’s Parents’ Fault Kids are Falling Behind.”	“Parents are responsible for their children failing to achieve in school.” “Government can’t force a kid to pick up a book or finish their homework. I’m tired of people blaming the government for problems when it’s their own fault that they have fallen behind.” “Some students are falling behind. It’s unacceptable! Parents need to start parenting.”	First Photo: Black or White Candidate Second Photo: Black Audience
Explicit	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “It’s Black Parents’ Fault Kids are Falling Behind.”	“Black parents are responsible for their children failing to achieve in school.” “Government can’t force a kid to pick up a book or finish their homework. I’m tired of black people blaming the government for problems when it’s their own fault that they have fallen behind.” “Black students are falling behind.” “It’s unacceptable! Black parents need to start parenting.”	First Photo: Black or White Candidate Second Photo: Black Audience
Control⁶⁰	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “American Kids are Falling Behind.”	“It’s terrible that not enough kids in our country pick up a book or finish their homework.” I’m tired of our nation’s children falling behind. Stop the problem!” “American students are falling behind. It’s unacceptable! We need to find a solution.”	First Photo: “Greg Davis for Congress” Banner Second Photo: Book

⁶⁰ Race is not signaled in this article.

Table 3.2: Prediction of White Support for Candidate by Experimental Condition

	(Model 1)	(Model 2)	(Model 3)	(Model 4)
White Racially Liberal	-2.14*** (0.41)	-2.92*** (0.40)	-2.42*** (0.40)	-1.61*** (0.38)
Black Racially Liberal	-2.01*** (0.40)	-2.81*** (0.39)	-2.30*** (0.39)	-1.49*** (0.37)
White Deracialized	-0.75** (0.39)	-1.56*** (0.38)	-1.06** (0.37)	-0.25 (0.36)
Black Deracialized	-0.74* (0.39)	-1.53*** (0.37)	-1.02** (0.37)	-0.21 (0.35)
White Implicit	0.30 (0.40)	-0.50 (0.38)		0.81** (0.37)
Black Implicit	0.83** (0.40)		0.50 (0.38)	1.31*** (0.37)
White Explicit	-0.52 (0.39)	-1.31*** (0.37)	-0.81** (0.37)	
Black Explicit	0.59 (0.39)	-0.23 (0.36)	0.28 (0.37)	1.09*** (0.36)
Cut 1	-1.35 (0.54)	-2.05 (0.56)	-1.55 (0.57)	-0.74 (0.55)
Cut 2	-0.12 (0.54)	-0.82 (0.56)	-0.31 (0.57)	0.50 (0.55)
Cut 3	1.65 (0.55)	0.83 (0.56)	1.34 (0.57)	2.15 (0.56)
Log likelihood	-542.38	-498.51	-498.51	-498.51
Observations	477	441	441	441

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are coefficients from four ordered logit models that also include controls for party identification, political ideology, employment status, marital status and household income. The baseline in Model 1 is the control condition (no race cue, neutral appeal). The baseline in Model 2 is the black racially conservative-implicit condition. In Model 3 the baseline is the white racially conservative-implicit condition. In Model 4 the baseline is the white racially conservative-explicit condition. The likelihood of voting for the candidate is coded 0-1, with higher values indicating more support for the candidate. Bolded results indicate a statistically significant slope change from the baseline condition.

Table 3.3: The Conditional Effect of Racial Resentment on Likely Vote by Experimental Condition (White Candidates Only)

	(Model 1)
Racial Resentment	-0.68 (1.79)
White Racially Liberal	0.64 (1.58)
White Implicit	-0.99 (1.63)
White Explicit	-5.22*** (1.77)
Racial Resentment * White Racially Liberal	-4.81** (2.39)
Racial Resentment * White Implicit	1.72 (2.28)
Racial Resentment * White Explicit	6.64*** (2.49)
Cut 1	-1.79 (1.45)
Cut 2	-0.37 (1.44)
Cut 3	1.25 (1.45)
Log Likelihood	-215.97
Observations	202

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are coefficients from an ordered logit model that also include controls for party identification, political ideology, employment status, marital status and household income. The baseline in Model 1 is the control condition (no race cue, neutral appeal). The likeliness of voting for the candidate is coded 0-1, with higher values indicating more support for the candidate. Racial resentment is also coded 0-1, with higher values, indicating higher levels of racial resentment. Bolded results indicate a statistically significant change from the baseline condition.

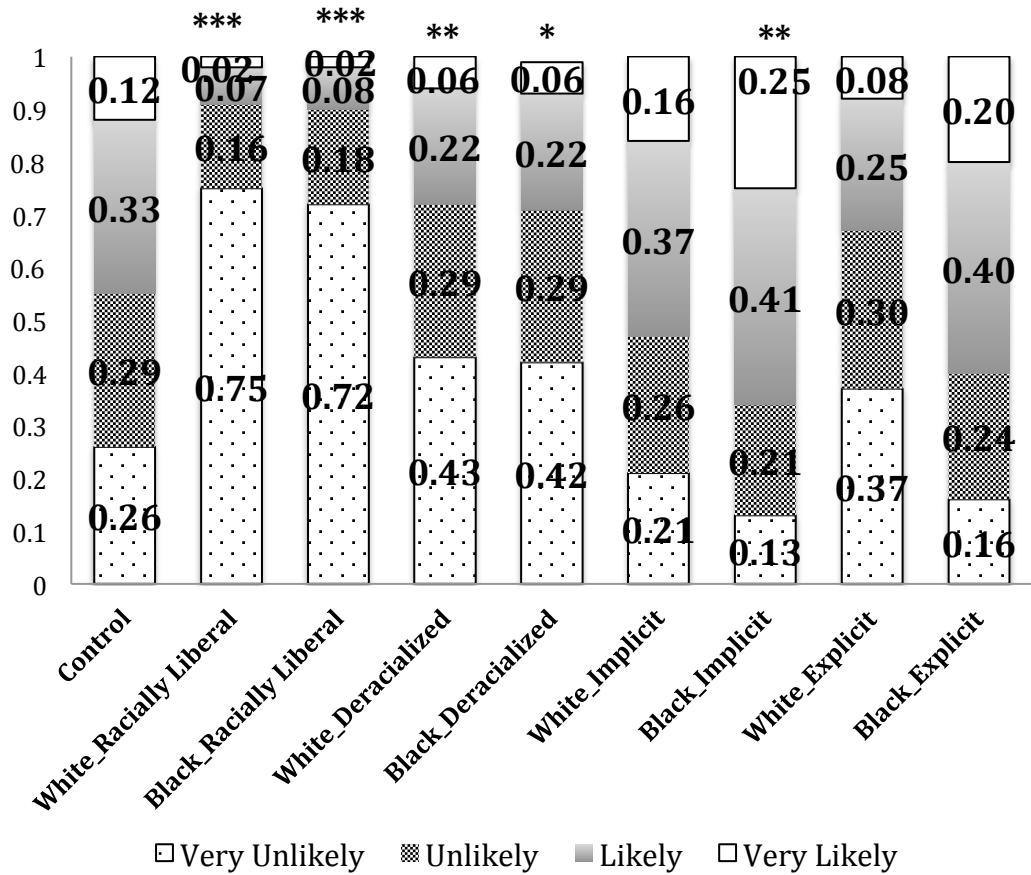
**Table 3.4: The Conditional Effect of Racial Resentment on Likely Vote
By Experimental Condition (Black Candidates Only)**

	(Model 1) Baseline = Control	(Model 2) Baseline = White Explicit
Racial Resentment	-0.37 (1.82)	5.63*** (1.74)
Black Racially Liberal	-1.53 (1.57)	
Black Implicit	1.68 (1.51)	
Black Explicit	-1.26 (1.60)	4.21** (1.55)
Racial Resentment * Black Racially Liberal	-1.00 (2.30)	
Racial Resentment * Black Implicit	-1.29 (2.18)	
Racial Resentment * Black Explicit	2.73 (2.29)	-4.36* (2.17)
Cut 1	-1.97 (1.45)	3.33 (1.39)
Cut 2	-0.83 (1.44)	4.65 (1.42)
Cut 3	1.48 (1.45)	6.56 (1.46)
Log Likelihood	-215.87	-125.04
Observations	201	103

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

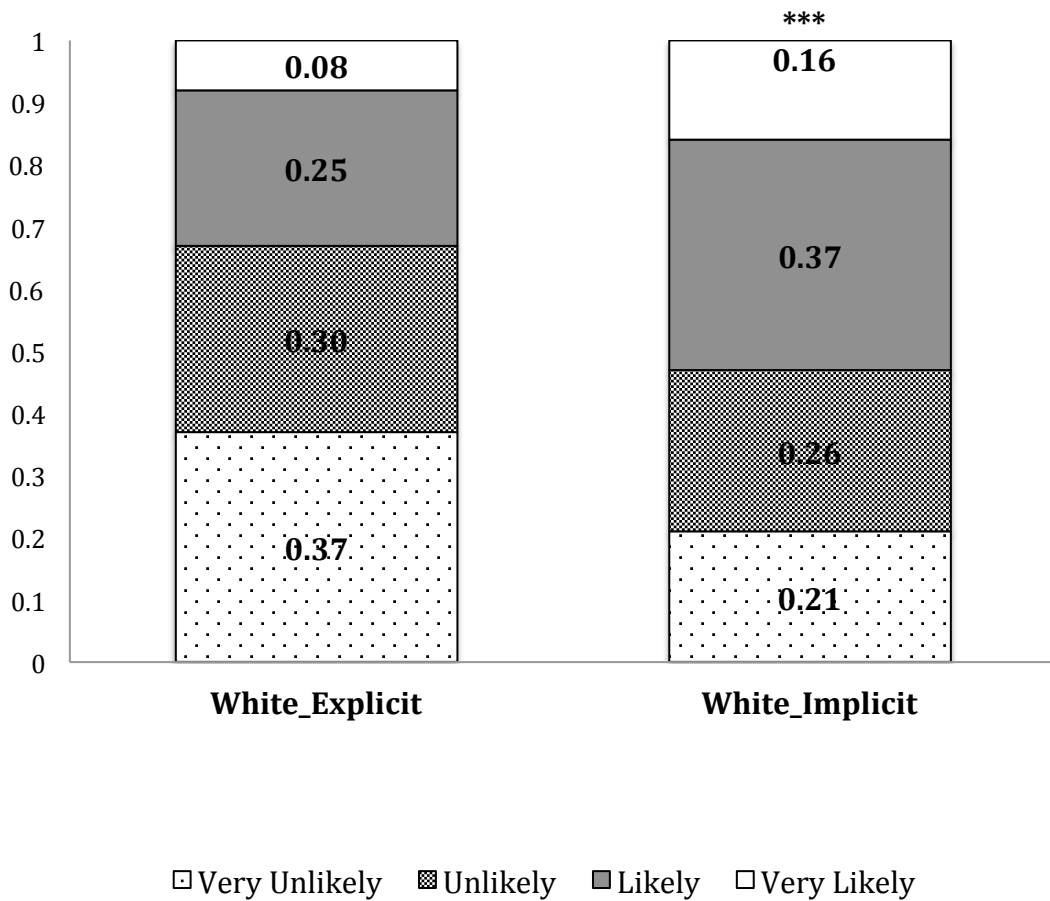
Note: Entries are coefficients from an ordered logit model that also include controls for party identification, political ideology, employment status, marital status and household income. The baseline in Model 1 is the control condition (no race cue, neutral appeal). The baseline in Model 2 is the white explicit condition. The likeliness of voting for the candidate is coded 0-1, with higher values indicating more support for the candidate. Racial resentment is also coded 0-1, with higher values, indicating higher levels of racial resentment. Bolded results indicate a statistically significant slope change from the baseline condition.

Figure 3.1: Predicted Probabilities of Likely Vote by Treatment Condition



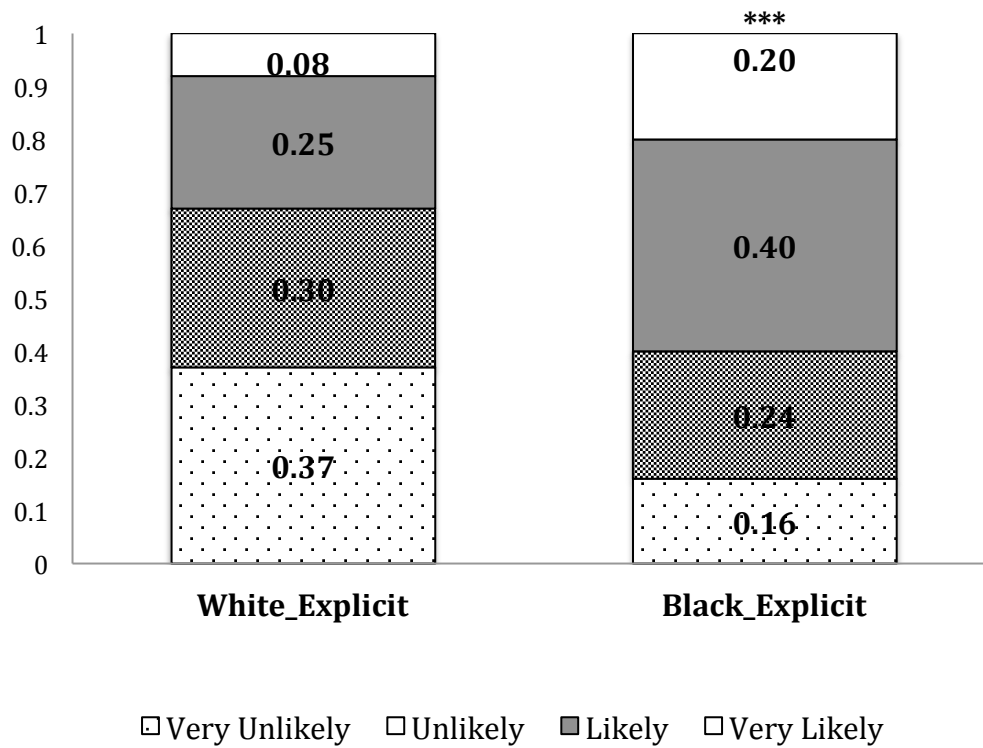
Note: What is the probability of being likely to vote for the candidate? Predicted probabilities derived from an ordered logistic regression model (Model 1) displayed in Table 3.2. Model includes controls for partisanship, ideology, marital status, employment status, and household income. Results that are statistically significant are noted with asterisks. *** p<.01 ** p<.05 * p<.10. Significance is compared to the control.

**Figure 3.2: Predicted Probabilities of Likely Vote for Greg Davis:
White Explicit Condition vs. White Implicit Condition**



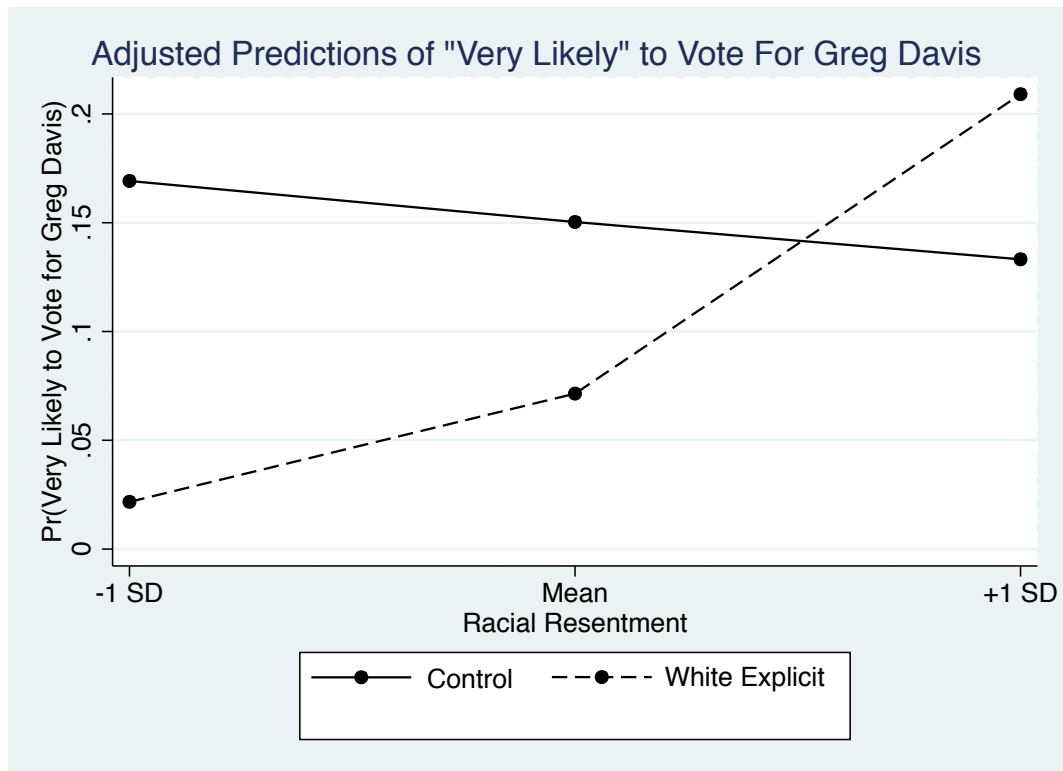
Note: What is the likelihood of voting for the candidate? *** p<.01

**Figure 3.3: Predicted Probabilities of Likely Vote for Greg Davis:
White Explicit Condition vs. Black Explicit Condition**

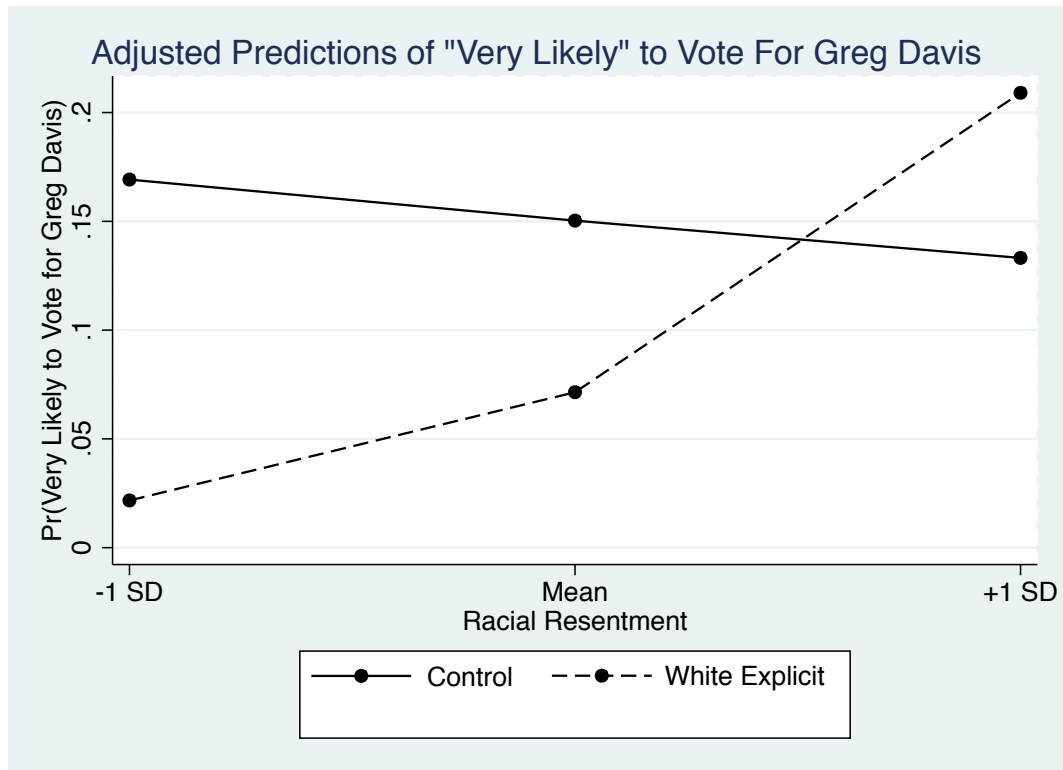


Note: What is the likelihood of voting for the candidate? *** p<.01

**Figure 3.4: Interaction Plot-Racial Resentment*White Explicit Condition
(Baseline=Control)**



**Figure 3.5: Interaction Plot-Racial Resentment*Black Explicit Condition
(Baseline = White Explicit)**



Chapter 4

The Message Matters—African Americans’ Response to Racial Appeals

Introduction

In the previous chapter I demonstrated that Black Democrats in particular have an incentive to signal via the use of explicit appeals that they are not beholden to black interests. Recall, in Chapter 3 we saw that contrary to the theory of racial priming, neither white racial conservatives nor white racial liberals penalized African American Democrats for using explicit appeals. Therefore, at least among white respondents, African American Democrats could use explicit racial appeals with virtual impunity. However, does the same hold true for African American respondents? Do African American respondents penalize Black Democrats who use explicit appeals that derogate the African American community? I contend that as more African American candidates seek office in majority white jurisdictions, we are likely to see more black candidates using explicit appeals.

For example, in a 2011 address to the Congressional Black Caucus, President Barack Obama was quoted as telling the mostly black audience, “Shake it off. Stop complaining, stop grumbling, stop crying.” This is only one of several addresses to majority black audiences in which the President delivered a message of “tough love” and personal responsibility. It also arguably served as a “signal,” that the White House would not be especially sympathetic to the grievances of African Americans. In other speeches

to black audiences, the President has chastised blacks for feeding their children “Popeyes for breakfast,” and being absent fathers. This type of elite communication in which an African American elite utilizes racialized and arguably, pejorative language to African Americans about African Americans has not been studied systematically by scholars. In fact most research on racial appeals has focused on the use of these appeals by White Americans, with little attention to African Americans, although they are often the subject of these messages (for an exception, see White 2007).

As noted in the previous chapter, political elites have the power to alter White Americans’ views about politics by making their views of blacks important in shaping their political judgments. This is done through the use of coded or implicit language and by highlighting issues that are ostensibly not about race, but that have become associated with African Americans over time, such as crime or welfare (Gilens 1999; Gilliam & Iyengar 2000; Mendelbeg 2001, 2008; Valentino 1999). This strategy is known as racial priming. According to the theory of racial priming, “An implicit appeal is less likely to be perceived as having violated the norm of racial equality. It is likely to be perceived not as a statement that derogates blacks or suggests a threat from blacks, but rather as a message that includes race only incidentally and neutrally. The same message made explicitly is likely to be perceived as having crossed the line of public acceptability, and it will be rejected” (Mendelberg 2001, 20).

Despite the usefulness of Mendelberg’s theoretical paradigm and the elaboration of this work by Valentino et al. (2002) and Hurwitz and Peffley (2005) in explaining the workings of racial messages for White Americans, the ability of this theoretical perspective to account for how racial messages might shape the opinions of Black

Americans is unclear. Thus, in this chapter, I offer and test a theoretically grounded account of how African Americans react to a variety of racial appeals, by drawing from the literatures on racial priming and African American politics. The purpose of this chapter is to advance our understanding of the consequences of racial appeals in African American politics by answering the following questions: Do African Americans make a distinction between implicit and explicit appeals (as implied by the theory of racial priming)? Are African Americans more receptive to explicit appeals when the messenger is African American? And finally, how does linked fate influence African Americans' receptivity to different types of appeals?

To foreshadow my results, I find that African Americans make a distinction between implicit and explicit appeals, regardless of the race of the messenger. However, African Americans punish a white messenger with an explicit appeal far more severely than they punish a black messenger with the identical message. And finally, linked fate has very little influence on black respondents' receptivity to racial appeals.

Theories of Black Public Opinion

While little is known about the effects of racial cues on African Americans' political attitudes, previous research may offer some insight about how African Americans will react to various racial appeals. In particular, the perception of closeness to blacks as a group (i.e., group identification) has been found to be an important explanatory variable in African American politics. For example, Tate (1993) found a relationship between racial group identification and African Americans' opinions on affirmative action, while Dawson (1994) has demonstrated that group identification accounts for the largely liberal views that African Americans hold on a range of political matters, regardless of their economic interests. In fact, Dawson (1994) demonstrates that "linked fate," (a measure of group identification) is a more powerful predictor of vote choice among African Americans than other variables, including partisanship. In a similar vein, Kinder and Winter (2001) also found a correlation between racial group closeness and African Americans' support of social welfare programs. Thus, group identification has emerged as an important explanatory variable in the study of African American politics.

Blacks who have a sense of linked fate, think about how policies and candidates affect the black community as a whole, and thus choose their policy preferences and candidates accordingly. In light of this, Dawson (1994) developed the black utility heuristic, which suggests that as long as race remains dominant in determining the lives

of individual blacks, it is “rational” for African Americans to follow group cues in interpreting and acting in the political world. Thus, it is plausible that African American respondents might reject explicit appeals from either black or white candidates, because such appeals might be perceived as violating the interests of the group.

However, the results from White (2007) suggest that it is also plausible that linked fate might be unrelated to respondents’ receptivity to racial appeals. White (2007) demonstrates that while linked fate is an important explanatory variable in African American politics, it is not consistently the central organizing principle of black political opinion. According to White (2007) “...when an issue is linked to a marginalized subset of the in-group, the role of black group identification in determining support for that issue is attenuated.” In other words, among African Americans there is a “qualified linked-fate politics,” whereby not every black person is an equally representative proxy of one’s individual interests, and thus as equally worthy of political support by other African Americans (Cohen, 1999). In light of this finding, we might also expect African Americans to embrace an African American candidate who uses an explicit appeal, if the appeal chastises behavior that some African Americans may associate with marginalized elements of the group.

A number of studies have explored the different leadership cues that precipitate a response from African Americans and have found that messages from African American elites, regardless of the partisanship of the elite in question, are more influential in shaping how blacks interpret events than messages from elites who do not share this identity (Kuklinski and Hurley 1994, Kuklinski and Hurley 1996, Domke et al 2000). In particular, Kuklinski and Hurley (1994) find that the race of the messenger overwhelms

the message, such that African Americans accepted a racially conservative message when it was attributed to a black messenger, but rejected the message when the message was attributed to a white messenger. In light of this finding, it is plausible that African Americans will accept an explicit message if it comes from another African American.

Thus far I have speculated about how African Americans will react to racial appeals, with particular attention to explicit appeals. In one scenario African Americans would reject explicit appeals, because explicit appeals might be perceived as violating the group interest. In the other scenario, Africans might accept an explicit appeal if the messenger is African American, because an African American candidate might be perceived as looking out for the interests of the group. Since there has been limited research exploring how African Americans react to racial appeals, further conceptual clarity to explain how African Americans react to these appeals. To this end, I test two hypotheses.

Hypotheses

H1: Respondents will make a distinction between implicit and explicit appeals regardless of the race of the candidate, such that candidates who use explicit appeals will lose vote support.

H2: African Americans with high levels of linked fate will reject explicit messages.

Experimental Design

To explore how African Americans react to a variety of racial appeals, the Internet-based survey experiment discussed in the previous chapter was also conducted on a sample of 906 African Americans. Recall, all participants read a mock news article involving a recent speech about education, delivered by a fictitious Democratic candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, named Greg Davis. This contest involved an open House seat in Ohio's third congressional district. As indicated by Table 4.1, respondents were randomly assigned to one of eight treatment conditions in which Davis' race was manipulated (black or white), and the type of appeal was manipulated (racially liberal, deracialized, implicit, explicit). Finally, there was a control condition in which race was not cued and the appeal was racially neutral.

[TABLE 4.1 ABOUT HERE]

Each treatment condition included two photos—one of the candidate, and a second photo that depending on the condition, was either a picture of a black audience or a picture of a book. The photograph of the candidate accompanying the article was used to manipulate the candidate's race (black or white). However, to avoid cueing race in the control condition, instead of a photo of the candidate, respondents saw a campaign banner with the candidate's name (Greg Davis). In all of the conditions, the candidate is calling for a need to reform the public education system, but the reason varies by

condition. In the racially liberal version⁶¹, government is held responsible for “black students falling behind.” In the deracialized version, government is held responsible for “*American* students falling behind,” which was designed to emphasize the issue in a manner that would have broad appeal to the electorate across racial lines. In the explicit version, black parents are held responsible for “black students falling behind.”

Furthermore, black parents are admonished to “start parenting,” and “stop blaming the government,” which plays on stereotypes of African Americans as bad parents, as well as lazy and dependent on assistance from the government. Conversely, in the implicit version “parents” are held responsible for “students falling behind” with no mention of race. Although there is no mention of race in the implicit version, race is implied, because the article is accompanied by a photo of an exclusively black audience.

Respondents answered questions about their group identification in a pre-test questionnaire. Specifically, all participants were asked about their degree of “linked fate,” which is a form of group identification that has been found to encourage political cohesion among African Americans. Those who hold strong perceptions of linked fate believe that their individual fates are connected with those of their racial group. Specifically, respondents were asked, “Do you think that what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life?” If respondents answered in the affirmative, they were then asked, “Will it affect you a lot, some, or not very much?” The data reveal that approximately 70 percent of the sample views their personal life chances as connected with other blacks. These results comport

⁶¹ This message is more liberal than the other messages, but it does not maximize the liberal message, as it does not call for government intervention to remedy the problem. A genuinely liberal message was avoided in order to maximize similarity across conditions.

with previous findings on the question of linked-fate in black public opinion (Dawson 1994; Tate 1994; McClain and Stewart 2010).

In order to avoid any priming effects from the pre-test questionnaire, there was a one-week lag time between the first and second wave of the study. During the second wave of the study, subjects received the experimental treatment (mock news article) and the post-treatment questionnaire. After reading the article, participants were asked how likely they were to vote for Greg Davis. Finally, all subjects were thoroughly debriefed after completion of the study so that they understood the article they read was fictitious and that “Greg Davis” was actually not running for the U.S. House of Representatives in Ohio’s 3rd Congressional District.

This study builds on previous work and contributes to the extant literature on racial appeals in a number of ways. First, in contrast to many previous studies that have relied on convenience samples, this design contains a nationally representative sample of African Americans, allowing us to make more confident generalizations to the broader electorate. Furthermore, very little scholarly attention has been paid to how African Americans react to racial appeals, even though they are often the subject of these appeals (for an exception see White 2007). And, although the theoretical account of White (2007) offers an explanation for which types of messages activate racial attitudes among African Americans, it is still unclear whether this racial attitude activation is moderated by the race of the messenger. Furthermore, to my knowledge, to date no study has examined the impact of explicitly *pejorative* language about African Americans by other African Americans.

Main Effects on Candidate Evaluation

[TABLE 4.2 ABOUT HERE]

Table 4.2 displays the results of four ordered logit models, where the dependent variable is always the likelihood of voting for the candidate. The likelihood of voting for the candidate is measured on a four-point scale, 0-1, (0=Very Unlikely, .33=Unlikely, .67=Likely 1= Very Likely). The model includes indicator variables for each treatment, but the omitted condition, or baseline condition varies depending on the model. The baseline condition is altered across the four models to facilitate comparisons relevant to the various hypotheses. And in order to discuss the results from Table 4.2 in more meaningful terms, Figure 4.1 displays the predicted probability of voting for the candidates depicted in the various conditions.

The first column of Table 4.2 displays the results of Model 1. In Model 1, the omitted condition is the control group (in which race is not cued and the appeal is racially neutral). Thus, Model 1 enables us to see how likely voters were to support Greg Davis in each condition, relative to a baseline in which respondents did not know the candidate's race and the message was racially neutral.

As indicated by Model 1, the candidates depicted in the treatment conditions were generally less popular than the candidate depicted in the control condition, although these results did not always achieve statistical significance. Similar to the results for the white

respondents, African Americans reacted negatively to the candidates in the racially liberal conditions. In other words, relative to the control, African Americans were far less likely to vote for candidates who attributed blame to government for racial disparities in education. This finding holds true, whether the candidate with the racially liberal message was depicted as black or white, which suggests that African Americans were responding negatively to the message, rather than the messenger. Although African Americans are sometimes stereotyped as demanding too much from government (Kinder and Sanders 1996), these results indicate that similar to their white counterparts, they did not respond positively to messages that attributed blame for racial disparities to the government.

It is plausible that the racially liberal messages were not popular due to African Americans' adherence to individualism. Individualism or the belief that adults bear responsibility for their own welfare, personal circumstances, and fate in society is a longstanding American value (Tocqueville 1904; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Feldman 1988; Hochschild 1995). African Americans are socialized into the same values, which might explain why a message that attributed racial disparity in education to government behavior was so unpopular among African Americans. Unfortunately, since the survey instrument did not include a measure of individualism, I am not in a position to definitively make this claim.

While the response of African Americans was similar to that of their white counterparts with respect to racially liberal messages, the two groups diverge regarding their support for candidates who use explicit racial appeals. Recall, from Chapter 3, relative to the control, white respondents only punished the white candidate with the

explicit message. In fact, among whites, this relationship was in the opposite direction when the candidate was depicted as an African American with an explicit appeal. In other words, for white respondents, exposure to the black candidate with an explicit appeal was associated with increased vote support, although this relationship did not attain statistical significance. In contrast, regardless of whether the candidate is black or white, candidates who use explicit appeals lose support among blacks. However, it is worth noting that the punishment is more severe for the white candidate than it is for his black counterpart.

As indicated by Figure 4.1, there is a 73 percent chance of respondents being very unlikely to vote for the candidate in the white explicit condition. In other words, on average, the white candidate with the explicit appeal is unlikely to receive the votes of the overwhelming majority of black respondents. In fact, when the respondents who say that they would be “unlikely” (as opposed to just “very unlikely”) to vote for the candidate are also taken into consideration, the white candidate who uses an explicit appeal has an 88 percent chance of not receiving the votes of black respondents. Conversely, the likelihood of respondents saying that they would be “very unlikely” or “unlikely” to vote for the black candidate with the explicit message is 60 percent. Thus, while the majority of black respondents express an unwillingness to vote for the black candidate with the explicit appeal, the loss in support is not nearly as severe as it is for the white candidate who uses the explicit appeal. These results suggest that while black respondents do not like explicit appeals, black candidates have somewhat more latitude to use such appeals. While candidates who use explicit appeals lose support from black respondents, it is

likely that black candidates are not punished as harshly, because they are a member of the in-group.

The results from Model 1 have interesting implications for our understanding for elite-driven accounts of public opinion, as well as the literature on source cues. These results indicate that African Americans do not blindly support African American candidates, but are willing to penalize them if they find the message objectionable. This suggests a level of sophistication that counters previous accounts of black public opinion (Kuklinski and Hurley 1996), which suggests that for African American respondents, the race of the candidate overwhelms the message.

Next, let us turn our attention to Model 2, which is located in the second column of Table 4.2. The omitted condition in Model 2 is the group who read about the black candidate with the implicit message. This condition enables us to examine whether respondents will distinguish between the implicit and explicit messages of African American candidates. Central to the theory of racial priming is that respondents will accept an implicit appeal because they are unaware of the racial content, but reject an explicit appeal, because the racial content is evident in an explicit appeal. Recall, from Chapter 3, white respondents did not distinguish between the implicit and explicit messages of the black candidates, but instead treated the two messages as essentially equivalent, running contrary to the theory of racial priming. However, the results of Model 2 indicate that black respondents do make a distinction between the implicit and explicit messages of the African American candidates ($p < .05$). Respondents are less likely to support the African American candidate with an explicit message than the African American candidate with an implicit message. As Figure 4.1 indicates, the

likelihood of respondents being “likely” or “very likely” to vote for the black candidate with the implicit message is 62 percent, as compared to only 41 percent for the black candidate with the explicit message.

Also of note is that respondents were more likely to support the white candidate with the implicit message, relative to the black candidate with the explicit message. Exposure to the white candidate with the implicit message was associated with a 56 percent chance of respondents saying that they would be “very likely” or “likely” to vote for the candidate, as opposed to 41 percent for the candidate depicted in the black explicit condition ($p < .10$). These results contradict the research of Kuklinski and Hurley (1994, 1996) who conclude in their study that the “essential attitude” of African Americans for interpreting messages about black self-reliance is “black leaders will always look out for my interests better than white leaders.” Instead, the results from Model 3 demonstrate that there are some instances in which African Americans will prefer a white candidate relative to a black candidate. In this case, a white candidate with an implicit appeal receives more support than a black candidate with an explicit appeal.

Next, the third column of Table 4.2 is Model 3. The baseline in Model 3 is the group who read about the white candidate with the implicit message. Thus, this allows us to assess whether respondents made a distinction between the implicit and explicit appeal when the candidate is depicted as white. As indicated by Model 3, respondents do in fact make a distinction between the implicit and explicit messages when the candidates are depicted as white. Specifically, respondents are far less likely to vote for the white candidate with the explicit message than for the white candidate with the implicit message. ($p < .01$). As Figure 4.1 indicates, the likelihood of respondents saying that

they will be “very unlikely” to vote for the candidate depicted in the white explicit condition is 73 percent, as compared to only 22 percent in the white implicit condition.

Thus, the results from Models 2 and 3 confirm Hypothesis 1, which states, “Respondents will make a distinction between implicit and explicit appeals regardless of the race of the candidate, such that candidates who use explicit appeals will lose vote support.” Recall, central to the theory of the racial priming is the notion that respondents will prefer an implicit message to an explicit message, because an explicit message is likely to be perceived as violating the norm of equality. While white respondents’ rejection of explicit appeals was contingent on the race of the messenger, black respondents consistently penalized candidates who used explicit appeals, regardless of the race of the candidate. This suggests that unlike their white counterparts, black respondents’ rejection of explicit appeals is not contingent on the race of the messenger.

Finally, in Model 4, the white explicit condition represents the baseline, which facilitates a comparison between the white explicit appeal and the black explicit appeal. Model 4 enables us to test H2, which states that, “Relative to the white explicit condition, respondents in the black explicit condition will be more inclined to support candidate Davis.” The black candidate with an explicit appeal was far more popular than the white candidate with identical message. The likelihood of being “very likely” or “likely” to vote for the black candidate with the explicit message is 41 percent, as compared to only 12 percent for the white candidate with the identical message. While on balance, African Americans preferred implicit appeals to explicit appeals, white candidates with explicit appeals were punished far more harshly than their black counterparts.

Conditional Effects on Candidate Evaluation

The results presented thus far suggest that in general, messages that blame government for disparities are not well received. The results also indicate that explicit racial appeals result in the loss of votes regardless of the race of the candidate, although the white candidate did suffer a greater loss in support. However, these results do not show which subjects are likely to accept particular messages. Since linked fate has often been found to be a powerful explanatory variable in black politics, I am interested in exploring the influence of linked fate on African Americans' receptivity to racial appeals? Therefore, I estimated a model, in which I assess the impact of linked fate on the likelihood of voting for Greg Davis in the various experimental conditions. Table 4.3 presents the results for the conditions in which Greg Davis was depicted as white.

[TABLE 4.3 ABOUT HERE]

Similar to the results presented in Table 4.2, the dependent variable is the likelihood of voting for U.S. House of Representatives candidate Greg Davis (coded 0-1), with higher values indicating more support for the candidate. The baseline is the control group (in which race is not cued and the appeal is racially neutral). Each interaction term represents the interaction between the linked fate measure and the indicator variable for the treatment condition in question. Table 4.3 presents likely vote for only the conditions

in which Greg Davis was depicted as white. Linked fate is measured on a four-point scale, 0-1 (0=No Linked Fate, .33=Not Very Much, .67=Some, 1=A Lot)⁶².

The first half of Table 4.3 presents the likely vote for candidate Davis among those respondents who expressed that what happens to other black people in this country will “never” affect them. The bottom half of the table presents the results for those respondents who expressed the highest degree of linked fate, or those who said that they would be affected “a lot,” by what happens to other black people in this country, interacted with exposure to the various treatments in which the candidate was depicted as white. All of the white candidates were less popular regardless of their message, relative to the candidate depicted in the control condition.

To understand the results from Table 4.3 in more intuitive terms, Figure 4.2 presents an interaction plot that displays the conditional effect of linked fate on “very unlikely” to vote for Greg Davis. Along the x-axis of the graph, is the measure of linked fate. At the center of the x-axis represents the mean level of linked fate for the respondents in the sample (.56). At the far left of the x-axis represents one standard deviation below the mean linked fate (.16) and to the far right of the x-axis represents one standard deviation above the mean linked fate (.96).

[FIGURE 4.2 ABOUT HERE]

As demonstrated in Figure 4.2, respondents who expressed low levels of linked fate were less likely to vote for the white candidate with the racially liberal message, as indicated by the coefficient of -1.13 ($p < .10$). Perhaps, because these respondents do not

⁶² Approximately 70 percent of the sample views their personal life chances as connected with other blacks.

find their interests tied to the collective group interest, they find a message that encourages a race specific solution objectionable.

Respondents with low levels of linked fate also found the message of the white candidate with the explicit appeal objectionable, as indicated by the coefficient of -2.08 ($p. <.01$). Although these respondents do not find their interests linked to the collective interests of African Americans, they still find a message that disparages black parents as objectionable.

In contrast, respondents with high linked fate were not less likely to vote for the white candidate with the explicit message relative to the candidate depicted in the control condition. This result runs contrary to H2, which recall states, “African Americans with high levels of linked fate will reject explicit messages.” This result highlights the notion that linked fate is not always the central organizing principle of black public opinion. It also highlights the need for more in-depth studies of black public opinion.

Finally, respondents with high levels of linked fate were less likely to support the white candidate with the deracialized message, relative to the candidate depicted in the control condition. Recall, the deracialized message did not mention racial disparities, and instead spoke about disparities with relation to the more universal term of “American.” Perhaps African Americans who believe that their interests are tied to those of the group find a message objectionable, when it does not include a discussion of race.

Next, Table 4.4 presents the results of an ordered logit model, where likely vote is the dependent variable, and linked fate is interacted with exposure to the respective treatments in which Greg Davis is depicted as African American. As indicated by Table 4.4, respondents who did not express any sense of linked fate were less likely to vote for

the black candidate with the racially liberal message, as indicated by the coefficient of -1.15 ($p < .10$). These respondents were also more likely to vote for the black candidate with the deracialized message as indicated by the coefficient of 1.28 ($p < .10$).

Therefore, blacks who do not think what happens to other blacks will affect them, prefer messages from black candidates in which race is not salient (deracialized), and are less likely to vote for black candidates who make race salient (racially liberal).

In contrast, respondents who express high levels of linked fate are less likely to vote for the black candidate with the deracialized message, as indicated by the coefficient of -2.23 ($p < .05$). Specifically, for respondents who agreed that their individual life chances were very much connected to the life chances of blacks as a group, the likelihood of them voting for any candidate with a deracialized message was significantly less than the likelihood of them voting for the candidate depicted in the control condition.

To understand the results from Table 4.4 in more intuitive terms, Figure 4.3 presents an interaction plot that presents the conditional effect of linked fate on “very likely” to vote for Greg Davis. Along the x-axis of the graph is the measure of linked fate. At the center of the x-axis represents the mean level of linked fate for the respondents in the sample (.56). At the far left of the x-axis represents one standard deviation below the mean linked fate (.16) and to the far right of the x-axis represents one standard deviation above the mean linked fate (.96). As indicated by Figure 4.3, as one’s sense of linked fate increases, the less likely one is to vote for the black candidate with the deracialized message.

[FIGURE 4.3 ABOUT HERE]

Figure 4.3 also indicates that for the remaining conditions, linked fate does not have much of a moderating effect on willingness to vote for Greg Davis. Contrary to H2, linked fate appears to have very little influence on respondents' receptivity to explicit racial appeals. Initially, I expected that those respondents who expressed a high degree of linked fate would be more likely to reject explicit racial appeals than those respondents who did not exhibit a strong sense of group identification. However, this does not appear to be the case. Although linked fate is often perceived as the central organizing principle of black public opinion (but for an exception, see White 2007), it appears to have limited influence on the respondents' receptivity to the various racial appeals explored in the study. These results suggest that there are limits to linked fate, such that linked fate will not prevent African Americans from penalizing an African American candidate, whose message is categorically disparaging of African Americans (as was the case in the explicit appeal). In addition, it appears that black respondents generally find explicit racial appeals so off putting that regardless of the level of their group identification, they reject explicit racial appeals.

Future research should examine whether there are particular subsets of the African American population who are more inclined to accept particular types of racial appeals. There are theoretical and historical reasons to expect the influence of outgroup resentment, religiosity, region, income and education on receptivity to the various types of appeals.

Conclusion

My analysis builds on previous work that seeks to understand the direct and conditional effects of exposure to different political messages. In particular, the results of this experiment inform our understanding of what types of racial appeals are effective, and who is allowed to use these appeals. We learn that African American respondents consistently prefer implicit appeals to explicit appeals. Regardless of whether the candidate is depicted as white or black, the implicit appeal receives more support than the explicit appeal. These results are consistent with Hypothesis 1, which states, “Respondents will make a distinction between implicit and explicit appeals regardless of the race of the candidate, such that candidates who use explicit appeals will lose vote support.” This finding contrasts the results from Chapter 3, which indicate that white respondents view the implicit and explicit appeals of black candidates as essentially equivalent. This is not to say that African Americans’ responses to racial appeals are never moderated by the race of the messenger. Consistent with the results from Chapter 3 is that the white candidate who uses an explicit appeal loses more support than his black counterpart. Although explicit appeals are not popular among African Americans, perhaps by some perception of in-group legitimacy, the African American candidate had more latitude in the use of an explicit appeal.

In sum, the ability of the theory of racial priming to account for how racial messages might shape the opinions of Black Americans is quite robust. While

receptivity to explicit racial appeals is moderated by the race of the messenger, African Americans consistently distinguish between implicit and explicit appeals, in accordance with the theory of racial priming.

We also learn that linked fate is not always the central organizing principle of black public opinion. While linked fate is typically a powerful predictor of black political attitudes, it was generally unrelated to black respondents' support of the various types of appeals. Thus, future research should explore whether another factor helps to explain African Americans' responses to particular types of appeals.

Next, in Chapter Five, we will explore how White Americans reacted to political advertisements in which not only the race of the messenger was varied, but also partisanship.

Table 4.1: Experimental Manipulations-Experiment 1

Appeal	Headline	Quotes	Photos
Racially Liberal	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “It’s Government’s Fault Black Kids are Falling Behind.”	“Government is responsible for your children failing to achieve in school. It’s because of government neglect that your kid doesn’t pick up a book or finish his or her homework. I’m tired of the government blaming black students for problems when it’s government’s fault that black students have fallen behind. Stop blaming the victim!”	First Photo: Black or White Candidate Second Photo: Book
Deracialized	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “It’s Government’s Fault American Kids are Falling Behind.”	“American children are failing to achieve in school. It’s terrible that not enough kids in our country pick up a book or finish their homework. I’m tired of the government blaming students for problems when it’s government’s fault that students have fallen behind. Stop blaming the victim! “American students are falling behind. It’s unacceptable! Government needs to start governing!”	First Photo: Black or White Candidate Second Photo: Book
Implicit	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “It’s Parents’ Fault Kids are Falling Behind.”	“Parents are responsible for their children failing to achieve in school.” “Government can’t force a kid to pick up a book or finish their homework. I’m tired of people blaming the government for problems when it’s their own fault that they have fallen behind.” “Some students are falling behind. It’s unacceptable! Parents need to start parenting.”	First Photo: Black or White Candidate Second Photo: Black Audience
Explicit	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “It’s Black Parents’ Fault Kids are Falling Behind.”	“Black parents are responsible for their children failing to achieve in school.” “Government can’t force a kid to pick up a book or finish their homework. I’m tired of black people blaming the government for problems when it’s their own fault that they have fallen behind.” “Black students are falling behind.” “It’s unacceptable! Black parents need to start parenting.”	First Photo: Black or White Candidate Second Photo: Black Audience
Control ⁶³	On Campaign Trail Candidate Says, “American Kids are Falling Behind.”	“It’s terrible that not enough kids in our country pick up a book or finish their homework.” I’m tired of our nation’s children falling behind. Stop the problem!” “American students are falling behind. It’s unacceptable! We need to find a solution.”	First Photo: “Greg Davis for Congress” Campaign Banner Second Photo: Book

⁶³ Race is not signaled in this article.

Table 4.2: Prediction of Black Support for Candidate by Experimental Condition

	(Model 1)	(Model 2)	(Model 3)	(Model 4)
White Racially Liberal	-1.51*** (0.36)	-1.29*** (0.35)	-1.06*** (0.36)	1.16*** (0.36)
Black Racially Liberal	-1.34*** (0.37)	-1.12*** (0.36)	-0.88*** (0.37)	1.33*** (0.37)
White Deracialized	-1.26** (0.40)	-1.05*** (0.38)	-0.81** (0.39)	1.40*** (0.39)
Black Deracialized	-0.03 (0.40)	0.15 (0.39)	0.39 (0.40)	2.61*** (0.41)
White Implicit	-0.43 (0.37)	-0.24 (0.36)		2.21*** (0.38)
Black Implicit	-0.18 (0.36)		0.24 (0.36)	2.45*** (0.37)
White Explicit	-2.68*** (0.38)	-2.45*** (0.37)	-2.21*** (0.38)	
Black Explicit	-1.08*** (0.37)	-0.87** (0.36)	-0.63* (0.37)	1.58*** (0.37)
Cut 1	-1.59 (0.31)	-1.33 (0.31)	-1.09 (0.31)	1.12 (0.30)
Cut 2	-0.58 (0.30)	-0.35 (0.30)	-0.12 (0.31)	2.10 (0.31)
Cut 3	1.06 (0.30)	1.23 (0.31)	1.46 (0.32)	3.68 (0.34)
Log likelihood	-555.57	-498.89	-498.89	-498.89
Observations	451	407	407	407

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are coefficients from an ordered logit model that also includes a control for employment status. The baseline in Model 1 is the control condition (no race cue, neutral appeal). The likeliness of voting for the candidate is coded 0-1, with higher values indicating more support for the candidate. Linked fate is also coded 0-1, with higher values, indicating higher levels of linked fate. Bolded results indicate a statistically significant change from the baseline condition.

Table 4.3: The Conditional Effect of Linked Fate on Likely Vote by Experimental Condition (White Candidates Only)

	(Model 1)
Linked Fate	0.76 (.59)
White Racially Liberal	-1.13* (.61)
White Deracialized	-0.18 (.71)
White Implicit	-0.09 (0.57)
White Explicit	-2.08*** (0.61)
Linked Fate * White Racially Liberal	-0.79 (0.87)
Linked Fate * White Deracialized	-1.85* (.99)
Linked Fate * White Implicit	-0.66 (0.86)
Linked Fate * White Explicit	-1.26 (0.88)
Cut 1	-1.34 (0.45)
Cut 2	-0.11 (0.44)
Cut 3	1.30 (0.45)
Log Likelihood	-303.05
Observations	258

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are coefficients from an ordered logit model that also includes a control for employment status. The baseline in Model 1 is the control condition (no race cue, neutral appeal). The likeliness of voting for the candidate is coded 0-1, with higher values indicating more support for the candidate. Linked fate is also coded 0-1, with higher values, indicating higher levels of linked fate. Bolded results indicate a statistically significant change from the baseline condition.

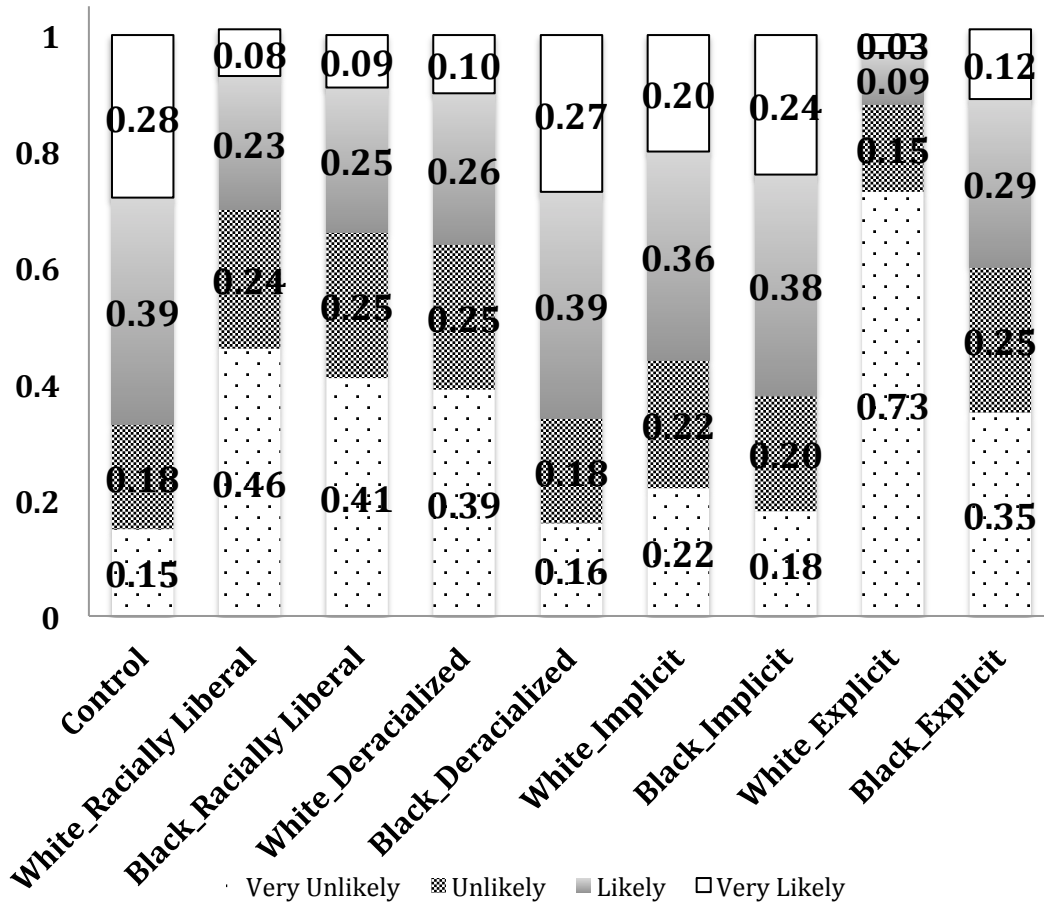
Table 4.4: The Conditional Effect of Linked Fate on Likely Vote by Experimental Condition (Black Candidates Only)

	(Model 1)
Linked Fate	0.85 (0.61)
Black Racially Liberal	-1.15* (0.59)
Black Deracialized	1.28* (0.72)
Black Implicit	0.01 (0.58)
Black Explicit	-0.96 (0.61)
Linked Fate * Black Racially Liberal	-0.45 (0.88)
Linked Fate * Black Deracialized	-2.23** (1.02)
Linked Fate * Black Implicit	-0.38 (0.85)
Linked Fate * Black Explicit	-0.28 (0.89)
Cut 1	-1.17 (0.46)
Cut 2	-0.33 (0.45)
Cut 3	1.64 (0.47)
Log Likelihood	-295.91
Observations	234

Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Entries are coefficients from an ordered logit model that also includes a control for employment status. The baseline in Model 1 is the control condition (no race cue, neutral appeal). The likeliness of voting for the candidate is coded 0-1, with higher values indicating more support for the candidate. Linked fate is also coded 0-1, with higher values, indicating higher levels of linked fate. Bolded results indicate a statistically significant change from the baseline condition.

Figure 4.1 Predicted Probabilities of Likely Vote by Experimental Condition



Note: What is the probability of being likely to vote for the candidate? Predicted probabilities derived from an ordered logistic regression model (Model 1) displayed in Table 3.2. Model includes controls for partisanship, ideology, marital status, employment status, and household income. Results that are statistically significant are noted with asterisks. *** $p < .01$ ** $p < .05$ * $p < .10$. Significance is compared to the control.

Figure 4.2 The Conditional Effect of Linked Fate on “Very Unlikely” to Vote (White Conditions)

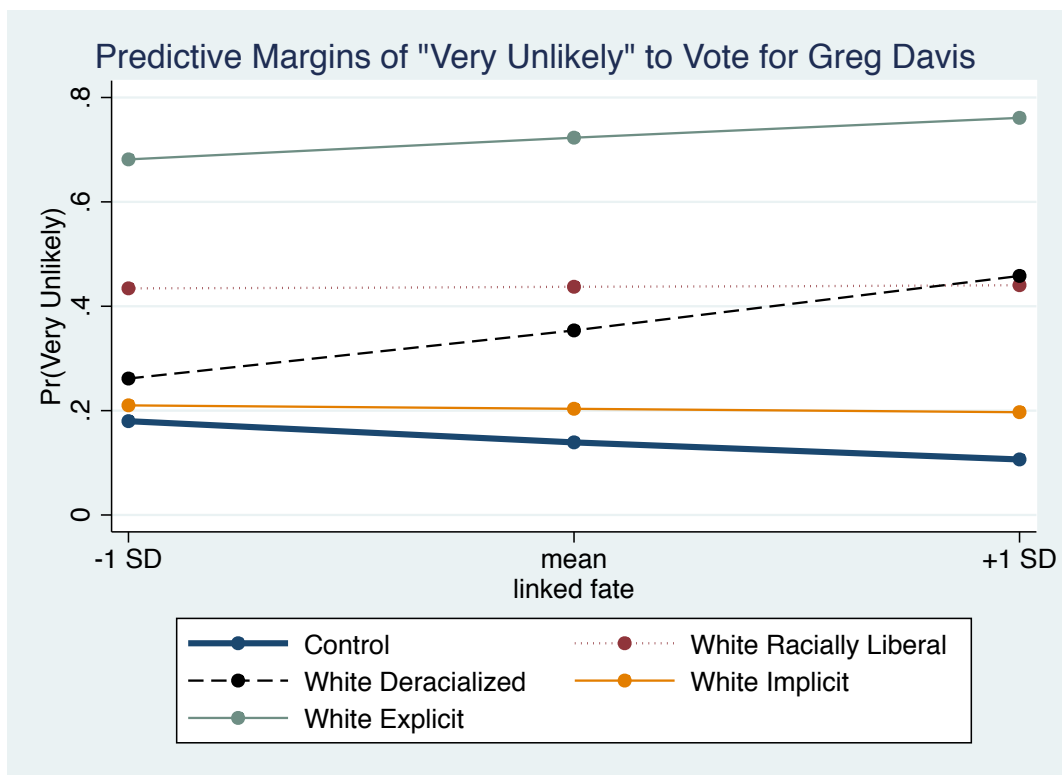
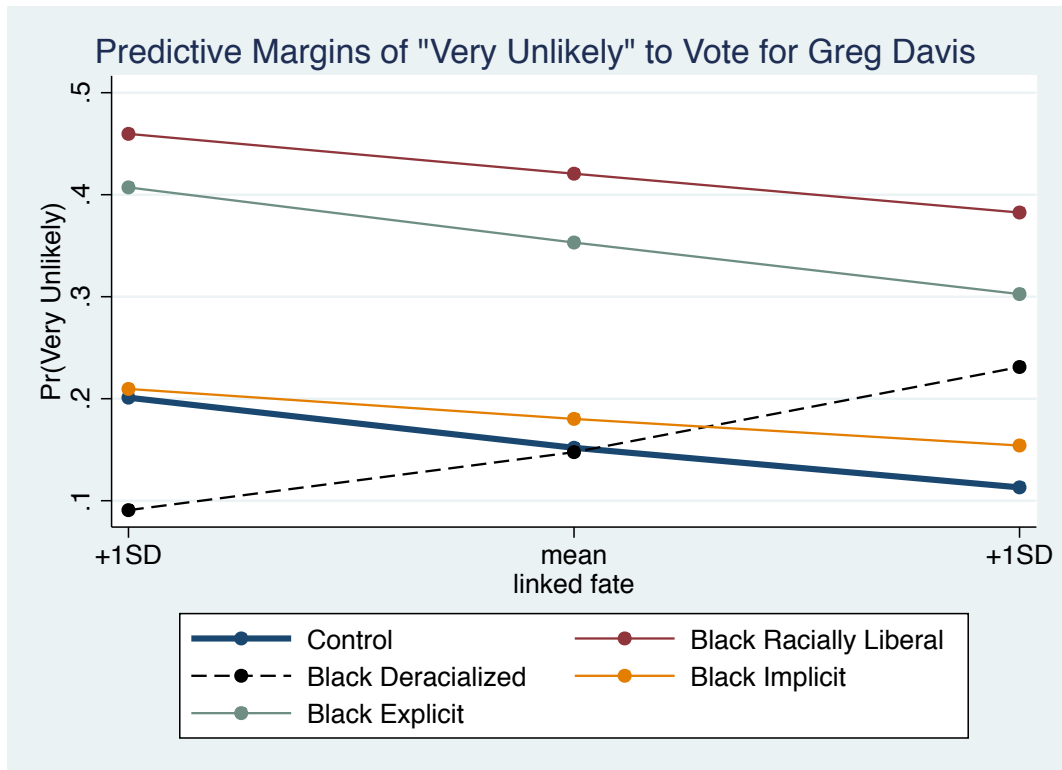


Figure 4.3 The Conditional Effect of Linked Fate on “Very Unlikely” to Vote (Black Conditions)



Chapter 5

The Consequences of Racial and Partisan Cues in Political Advertisements

Introduction

In Chapters 3 and 4, I discussed the results of Experiment 1, which was designed to test whether explicit appeals are effective under certain circumstances. I found that Black Democratic candidates seeking office in majority white jurisdictions, in particular, may have an incentive to signal that they are not beholden to black interests, through the use of explicit appeals. That is to say that white respondents across the ideological spectrum did not punish Black Democratic candidates who used explicit appeals. This is not to suggest that Black Democratic candidates can use explicit appeals without any reprisal, as African American respondents were less likely to vote for Black Democrats who used explicit appeals. In light of these findings, I am interested in testing whether Black Democratic candidates must “go explicit,” or whether they can also signal more subtly through the use of public distancing. Specifically, in this chapter I report the results of an experiment that tests whether candidates are rewarded or penalized for a mere visual association with certain demographic groups. In fact, there are several examples from contemporary American politics that suggest that there are political consequences to being visually associated with certain groups.

For example, during the 1992 presidential campaign, the Democratic candidates appeared to avoid a visual association with African Americans, as evidenced by the fact none of the Democratic candidates made major speeches to the African American

community during the entire presidential campaign. Walton (2000) argues that this was “the most telltale sign of the impact of the racial conservatism of the Reagan-Bush era.”

Conversely, during the 1996 Republican convention, Republicans made an effort to feature African Americans more prominently, in order to craft the image of a more inclusive convention, relative to the 1992 convention, which was criticized for being exclusionary. Although only 52 of 1,990 delegates at the 1996 Republican Convention were black, those numbers were boosted by “auxiliaries,” or nonvoting blacks affiliated with the party who were brought in to occupy seats in the convention hall so that the convention would appear more integrated on television (Mayer, 2001). As Republican Chairman Haley Barbour described the aim of the convention: “We needed to let the public understand that we are not a party of just seventy-year old white men” (Mayer 2002). Barbour’s statement coupled with the concerted effort to televise more black faces at the convention indicates that party elites believe that there are political ramifications to the racial imagery associated with their party.

In a similar vein, during the 2000 electoral cycle, the Republican Party made additional efforts to be associated with African American voters. For example, George W. Bush became the first Republican presidential candidate in twelve years to address the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at its national convention. Furthermore, there were 85 black delegates in attendance at the 2000 Republican National Convention, which was a 63 percent increase from the 1996 convention. And finally, the convention featured prime-time appearances by prominent African American Republicans, Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell (Philpot 2007).

Again, this was largely perceived as an effort by the Republican Party to portray itself as “a new, happy and inclusive Republican Party” (Mayer 2002).

And finally, another instance that illustrates strategic behavior regarding visual images occurred in 2008, at a rally for then presidential candidate Barack Obama. Campaign volunteers who didn't want the women's headscarves to appear in photographs or on television with the candidate barred two Muslim women from sitting behind the podium. According to one of the women involved in the incident she was told, “because of the political climate, and what's going on in the world and what's going on with Muslim Americans, it's not good for [her friend] to be seen on TV or associated with Obama.” This incident offers anecdotal evidence that campaign staff may think there are political consequences to candidates being *visually* associated with certain groups.

The aforementioned examples suggest that candidates are or perhaps should be strategic about the demographic composition of the imagery associated with their campaign. In fact, the literature on campaign behavior suggests that candidates are strategic in how they present themselves, and the types of appeals that they make. These strategic considerations present themselves in a variety of ways. For example, as Downs (1957) has illustrated, it is on the “critical issues” that candidates have an incentive to equivocate, or to “becloud their policies in a fog of ambiguity.” Also, when designing their campaign agendas, candidates often highlight issues on which they or their party hold an advantage (Petrocik 1996). Finally, previous research indicates that competitive contests include more negative advertising and appeals to fear, than less competitive contests (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995; Brader 2006). Therefore, given the consideration with which candidates choose their issue content, tone, and emotional

valence, it seems reasonable that candidates are also strategic about the images they include in their advertisements. Furthermore, given the centrality of race in American politics, it seems that candidates would be especially strategic about their use of racial images.

In this chapter, I demonstrate that the racial composition of the supporters portrayed in campaign materials influences candidate evaluations and likely vote. Specifically, I am interested in whether white voters are more likely to vote for Democratic candidates whose campaign materials include more images of whites than images of blacks. Alternatively, I explore whether Republican candidates become *more* popular when they are associated with African American supporters. A popular critique of the Democratic Party is that it is beholden to black voters, while the Republican Party is often perceived as being hostile to minority rights (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1994; Philpot 2007). Recall that according to my theory of racial signaling, candidates have an incentive to signal that they are not primarily concerned with black interests, while also showing that they are not racially insensitive. I argue that one way in which candidates are able to “signal” is through the use of racial imagery in their advertisements. Since a candidate’s ability to signal is constrained by their race and partisanship, we might expect that Democratic candidates are more likely to be penalized for an association with black images, whereas White Republican candidates may be rewarded for an association with black images.

Therefore, I ask the following questions: Are Democratic candidates penalized for the use of African American images in their advertisements, even absent the use of racially coded language? Or, are some candidates rewarded for their use of white

images? Are Republican candidates rewarded for the use of African American images in their advertisements? And, when a candidate is surrounded by images of whites, does that serve as an implicit cue? Finally do voters make substantive inferences about a candidate's issue positions, based on the racial composition of their campaign materials?

To foreshadow my results, I find that White Democratic candidates whose advertisements include black supporters lose the support of white voters, highlighting the political salience of groups in American politics. Conversely, the racial composition of an advertisement is relatively inconsequential in the case of African Americans, as perceptions of black candidates remain unchanged regardless of the racial composition of their advertisements. And finally, an association with exclusively white images bolsters the perception that White Republican candidates will support conservative racial policies.

Theoretical Framework

Group-centrism

Previous research has explored the impact of stereotypic and counter-stereotypic imagery, and has concluded that the mere presence of images of blacks or whites is not sufficient to prime racial attitudes (Nelson and Kinder 1996; Valentino, Hutchings and White 2002). For example, Nelson and Kinder (1996) exposed subjects to negative (stereotype-consistent) or positive (stereotype-inconsistent) images of blacks or to irrelevant images of whites. They found that racial resentment had virtually no effect on the political attitudes of subjects exposed to the white images, a moderately sized but statistically insignificant effect among subjects exposed to positive images of blacks, and a very large impact among those subjects exposed to negative images of African Americans. These results suggest that counter-stereotypic images of blacks, as well as whites will not prime racial attitudes. Also, Valentino, Hutchings, and White (2002) found that counter-stereotypic cues, in particular those implying blacks are deserving of government resources dampen racial priming. As a result, they conclude that it is not simply the presence of black images that triggers the racial priming effect but that the effect is triggered by the visual/narrative pairing.

However, I contend that the presence of black images or white images can trigger the racial priming effect under certain conditions—even when the images are not

stereotype-consistent. Drawing on the literature on group-centrism, as well as group-position theory, I argue that whites are as concerned with whether public policy will benefit blacks at their expense as they are with whether blacks violate traditional American values like work ethic. Consequently, the presence or absence of black images can matter even when this imagery does not adhere to traditional black stereotypes. In short, I hypothesize that voters will draw an inference about a candidate and his policy positions based on the racial makeup of the supporters pictured in the advertisement. When an advertisement features a particular racial group, voters will make inferences about the candidate's positions, especially with regards to matters of race.

Research indicates that individuals often make sense of the world by associating themselves with groups and treating the interests of that group as their own (Converse 1964; Tajfel 1981). Therefore, if a campaign advertisement features members of the in-group, it is plausible that voters will perceive the candidate as supportive of the interests of the in-group. On the other hand, if the advertisement features members of an out-group, voters will likely perceive the candidate as supportive of the interests of the out-group. As Converse (1964) suggests, most voters organize their thinking around what he called, "visible social groupings." In other words, since most of the citizenry does not exhibit coherent ideological constraint, they rely on visible social groupings—Democrats or Republicans, or in this case, blacks versus whites, in order to make their political judgments.

My expectations are also informed by a tradition of research stemming from Blumer's (1958) view of racial prejudice, as a sense of group position. Group-position theory views racial animus not merely as a consequence of negative feelings between

members of different racial groups but, more centrally, as a reflection of group competition and conflict over material rewards, power, and status in a multiracial society (Blumer 1958). In this model, prejudice is rooted in a collective “sense of group position,” and group interest is the driving force underlying contentious intergroup relations. Dominant group interests are predicated on members’ beliefs that they have proprietary claims to scarce resources. Furthermore, any challenge to these proprietary claims is viewed as a threat to the racial status quo and may be resisted. In light of this, it is plausible that whites will perceive a candidate whose advertisement features blacks as a threat to their proprietary claims to scarce resources.

Moreover, studies in advertising and psychology have shown that respondents are more likely to respond favorably to ads featuring people who look like them than ads that do not (Chang, 2002). Therefore, white voters may prefer candidates who feature images of other whites in their advertisements. In addition, as Sulkin and Swigger (2008) show, there is a strong positive correlation between the groups of people a candidate pictured in her ads and the candidate’s support for those groups once in office. Thus campaign ad imagery may serve an important role in communicating candidate positions to the electorate.

Racial and Partisan Stereotypes

White voters often prefer white candidates to black candidates, when all that differs between the two candidates is the race of the candidate pictured (Reeves 1997; Terkildsen 1993). Thus if voters draw conclusions about black candidates, then perhaps voters also have stereotypes about candidates (white or black) who have a

preponderance of black images in their advertisements. There are several reasons why images of African Americans in particular, might influence white voters' vote choice and opinions of a candidate. Research indicates that both parties try to attract white swing voters by distancing themselves from blacks (Frymer, 1999). This incentive to distance themselves from blacks may be especially true of the Democratic Party, which since the civil rights movement of the 1960s has suffered from the perception of being beholden to minority interests. According to Frymer (1999), "...many Democratic Party leaders believe their victory is threatened by their association with large numbers of African American voters. This leads them to minimize the *public appearance* [italics added] of their candidates with these voters. If Democratic Party leaders believe wide segments of the public are ambivalent about black interests, they will disassociate themselves from black voters" (Frymer 1999, 121). Arguably, one way in which candidates can disassociate themselves from black voters, is by limiting their appearance or excluding them altogether in campaign materials.

However, what about the use of white images? It is also plausible that a preponderance of white images sends a signal about a candidate. As Hurwitz and Peffley (2005) suggest, the Horton ad⁶⁴ has made it more difficult to play the race card in campaigns. Thus, it is plausible that politicians who wish to "play the race card" will do so in an even more subtle fashion. One such way may be to use images that are exclusively or predominantly of whites. White voters may perceive a candidate

⁶⁴ The Willie Horton ad was run against the 1988 Democratic presidential nominee, Michael Dukakis, and is infamous for playing on racial fears. Willie Horton was an African American prisoner furloughed from Massachusetts who raped a white woman in another state. As noted in previous chapters, the ad used a menacing mugshot of Horton and was widely denounced as appealing to racial prejudice.

who uses exclusively white images in his advertisement, as a candidate who will look out for the interests of whites.

However, the influence of the racial composition of an advertisement does not occur in isolation. In accordance with my theory of racial signaling, people are likely to view the advertisement in light of the racial and partisan stereotypes they associate with the candidate. While previous research has explored how partisan stereotypes, as well as racial stereotypes influence evaluations of candidates, there has been less attention paid to the racialized nature of partisan stereotypes. In other words, the public has perceptions of what it means for a politician to be a “Black Democrat,” or a “White Republican.” Thus, the effect of being pictured with black supporters is probably very different for a Black Democrat than it is for a White Republican.

In light of these questions, I test the following hypotheses:

Hypotheses

My hypotheses formally stated are as follows:

H1: Democratic candidates are penalized for an association with African Americans.

H2: Republican candidates are rewarded for an association with African Americans.

H3: The racial composition of an advertisement influences voters' perceptions of the candidates' policy preferences.

Experimental Design

To evaluate how the racial composition of political advertisements influences political attitudes, I designed and conducted an Internet-based survey experiment of a diverse sample of 780 White Americans in July 2011. The survey was fielded by YouGov/Polimetrix, which uses a matching methodology for delivering online samples that mirror target populations on key demographics. All participants viewed a mock campaign mailer from a candidate named Greg Davis, who was running for the United States Senate. Participants were told that they were evaluating the campaign mailer to provide feedback to the candidate and his campaign staff.

As indicated by Table 5.1, respondents were randomly assigned to one of twelve treatment conditions (campaign mailers). Each campaign mailer featured six photos—one of the candidate, and five photos of constituent groups (homeowners, senior citizens, students, small business owners, and healthcare workers). The race of the candidate (black or white) and the partisanship of the candidate (Democrat or Republican) were manipulated, as well as the racial composition of the constituent groups pictured (exclusively black, exclusively white, or a combination of black and white—three photos of whites and two photos of blacks). In the control condition, neither the candidate’s race nor the candidate’s partisanship are mentioned. Furthermore, in the control condition, instead of racial images, racially neutral images were displayed. For example, when the candidate mentions “homeownership for families,” respondents see a picture of

a home, without any images of people. Some examples of the campaign mailers are available in Appendix C.

In addition, the candidate's issue stances were purposely vague, in order to ensure that subjects were responding to the candidate and not specific policy positions. For example, the mailer read, "In the United States Senate, I'll be fighting to make a difference for YOU. A vote for Greg Davis on Tuesday, November 8th, means a vote for: homeownership for families, high quality healthcare, investing in small business, protecting senior citizens, educating our children." Also of note is that the campaign mailer did not include any racially coded language, such as "inner city" which is typically included in studies of racial imagery (Hurwitz and Peffley 2007). Immediately after reviewing the campaign mailer, subjects were asked a battery of questions about their reactions and their likelihood of voting for the candidate.

[TABLE 5.1 ABOUT HERE]

Manipulation Check

I first checked that the manipulation worked as intended by seeing whether respondents were able to accurately identify the content of the campaign mailer. Respondents were given a list of five statements about the article that depending on the respondents' condition may or may not have been true.⁶⁵ Respondents were asked to check as many statements as they believed to be true. They also had the option of not selecting any of the statements. There is mixed evidence that the manipulation worked as intended. Only six percent of the respondents in the sample incorrectly agreed with the statement that the advertisement "dealt with the environment." In addition, only one percent of the sample incorrectly agreed that the advertisement "dealt with the war in Afghanistan." These results suggest that respondents were not simply agreeing with all of the statements presented, thus diminishing concerns about acquiescence bias.

Among those respondents who saw a version of the campaign mailer with a white candidate, only three percent incorrectly recalled seeing an ad with a black candidate. However, among those respondents who saw a version of the advertisement with a black candidate, 79 percent agreed that they saw an advertisement with a black candidate. In other words, 21 percent of those respondents who saw a black candidate incorrectly stated

⁶⁵ Respondents were asked whether the ad they viewed dealt with the environment (which was never true), whether it showed a candidate wearing glasses (which was never true), whether it dealt with the war in Afghanistan (which was never true), whether the candidate was African American (true in half of the cases) and whether the article dealt with a candidate who tried to appeal to racial feelings (open to interpretation). The statements were coded as dummy variables, with "1" indicating agreement with the statement. For a more detailed description, see the Appendix.

that they did not see an African American candidate, which is a significant percentage of the sample. Therefore, for the purposes of the analysis, I have chosen to exclude those respondents who incorrectly stated that they did not see an advertisement with an African American candidate.

Candidate Evaluations

African American Candidates

Table 5.2 displays the results of analyses that assess respondents' perceptions of African American candidates. Specifically, Table 5.2 displays the results of three ordered logistic regression models, where the dependent variable differs according to the model. The dependent variables include the likelihood of voting for the African American candidate depicted in the various conditions (Model 1), the perception that the African American candidate would support affirmative action in the workplace (Model 2), and the perception that the African American candidate will favor blacks over whites (Model 3). Each model also includes indicator variables for the various treatment conditions.⁶⁶ Also of note is that for the models displayed in Table 5.2, the baseline condition is always the control group (in which neither race nor partisanship are cued). The model includes controls for marital status, age, gender, education income, region, partisan identification, and ideology.⁶⁷

And finally, to understand the results from Table 5.2 in more meaningful statistics, Figures 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 displays the predicted probabilities derived from the ordered logistic regression models in Table 5. 2. Figure 5.1 displays the predicted probabilities associated with Model 1, where the dependent variable is the likelihood of

⁶⁶ Like conditions that included any black images were collapsed into one category. For example, the condition in which there was a White Republican with three white images and two black images was combined with the condition in which there was a White Republican with five black images. The results are equivalent whether the conditions are combined or treated separately.

⁶⁷ The results are in the same direction and of the same magnitude even when the controls are excluded.

voting for the candidate. Figure 5.2 represents the predicted probabilities associated with Model 2, where the dependent variable is the perception that the candidate favors affirmative action. Finally, Figure 5.3 represents the predicted probabilities associated with Model 3, where the dependent variable is the perception that the candidate favors blacks over whites.

[TABLE 5.2 ABOUT HERE]

[FIGURE 5.1 ABOUT HERE]

The first column displayed in Table 5.2 is Model 1, where the dependent variable is the likelihood of voting for the candidate. The likelihood of voting for the candidate is measured on a four-point scale 0-1, (0=Very Unlikely, .33=Unlikely, .67=Likely, 1=Very Likely). The results from Model 1 indicate that all of the treatments in which the candidate was depicted as black, were associated with a loss in vote support, relative to the control. However, this loss in support is neither substantively nor statistically significant.

Recall, H1 suggests that Democratic candidates will receive less favorable evaluations when they are associated with black images relative to the candidate in the control condition. However, the results from Model 1 indicate that regardless of partisanship, whether an African American candidate is associated with exclusively white images or with black images, respondents are no more likely to vote for any of the African American candidates, than the candidate depicted in the control condition. As indicated by Figure 5.1, the racial composition of the individuals portrayed in campaign

materials appears to have very little influence on likely vote for African American candidates. However, results discussed later in this paper indicate that support of White Democratic candidates is largely influenced by the racial composition of the individuals portrayed in their campaign materials.

Next, the second column of Table 5.2 displays the results of Model 2, where the dependent variable is the perception of the candidate's support for affirmative action for blacks in the workplace. Specifically, respondents were asked the following question, "Does Greg Davis favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose affirmative action policies for Blacks in the workplace?" The candidate's support is scored on a three-point scale 0-1, where 0= Oppose, .5=Neither Favor Nor Oppose, and 1=Favor. Interestingly, exposure to any African American candidate increases the perception that the candidate will favor affirmative action, relative to the candidate in the control condition. This is noteworthy, considering that the candidate never makes a reference to affirmative action or race for that matter.

[FIGURE 5.2 ABOUT HERE]

As Figure 5.2 indicates, the likelihood of perceiving the candidate in the control condition as favoring affirmative action is only six percent, whereas that perception ranged from 18 percent to 31 percent among the candidates depicted as African American. The race of the candidate overwhelms the partisan cue and the race of supporters, such that whether the candidate is a Democrat or Republican, depicted with white or black supporters, African American candidates are always perceived as favoring affirmative action relative to the control condition. However, as Figure 5.2 indicates, the degree to which an African American candidate is perceived as favoring affirmative

action is influenced by the candidate's partisanship, such that Black Democratic candidates are more likely to be perceived as favoring affirmative action than Black Republican candidates. The chance of being perceived as favoring affirmative action, ranges from 25 percent when the Black Democratic candidate is pictured with exclusively whites, to 31 percent, when the Black Democratic candidate includes images of African Americans. In contrast, Black Republican candidates who are pictured with blacks have only an 18 percent chance of being perceived as favoring affirmative action, and this difference is statistically distinguishable from the Black Democratic candidate with black images ($p < .01$). Thus, while all African American candidates are perceived as favoring affirmative action relative to the control, the partisan cue of "Republican" helps to dampen this perception.

Figure 5.2 displays a pattern in which black candidates are more likely to be perceived as favoring affirmative action, when all three cues (race of candidate, partisanship of the candidate, and the race of the supporters) converge and conform with stereotypes. The perception that the candidate favors affirmative action is highest when the candidate is a Black Democrat with black supporters, and far weaker when the candidate is a Black Republican with exclusively white images.

The results thus far indicate that the race of the candidate overwhelms the partisan cue such that any black candidate is perceived as being more likely than the control candidate to favor affirmative action. But, does the race of the candidate also overwhelm the cue delivered by the racial composition of the mailer? Recall, I hypothesize that the racial composition of the mailer influences voters' perceptions of the candidates policy preferences. Therefore, I expected that all else being equal, a black

candidate pictured with exclusively white supporters would be perceived as less likely to favor affirmative action than black candidates whose mailers included other blacks. However, this is in fact *not* the case, as the African American candidates with exclusively white images are statistically indistinguishable from their partisan counterparts whose mailers included African American images. In short, African American candidates are generally perceived as being more likely relative to the control to favor affirmative action, although the partisan cue of “Republican,” helps diminish this perception.

Next, the dependent variable of interest for Model 3 is the perception that the policies of the candidate will favor one racial group over the other. This variable was measured on a three-point scale, 0-1, (0=Favors Whites Over Blacks, .5=Treat Both Groups the Same, 1=Favors Blacks Over Whites). The results from Model 3 indicate that almost all of the African American candidates were perceived as being more likely to favor blacks over whites. The lone exception is the African American Republican candidate whose campaign mailer included exclusively white images. The candidate depicted as an African American Republican with exclusively white images was not statistically distinguishable from the candidate in the control condition. However, the African American Republican candidates whose mailers included black images were perceived as favoring blacks over whites. Thus, it is not simply the partisan label of Republican that enables an African American candidate to overcome the stereotype that he will favor blacks over whites. Instead it seems that the African American candidate needs not only the partisan cue of Republican, but also exclusively white images to

overcome the stereotype that he will favor blacks over whites. The results from Model 3 are displayed in Figure 5.3

[FIGURE 5.3 ABOUT HERE]

As indicated by Figure 5.3, exposure to the African American Democratic candidate with black or white images increased the perception that the candidate favors blacks over whites relative to the control condition. The likelihood of perceiving an African American Democratic candidate as favoring blacks over whites, regardless of the racial composition of their mailer is 19 percent, as compared to only four percent in the control condition. In a similar vein, when a Black Republican candidate is featured with black supporters, they are also perceived as favoring blacks over whites, at a magnitude of 14 percent, which is statistically indistinguishable from the perception of the African American Democratic candidates. For the most part, black candidates are more likely to be perceived as favoring blacks over whites, and for African American Democratic candidates in particular, the racial composition of their advertisement does not alter this perception.

In short, we see that the perception of African American candidates is not contingent on their partisanship or the race of their supporters. Overall it appears that in the case of African American candidates, the race of the candidate largely overwhelms the other two cues. However, does the same hold true when the candidates are depicted as white?

White Candidates

Next, Table 5.3 displays the results of analyses that assess respondents' perceptions of the white candidates. The dependent variables include the likelihood of voting for the white candidate depicted in the various conditions (Model 1), the perception that the white candidate would support affirmative action in the workplace (Model 2), and the perception that the white candidate will favor blacks over whites (Model 3).

[TABLE 5.3 ABOUT HERE]

Figures 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 display the predicted probabilities derived from the ordered logistic regression models in Table 5.3. Figure 5.4 displays the predicted probabilities associated with Model 1, Figure 5.5 represents the predicted probabilities associated with Model 2, and finally, Figure 5.6 represents the predicted probabilities associated with Model 3.

The first column of Table 5.3 displays the results of Model 1. Overall, the results from Model 1 indicate that all of the treatments were associated with a loss of voter support for the white candidates, relative to the control condition. As noted earlier, it was a low-information environment, in which the treatments were purposefully vague. Therefore, it is not surprising that the treatments were unable to generate significant support for any of the white candidates. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the conditions in which the campaign mailer featured a White Democratic candidate with any African American images were associated with a substantive and

statistically significant decline in voter support. These results lend support to H1, which suggests that White Democratic candidates who are visually associated with African Americans fare worse relative to the candidate in the control condition. Thus, initially anemic support decreases even further when the candidate is depicted as a White Democrat with African American images in his campaign mailer.

[FIGURE 5.4 ABOUT HERE]

Figure 5.4 indicates that while the likelihood of being “unlikely” or “very unlikely” to vote for the candidate depicted in the control condition was 49 percent, the likelihood of being “unlikely” or “very unlikely” to vote for the White Democratic candidate with black supporters was 18 percentage points higher, at 67 percent ($p < .05$). In other words, respondents were far less likely to vote for White Democratic candidates associated with blacks relative to the candidate in the control condition. Conversely, vote support for the White Democratic candidate with exclusively white images was not statistically distinguishable from vote support for the candidate depicted in the control condition. This result lends further support to H1, which suggests that White Democratic candidates may suffer a loss in support among white voters, due to their visual association with African Americans. Unlike Black Democratic candidates (Table 5.2), White Democratic candidates whose advertisements included African American images lost voter support at a statistically distinguishable level. Perhaps White Democratic candidates who are pictured with African American images are penalized for violating their apparent group interest.

[FIGURE 5.5 ABOUT HERE]

Next, the dependent variable of interest for Model 2 is the perception that candidate favors affirmative action. As Figure 5.5 indicates, the likelihood of perceiving the candidate in the control condition as favoring affirmative action is only seven percent, as compared to four times that, at 28 percent in the condition in which the candidate is depicted as a White Democrat with black images. Once again, we see that voters have a markedly different reaction to White Democratic candidates who include African American images in their advertisements. In contrast, the perception that the White Democrat with white images favored affirmative action was notably less at 11 percent, which was statistically indistinguishable from the candidate depicted in the control condition. Furthermore, in accordance with H3, the racial composition of the mailer influences voter's perceptions of the candidate, when the candidate is depicted as a White Democrat. A White Democratic candidate with black images is more than twice as likely to be perceived as favoring affirmative action than a White Democratic candidate with exclusively white images ($p < .01$). Thus, the results from Model 3 suggest that excluding African American images from campaign materials may be a powerful strategy for White Democratic candidates to distance themselves from the unpopular policy of affirmative action, and perhaps garner white votes.

Also of note is that the condition in which the candidate was depicted as a White Republican with exclusively white images also sends a very powerful message. Exposure to this condition was associated with a decrease in the perception that the candidate favored affirmative action. The image of a White Republican candidate with exclusively white images appears to send a strong message about the candidate's priorities. While the White Democratic candidate with exclusively white images was

not statistically distinguishable from the candidate in the control condition, the Republican equivalent is perceived as being more likely to oppose the policy. Specifically, Figure 5.5 indicates that while the candidate depicted in the control condition has a nine percent chance of being perceived as opposing affirmative action, the likelihood of perceiving the White Republican candidate with exclusively white images is more than twice that, at 21 percent. These results suggest that it is not simply the presence of all white images that respondents are reacting to, but it is the presence of all white images coupled with the partisan label of Republican, that leads voters to draw the conclusion that the candidate is more likely to oppose affirmative action. Furthermore, these results highlight that while voters draw an inference about a candidate due to the presence of black images, they also make an inference about the presence of white images, under certain circumstances.

Next, the final column of Table 5.3 (Model 3) displays the results of analyses that examine whether the white candidates depicted in certain conditions are more likely to be perceived as favoring blacks over whites. Although candidates never made any claims about policy related to race, the results indicate that the respondents clearly drew substantive inferences about the candidates' racial policy, based on the candidates' party and the racial composition of the campaign mailer.

[FIGURE 5.6 ABOUT HERE]

As Figure 5.6 indicates, the candidate in the control condition has a seven percent chance of being perceived as favoring blacks over whites, which is markedly different than the perception of White Democratic candidates associated with black images. Relative to the control condition, White Democratic candidates whose campaign mailers

include black images are perceived as being more likely to favor blacks over whites. A White Democratic candidate whose campaign mailer includes images of African Americans has a 19 percent chance of being perceived as favoring blacks over whites, as compared to only seven percent in the control condition. Thus, the presence of black images in the campaign mailer of White Democratic candidates appears to serve as an implicit racial cue. Recall from Table 5.2, that in the case of African American Democratic candidates, the perception that the candidate favors blacks over whites is invariant, whereas for White Democratic candidates, the perception is much more malleable, depending on the racial composition of the advertisement.

On the other hand, the White Republican with exclusively white images is perceived as being more likely to favor whites over blacks, relative to the control condition. The White Republican candidate with white images has a 29 percent chance of being perceived as favoring whites over blacks as compared to only 11 percent for the candidate depicted in the control condition. Thus, it appears that if White Republicans are generally stereotyped as being less amenable to “black interests,” then the presence of exclusively white images only helps to bolster this perception.

Group Competition

The aforementioned results indicate that White Democratic candidates are penalized for an association with African Americans. These results also suggest that it is not merely racial animus that is causing White Democratic candidates to be punished when they are associated with African Americans. If that were the case, then we would expect all black candidates to lose vote support relative to the control. Instead, we see

that regarding voter support, black candidates are statistically indistinguishable from the control candidate, while White Democratic candidates who are pictured with blacks lose the support of voters relative to the candidate depicted in the control condition. I argue White Democrats suffer a consequence for being associated with blacks due to perceptions of group competition.

Recall that I draw on group position theory (Blumer 1958) which views racial animus not merely as a consequence of negative feelings between members of different racial groups but, more centrally, as a reflection of group competition and conflict over material rewards, power, and status in a multiracial society. Therefore, respondents who perceive African Americans as competitors in the political arena, will be likely to penalize White Democratic candidates for an association with blacks. Approximately 20 percent of the sample perceives African Americans as competitors, as indicated by their agreement with the statement, “The more influence Blacks have in politics, the less influence people like me will have in politics.”

Therefore, I estimated an ordered logistic regression model in which I interacted perception of group competition with exposure to the various treatments. Figure 5.7 displays the interaction between perceived group competition and the likelihood of respondents indicating that they would be “very unlikely” to vote for Greg Davis when his advertisement included blacks. As indicated by Figure 5.7, as the perception of group competition increases, the more likely respondents are to indicate that they would be “very unlikely” to vote for candidate Greg Davis, when his advertisement featured African Americans. Perhaps respondents who perceive competition with blacks in the political arena, think that a candidate whose advertisement features African Americans

will benefit African Americans if elected to office. Thus, not only is there a main effect for exposure to a White Democratic candidate associated with blacks, but we also see that non-stereotypical images of blacks can prime attitudes regarding group competition.

[FIGURE 5.7 ABOUT HERE]

Conclusion

The results from this chapter suggest that there are consequences to being associated with certain groups in American politics. Furthermore, in keeping with the theory of racial signaling, the consequences of being associated with certain groups are largely influenced by a candidate's race and partisanship.

For example, White Democratic candidates lost vote support and were perceived as more liberal on racial issues when their advertisements included images of African Americans, whereas White Republican candidates associated with black images were not statistically distinguishable from the candidate depicted in the control condition. In contrast, White Republican candidates whose advertisements featured exclusively white images were perceived as more conservative on racial issues. Thus suggesting that it is not simply the label of "Republican" or "white," from which voters draw conclusions. Instead, it appears that partisan stereotypes are also racialized, such that voters have a particular idea of what it means to be a "White Republican," or a "White Democrat."

While perceptions of white candidates appear to be largely influenced by the combination of the partisan cue and the racial imagery in their advertisement, the same does not hold true for African American candidates. Regardless of their partisan cue and the racial imagery in their campaign mailer, African American candidates were perceived as being more likely to favor affirmative action and more likely to favor

blacks over whites. This result speaks to enduring nature of the stereotypes associated with African American candidates.

Furthermore, these results suggest that African American candidates may in fact have to “go explicit,” as the milder cues of partisanship and racial imagery were not sufficient to alter the stereotype of black candidates being primarily concerned with the interests of other African Americans.

Table 5.1 Experimental Manipulations-Experiment 2

Treatment #	Candidate Race	Candidate Party Affiliation	Racial Composition of Photos
Control	No race pictured	No party Mentioned	Neutral images (no pictures of people)
1	Black	Democrat	Five exclusively black photos
2	Black	Democrat	Five exclusively white photos
3	Black	Democrat	Three white photos, two black photos
4	White	Democrat	Five exclusively black photos
5	White	Democrat	Five exclusively white photos
6	White	Democrat	Three white photos, two black photos
7	Black	Republican	Five exclusively black photos
8	Black	Republican	Five exclusively white photos
9	Black	Republican	Three white photos, two black photos
10	White	Republican	Five exclusively black photos
11	White	Republican	Five exclusively white photos
12	White	Republican	Three white photos, two black photos

**Table 5.2: Predicting Evaluations of Black Candidates by Condition
(Baseline = Control)**

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Likely Vote	Favors Affirmative Action	Favors Blacks Over Whites
Black Democrat w/ Blacks	-0.07 (0.32)	1.57*** (0.44)	1.72*** (0.49)
Black Democrat w/ Whites	-0.40 (0.38)	1.27** (0.50)	1.71*** (0.55)
Black Republican w/ Blacks	-0.48 (0.32)	0.85* (0.44)	1.37*** (0.49)
Black Republican w/ Whites	-0.04 (0.38)	0.96* (0.50)	0.80 (0.55)
Cut 1	-3.53 (14.77)	18.84 (18.44)	-32.10 (20.99)
Cut 2	-1.60 (14.77)	23.45 (18.47)	-26.34 (20.94)
Cut 3	1.08 (14.77)	-- --	-- --
Log Likelihood	-365.83	-199.60	-167.42
Observations	313	300	311

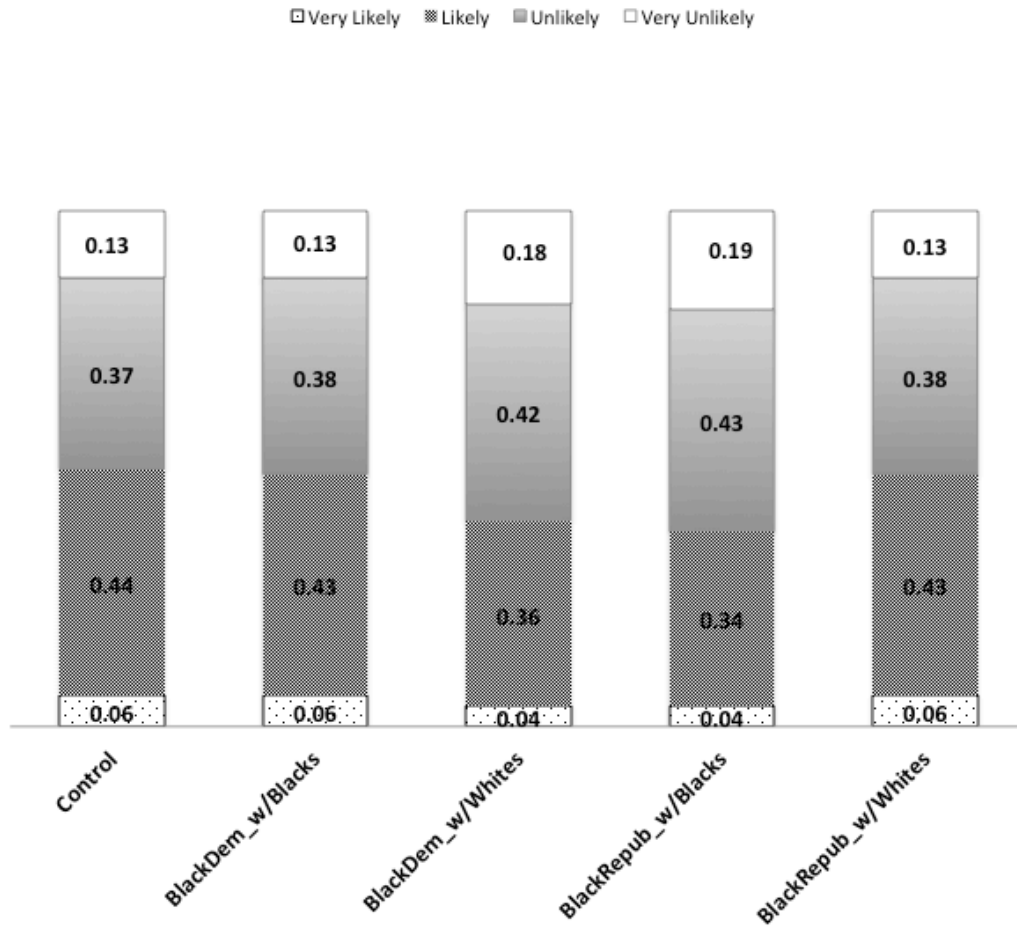
Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$ for two-tailed test. All variables coded 0-1, with higher values indicating more support for the variable in question. Entries are ordered logit coefficients from a model that includes controls for marital status, income, age, partisan identification, ideology, region, gender, and education. Bolded results indicate a statistically significant result.

**Table 5.3: Predicting Evaluations of White Candidates by Condition
(Baseline = Control)**

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Likely Vote	Favors Affirmative Action	Favors Blacks Over Whites
White Democrat w/ Blacks	-0.74** (0.30)	1.64*** (0.42)	1.15*** (0.40)
White Democrat w/ Whites	-0.10 (0.35)	0.49 (0.48)	-0.52 (0.45)
White Republican w/ Blacks	-0.49 (0.30)	0.11 (0.43)	-0.54 (0.40)
White Republican w/ Whites	-0.43 (0.35)	-0.96** (0.47)	-1.21*** (0.45)
Cut 1	-6.36 (12.69)	-21.83 (16.66)	1.08 (15.88)
Cut 2	-4.59 (12.69)	-16.97 (16.63)	5.76 (15.89)
Cut 3	-1.89 (12.68)	-- --	-- --
Log Likelihood	-458.67	-231.08	-247.20
Observations	388	371	378

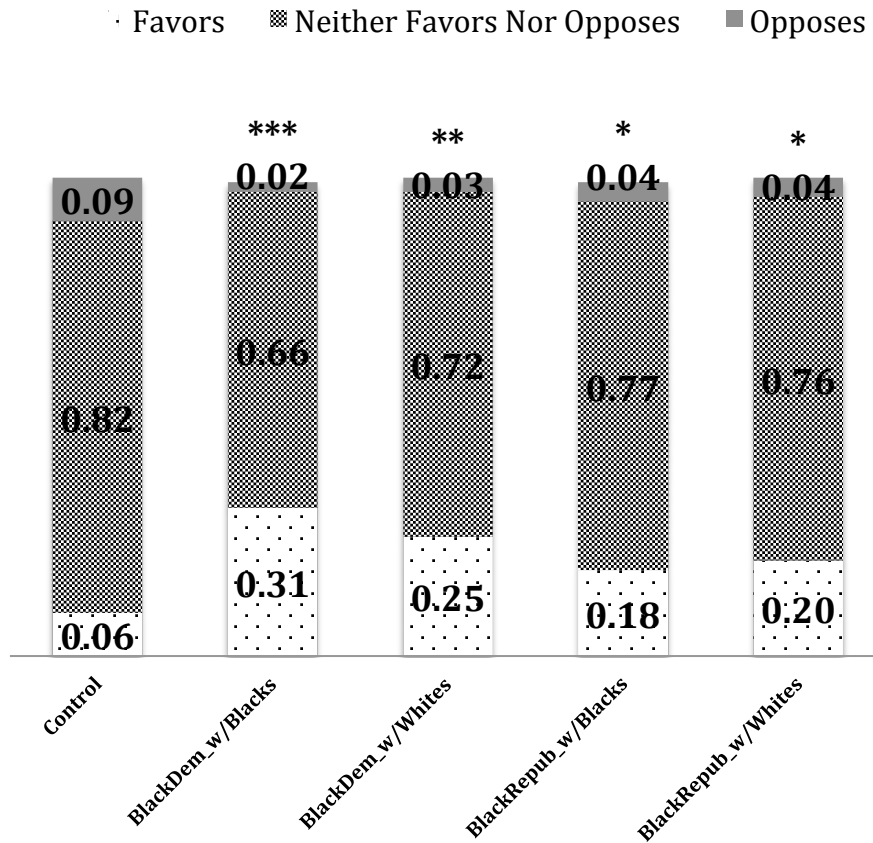
Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$ for two-tailed test. All variables coded 0-1, with higher values indicating more support for the variable in question. Entries are ordered logit coefficients from a model that includes controls for marital status, income, age, partisan identification, ideology, region, gender, and education. Bolded results indicate a statistically significant result.

Figure 5.1: Predicted Probabilities of Likely Vote for Black Candidates by Condition



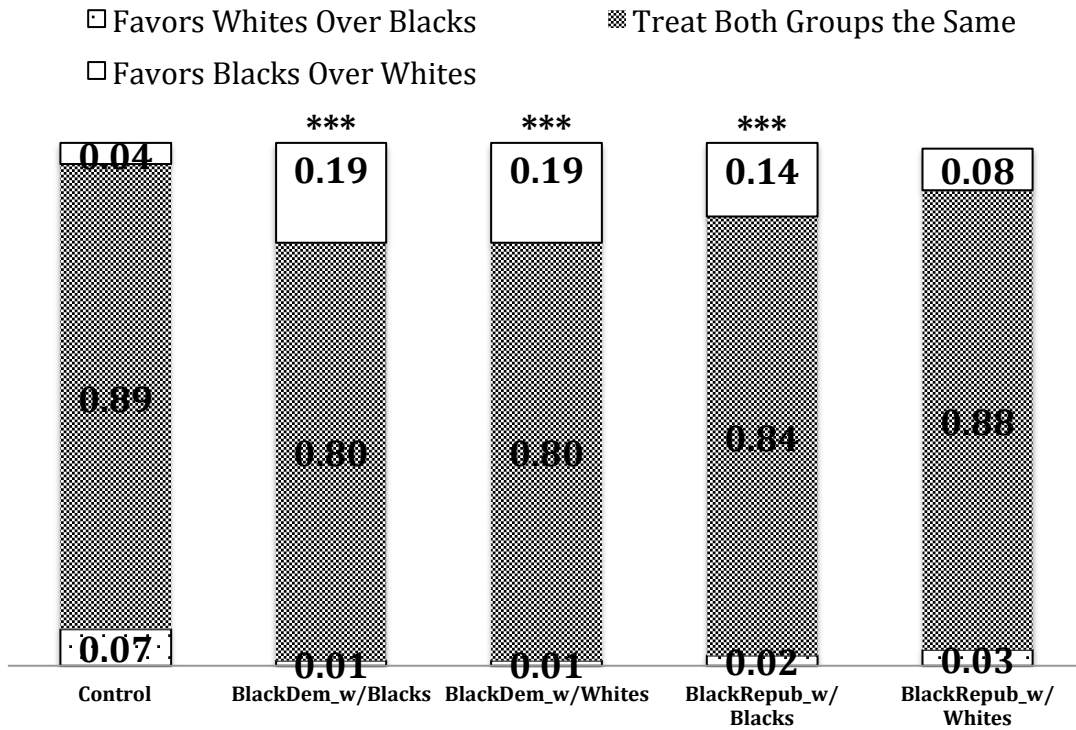
Note: What is the probability of being likely to vote for the candidate? Predicted probabilities derived from an ordered logistic regression model. Results that are statistically significant are noted with asterisks. Significance levels are compared to the control ***p<.01 **p<.05 *p<.10. Model includes controls for marital status, income, age, partisan identification, ideology, region, gender, and education. Excluding these controls does not alter the direction of these results.

Figure 5.2: Predicted Probabilities of Black Candidates' Support for Affirmative Action by Condition



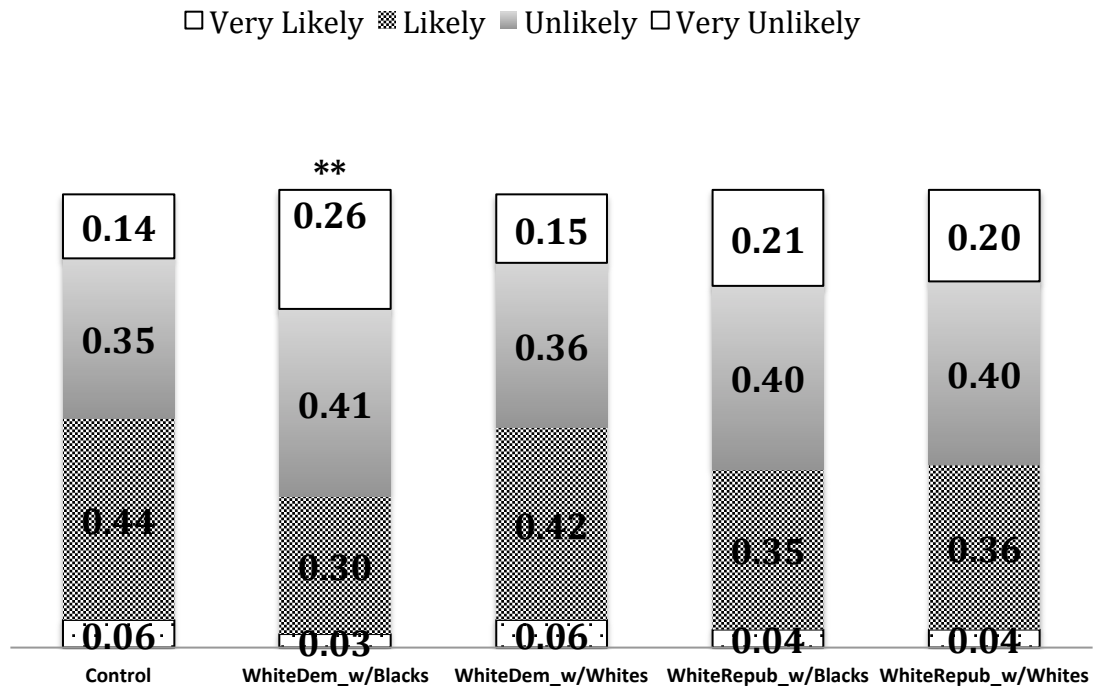
Note: What is the probability of perceiving that the candidate favors affirmative action? Predicted probabilities derived from an ordered logistic regression model. Results that are statistically significant are noted with asterisks. Significance levels are compared to the control ***p <.01 **p<.05 *p<.10. Model includes controls for marital status, income, age, partisan identification, ideology, region, gender, and education. Excluding these controls does not alter the direction of these results.

**Figure 5. 3: Predicted Probabilities of Black Candidates
“Favoring Blacks Over Whites” by Condition**



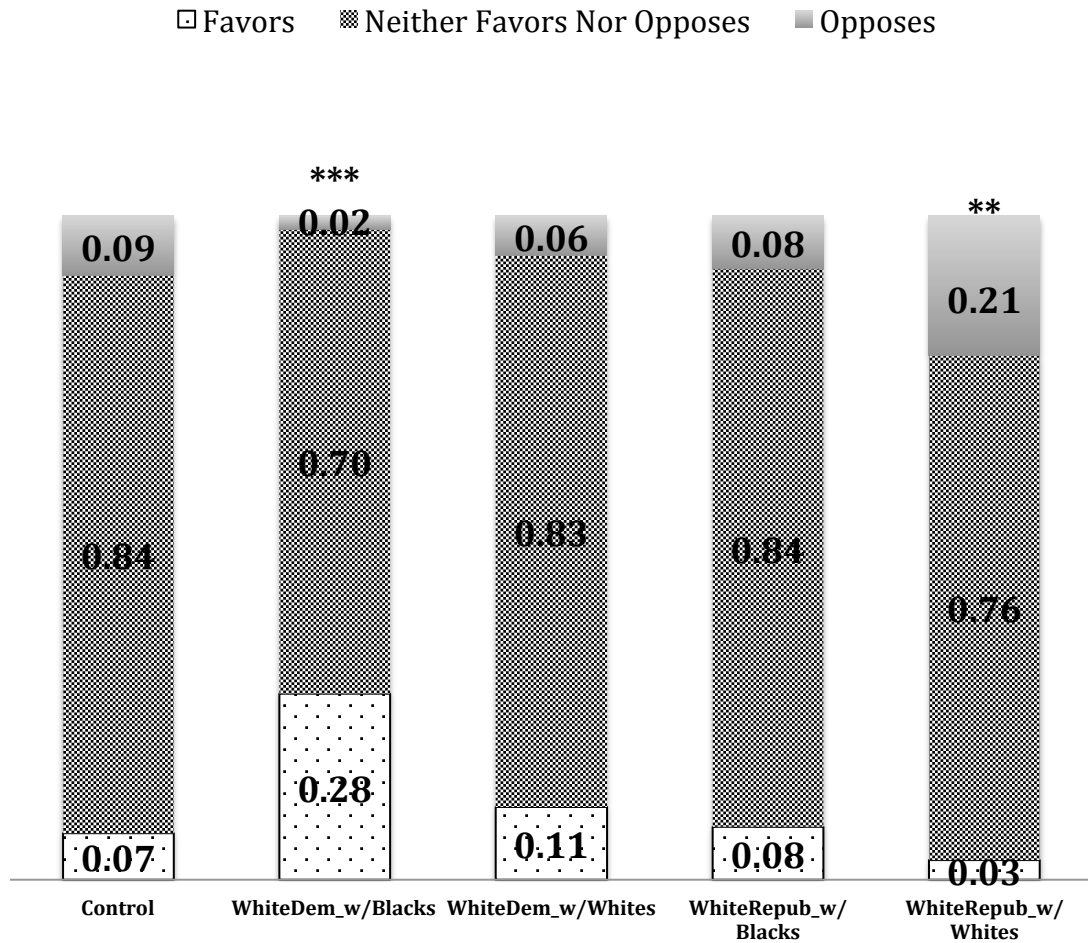
Note: What is the probability of being likely to vote for the candidate? Predicted probabilities derived from an ordered logistic regression model. Results that are statistically significant are noted with asterisks. Significance levels are compared to the control ***p <.01 **p<.05 *p<.10. Model includes controls for marital status, income, age, partisan identification, ideology, region, gender, and education. Excluding these controls does not alter the direction of these results.

Figure 5.4: Predicted Probabilities of Likely Vote for White Candidates by Condition



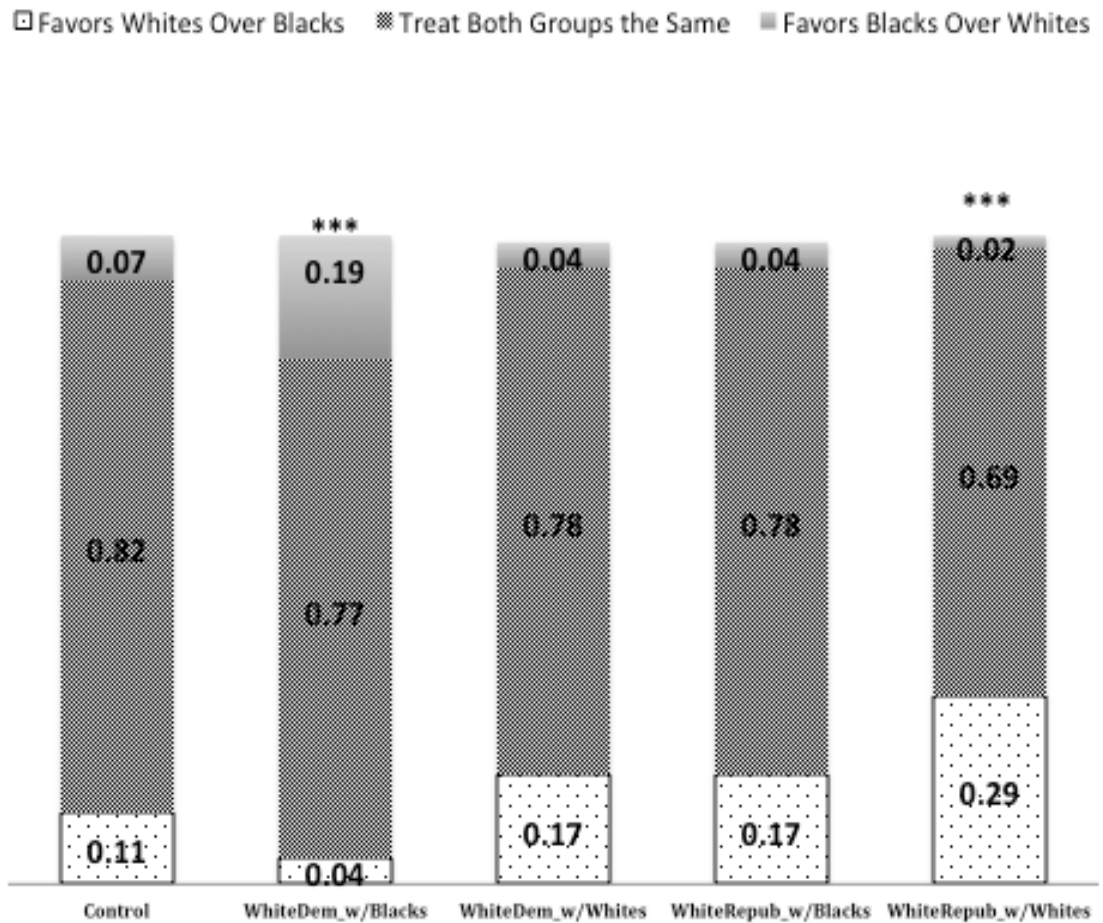
Note: What is the probability of perceiving that the candidate's policies favor one group over the other? Predicted probabilities derived from an ordered logistic regression model. Results that are statistically significant are noted with asterisks. Significance levels are compared to the control ***p <.01 **p <.05 *p <.10. Model includes controls for marital status, income, age, partisan identification, ideology, region, gender, and education. Excluding these controls does not alter the direction of these results.

Figure 5.5: Predicted Probabilities of White Candidates' Support for Affirmative Action by Condition



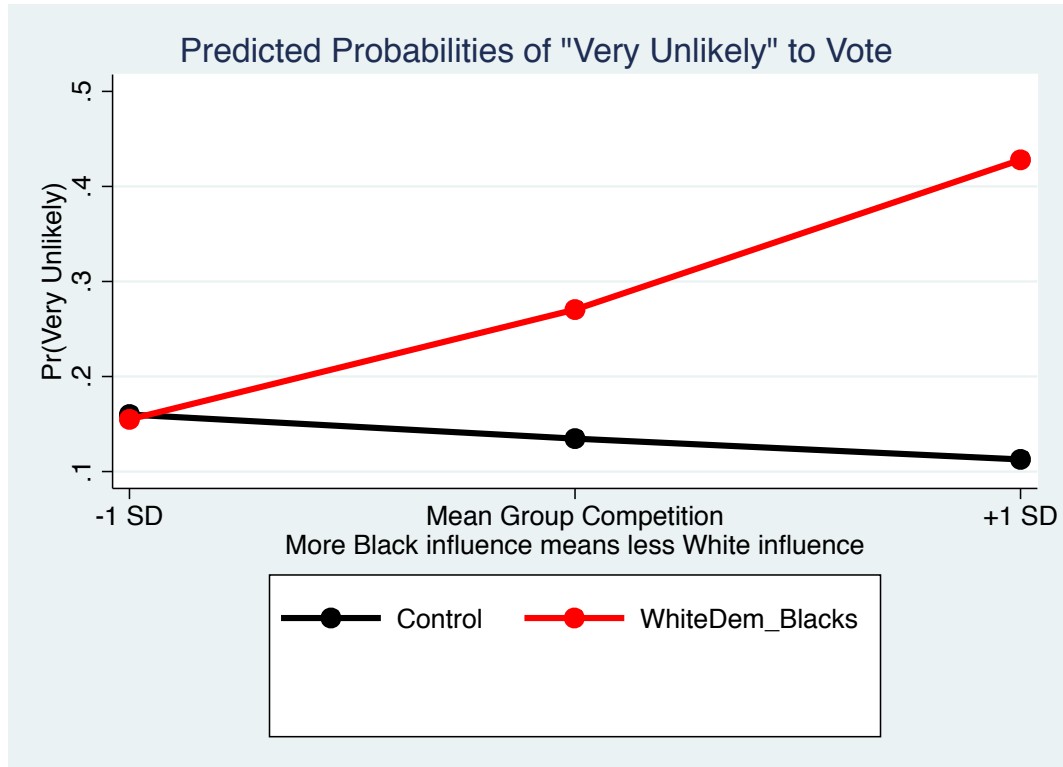
Note: What is the probability of perceiving that the candidate favors affirmative action? Predicted probabilities derived from an ordered logistic regression model. Results that are statistically significant are noted with asterisks. Significance levels are compared to the control ***p <.01 **p<.05 *p<.10. Model includes controls for marital status, income, age, partisan identification, ideology, region, gender, and education. Excluding these controls does not alter the direction of these results.

**Figure 5.6: Predicted Probabilities of White Candidates
“Favoring Blacks Over Whites” by Condition**



Note: What is the probability of being that the policies of the candidate favor one group over the other? Predicted probabilities derived from an ordered logistic regression model. Results that are statistically significant are noted with asterisks. Significance levels are compared to the control ***p <.01 **p<.05 *p<.10. Model includes controls for marital status, income, age, partisan identification, ideology, region, gender, and education. Excluding these controls does not alter the direction of these results

Figure 5.7: The Conditional Effect of Perceived Group Competition on Likely Vote



Chapter 6 Conclusion

Throughout this dissertation, I have outlined and tested my theory of racial signaling, which I believe offers not only an important modification to the theory of racial priming, but also a broad theoretical account for the use of racial appeals in contemporary American politics. While the theory of racial priming suggests that explicit racial appeals are ineffective in contemporary American politics, I challenge this notion. I argue that because the theory of racial priming has traditionally been tested in the context of White Republican candidates, it misses some of the nuance and caveats that are associated with the use of racial appeals more broadly. Specifically, I contend that the theory of racial priming overstates the ineffectiveness of explicit appeals, because the efficacy of these appeals has largely been tested among the group most constrained in their ability to use them—White Republican candidates.

My theory of racial signaling is based on three core tenets: 1) Candidates running for office in majority white jurisdictions have an incentive to “signal” that they are not beholden to black interests. In other words, that they will not be overly concerned with black interests, presumably at the expense of whites. 2) Candidates must also indicate that they are not racially insensitive. 3) A candidate’s ability to use racial appeals is constrained by their race and their partisanship.

The first tenet is based on the premise that race—in particular, black-white relations have long been at the center of American politics (Hutchings and Valentino,

2004). For example, racial attitudes, particularly the attitudes of whites toward blacks are widely perceived as a major cause of the sectional realignment of the southern Democratic Party in the post-civil rights era (Carmines and Stimson 1989). Numerous scholars have also demonstrated that racial attitudes are fundamental determinants of policy preferences (Kinder and Sanders 1996). Attitudes toward African Americans in particular, have been shown to predict the attitudes of White Americans on a wide range of policies, ranging from welfare, crime, and most recently, healthcare reform (Kinder and Sanders 1996) (Tesler and Sears 2010). Furthermore, race even affects representation in politics, such that not only does the race of the legislator affect the quality of representation African Americans receive, but on average, state legislators have been found to be less responsive to people with putatively “black names” (Butler and Broockman, 2011).

Historically, candidates who have been perceived as being too liberal on racial issues or concerned with racial equity have not fared well (e.g. Walter Mondale, Bill Bradley). And most recently, we see evidence that President Barack Obama has suffered politically when he has used the bully pulpit to speak out on matters of race. For example, early in his presidency, President Obama weighed in after the black Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. was arrested at his home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The president said the police had “acted stupidly.” He also went on to say that, “there is a long history of African Americans and Latinos being stopped by law enforcement disproportionately.” An opinion poll released shortly after the incident by the Pew Research Center found that 41 percent of Americans disapproved of Obama's “handling of the situation,” while only 29 percent approved and support from white voters dropped

from 53 percent to 46 percent after the incident (Hamden, 2009). This is only one example that suggests that there are political consequences for politicians, particularly African American Democrats who are perceived as overly concerned with black interests.

Considering that race has played such a crucial role in many of the critical debates in American politics, I argue that race also plays a prominent role in the strategies candidates employ when running for office in majority white jurisdiction. Simply put, candidates who are running for office in majority white jurisdictions have an incentive to “signal” that they are not overly concerned with black interests. This is especially true for Democratic candidates, who have a reputation as being more likely to champion policies that benefit African Americans.

Signaling may take the form of appeals that are either implicit or explicit in nature. For example, candidates may use racially conservative (implicit or explicit) messages to signal that they are not beholden to African American voters. Take for example, Republican presidential candidate, Herman Cain, who when questioned about African Americans struggling economically said, “They [African Americans] weren’t held back because of racism. People sometimes hold themselves back because they want to use racism as an excuse for them not being able to achieve what they want to achieve.”⁶⁸ Racially conservative messages such as the aforementioned example, signal that the candidate is not overly concerned with “black interests.” And in the case of African American candidates, racially conservative messages help to distinguish them from liberal African American political elites, such as Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, which arguably helps them to appeal to white voters.

⁶⁸ Liptak, Kevin. “Cain: Racism Not Holding Anyone Back.” CNN, October 9, 2011. <http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2011/10/09/cain-racism-not-holding-anyone-back/>

Furthermore, African American elites may have an incentive to use explicit messages that are inflammatory in nature, because such messages are likely to garner media attention. And to the extent that increased media attention is associated with increased fundraising, and thus increased electoral success, African American candidates looking to raise their profile, may “go explicit.” The case study of the 2010 22nd Congressional District (FL) election offers evidence of such a phenomenon, as Allen West rose to popularity as a Tea Party favorite in large part due to his inflammatory sound bytes on matters of race. West was able to generate a national profile that resulted in many of his donations coming from outside the state of Florida.

Aside from using racially conservative appeals, another way in which candidates running for office in majority white jurisdictions signal that they are not beholden to black interests is through “public distancing.” Recall, public distancing is when candidates avoid appearances at public events or advertisements with particular demographic groups, in this case, African Americans. Since African American candidates and White Democratic candidates are stereotyped as overly concerned with black interests, one way in which they may try to alter this perception is by publicly distancing themselves from African American constituents. As noted by Frymer (1999, 12) “...many Democratic Party leaders believe their victory is threatened by their association with large numbers of African American voters. This leads them to minimize the *public appearance* [italics added] of their candidates with these voters. If Democratic Party leaders believe wide segments of the public are ambivalent about black interests, they will disassociate themselves from black voters.”

The second tenet of the theory of racial signaling suggests that candidates must also show that they are not racially insensitive. In the post-civil rights era, social norms have made it such that it is politically unacceptable to espouse attitudes associated with “old-fashioned racism.” In other words, there is a social prohibition against espousing ideas that may indicate a belief in the biological or inherent inferiority of blacks. In short, Americans do not want to be perceived as racist, nor do they want to be associated with a candidate who is perceived as racist. Therefore, candidates must also demonstrate that they are not racially insensitive.

While much of the racial priming literature suggests that political elites avoid being perceived as racially insensitive, by using implicit rather than explicit appeals, I argue that this explanation is incomplete. Voters can also use a candidate’s race and partisanship as a cue about the candidate’s racial sensitivity. For example, due to the respective parties’ reputations on racial matters, the partisan label of “Democrat” helps some candidates, including White Democrats to avoid the perception of being racially insensitive. In a similar vein, an African American candidate from either major party may also be able to avoid the perception of racial insensitivity, by virtue of being African American. Therefore, White Democratic candidates and African American candidates of either major party may have more latitude to use explicit appeals than their White Republican counterparts, who often suffer from the stereotype of being racially intolerant. Since the theory of racial priming has largely been tested in the context of White Republican candidates, scholars may have overstated the ineffectiveness of explicit appeals, because the usage was tested among the political elites with the least latitude to use them.

The third tenet of the theory is that the race and partisanship of candidates constrains their ability to use a variety of racial appeals. In short, candidates face a balancing act between signaling that they are not beholden to the interests of African Americans, while also demonstrating that they are not racially insensitive. Given the reputations of the two major parties on race, as well as stereotypes of black versus white candidates, their ability to use different appeals is contingent on both their race and their partisanship. White Republican candidates for example, have less latitude to use explicit appeals, because their party is often perceived as racially intolerant (Philpot, 2007). Conversely, due to the stereotype of the Democratic Party as overly concerned with minority interests, Democratic candidates, black and white alike, have an incentive to err more towards demonstrating that they are not beholden to black interests. Thus, Democratic candidates have more latitude to use explicit, or at the very least pejorative appeals, than their White Republican counterparts.⁶⁹

My dissertation offers a broad account of the use of racial appeals in contemporary American politics. The dissertation began in Chapter 1, with a discussion of my theory of racial signaling. I argued for the need to revisit the theory of racial priming, in order to offer a more comprehensive account of the use of racial appeals in contemporary American politics.

Chapter 2 offered a study of several cases of Congressional elections involving black and white candidates, Democrats and Republicans, who ran for seats in majority white jurisdictions. These case studies were designed to provide more direct evidence of the types of campaign strategies candidates use when trying to effectively enhance the

⁶⁹ Interestingly enough, although not explored in this dissertation, it is also plausible that White Republicans have more latitude to frame policies in terms of *racial equity*. For example, President George W. Bush was able to frame Social Security in terms of racial equity, with little to no backlash.

likelihood of white support. Specifically, I offered an account of the use of implicit and explicit racial appeals in the following campaigns: Gwen Moore, an African American Democrat from Wisconsin (U.S. House, 2004), Keith Ellison, an African American Democrat from Minnesota (U.S. House, 2006), Harold Ford Jr., and African American Democrat from Tennessee (U.S. Senate, 2006), Allen West, an African American Republican from Florida (U.S. House, 2010), and James Webb, a White Democrat from Virginia (U.S. Senate, 2006).

While African American candidates have traditionally been advised to avoid the topic of race altogether, I demonstrate that African American candidates can talk about race openly, as long as they do so in a manner that signals that they are not beholden to African Americans. This hypothesis is tested in Experiment 1, which is discussed in Chapter 3. Specifically, I tested the effectiveness of different types of racial appeals by both black and white candidates, with a focus on white respondents. In particular, special attention was devoted to whether explicit appeals can be effective under certain circumstances, especially when the messenger is African American. Contrary to the theory of racial priming, I found that explicit appeals have not been rejected to the degree that has previously been argued. Many white racial conservatives do not reject explicit racial appeals regardless of whether the messenger is black or white. In contrast, white racial liberals' rejection of explicit racial appeals is contingent on the race of the messenger, such that they reject the message when the candidate is depicted as white, but accept them when the candidate is depicted as black. The findings from Experiment 1 suggest that the norm of equality may not be activated when the messenger is African American.

Similar to Chapter 3, Chapter 4 also discussed the results of Experiment 1, but with a focus on black respondents. The results indicate that in contrast to their white counterparts, black respondents reject explicit appeals regardless of whether the messenger was depicted as black or white. However, the penalty is more severe for the white candidate with the explicit appeal than for his black counterpart.

Chapter 5 discussed the results of Experiment 2, which tested the “public distancing” element of the racial signaling strategy. Do Democratic candidates have an incentive to distance themselves from African American supporters? Specifically, are Democratic candidates penalized by whites for even a mere visual association with African Americans? Experiment 2 also tested whether black candidates are evaluated more favorably when they are associated with a preponderance of white, as opposed to black images. Experiment 2 was in part designed to test whether African American candidates had an incentive to “go explicit” in order to effectively enhance the likelihood of white support. In other words, is the mild visual cue of white supporters sufficient to garner white support, or do African American candidates have to utilize more aggressive racial appeals to garner the support of White Americans? The results of Experiment 2 indicate that White Democrats are penalized for an association with black images. On the other hand, African American candidates regardless of their partisanship and the racial composition of their advertisements, were unable to alter respondents’ perceptions. Thus, African American candidates may have an incentive to “go explicit,” because milder visual cues are insufficient.

This dissertation has implications for the study of campaigns, elections, and racial attitudes. For one, while some pundits have suggested that the election of an African

American president is indicative of a “post-racial” America, the results of my study highlight the enduring nature of racial attitudes on policy preferences and election outcomes. Furthermore, this study suggests that race will continue to be a fundamental determinant of public opinion, as candidates have an incentive to use racial appeals in contemporary American politics.

However, many questions still remain unanswered. For example, does gender constrain the ability of candidates to engage in racial signaling? In the experimental chapters as well as the case studies, the focus was largely on the use of racial appeals by male candidates. However, it is unclear whether a candidate’s gender facilitates or constrains their use of various types of racial appeals. Future work will explore whether stereotypes of women as more compassionate, afford women more latitude in the use of explicit appeals. However, it is plausible that to the extent that explicit appeals are perceived as “aggressive,” women may be penalized for the use of explicit appeals, because they are violating expectations for their gender.

Another area for future exploration is the extent to which other racial and ethnic minorities are also able to engage in “signaling.” While the focus of this dissertation was on black and white candidates, the political landscape in contemporary American politics is becoming increasingly diverse. Thus we are likely to see more ethnic and racial minorities running for office in majority white jurisdictions. Therefore, another avenue for future research is to explore the extent to which other groups, such as Latinos, have an incentive to signal. Furthermore, how do other racial and ethnic minorities react to the signaling behavior of black and white candidates?

Another question is whether engaging in signaling on the campaign trail, has implications for how a candidate governs, once elected to office? If candidates campaign in a manner that signals that they will not be beholden to black interests, then it is also likely that they will govern in such a manner as well. If candidates who engage in signaling are more electable (i.e. have disproportionate access to fundraising, political consultants, and media attention), then we will likely see an increase in the election of such candidates. Such candidates may be likely to ignore the role that structural racism plays in perpetuating inequality.

And finally, while the results of this study suggest that there are incentives for candidates running in majority white jurisdictions to engage in signaling, it is unclear at what numerical threshold this behavior is beneficial. Take for example the 2010 election for the 22nd Congressional district (FL), where Allen West ran to represent a district that was overwhelmingly white. In such a scenario, a candidate may be able to engage in more explicit methods of signaling with little to no impunity, because there is not a significant population of African Americans to counter-mobilize. However, when the district is more racially balanced, or when African Americans constitute a significant voting bloc, racial signaling may be less effective. For example, in the 2006 United States Senate Race to represent Tennessee, Harold Ford Jr. engaged in signaling behavior that bordered on explicit—most notably his photograph in front of a Confederate Flag. Such behavior likely detracted African American voters. While African Americans were unlikely to vote for Ford's Republican opponent, Ford's behavior did not convince requisite numbers of African Americans to go to the polls on his behalf (Gillespie, 2010). The experimental findings from Chapter 4 also support this finding, as African American

respondents did not blindly support black candidates, but instead punished the black candidate with the explicit appeal.

In short, we see that candidates face a delicate balance when trying to win elections in the majority white jurisdictions. In accordance with the theory of racial signaling, they must “signal” that they are not beholden to black voters, while also demonstrating that they are not racially insensitive. The degree to which candidates balance these two considerations is contingent on the race and the partisanship of the candidate in question.

Appendix A: Mock News Articles for Experiment 1 (Chapters 3 and 4)

Treatment 1-White Racially Liberal Condition

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ON CAMPAIGN TRAIL, CANDIDATE SAYS, "IT'S GOVERNMENT'S FAULT BLACK KIDS ARE FALLING BEHIND"

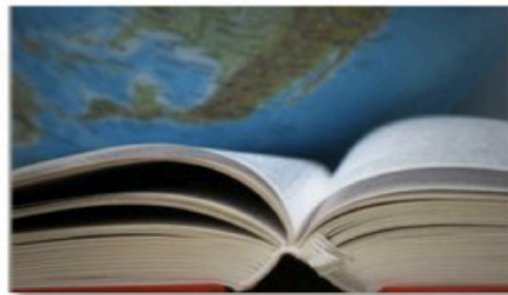
Wednesday, March 16, 2011 --Staff Desk

SPRINGFIELD-- Last Thursday night, Greg Davis, who is a Democrat campaigning to represent Ohio's 3rd-district in Congress, spoke at a community forum. He told the mostly black audience that, "Government is responsible for your children failing to achieve in school."

He also went on to say that, "it's because of government neglect that your kid doesn't pick up a book or finish his or her homework. I'm tired of the government blaming black students for problems when it's government's fault that black students have fallen behind. Stop blaming the victim!" Mr. Davis' remarks were met with cheers and applause.

While Mr. Davis' speech touched on a variety of issues, including housing, health care, and jobs, he paid particular attention to education. Davis declared "African American students are falling behind their white classmates. It's unacceptable! Government needs to start governing."

Davis, a Yale educated lawyer and former Councilman, has been active on education issues in the past, including a two-year stint on the City Council's education committee. Mary Jones, a Springfield resident says she welcomes the opportunity to hear candidates speak --"It's a real chance to hear what a candidate has to say for themselves, outside of a 30 second television commercial."



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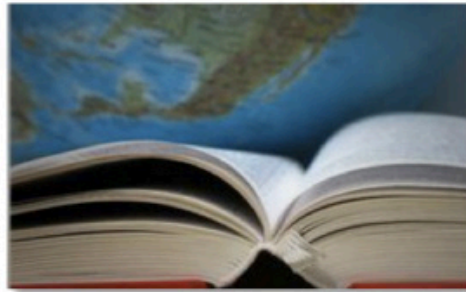
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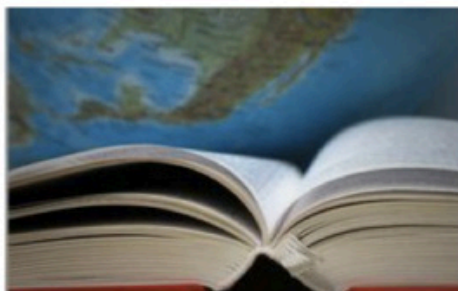
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Treatment 4-Black Deracialized Condition

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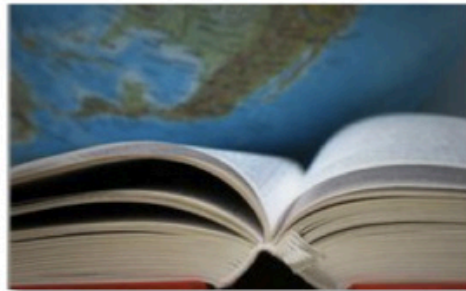
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ON CAMPAIGN TRAIL, CANDIDATE SAYS, "IT'S PARENTS' FAULT KIDS ARE FALLING BEHIND"

Wednesday, March 16, 2011 --Staff Desk

SPRINGFIELD--Last Thursday night, Greg Davis, who is a Democrat campaigning to represent Ohio's 3rd-district in Congress, spoke at a community forum. He told the audience that, "Parents are responsible for their children failing to achieve in school."

He also went on to say that, "government can't force a kid to pick up a book or make sure that the homework gets done. I'm tired of people blaming the government for problems when it's their own fault that they have fallen behind. Stop blaming the system!" Mr. Davis' remarks were met with cheers and applause.

While Mr. Davis' speech touched on a variety of issues, including housing, health care, and jobs, he paid particular attention to education. Davis declared, "Some students are falling behind. It's unacceptable!" "Parents need to start parenting."

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ON CAMPAIGN TRAIL, CANDIDATE SAYS, "IT'S BLACK PARENTS' FAULT KIDS ARE FALLING BEHIND"

Wednesday, March 16, 2011 --Staff Desk

SPRINGFIELD--Last Thursday night, Greg Davis, who is a Democrat campaigning to represent Ohio's 3rd-district in Congress, spoke at a community forum. He told the audience that, "Black parents are responsible for their children failing to achieve in school."

He also went on to say that, "government can't force a kid to pick up a book or make sure that the homework gets done. I'm tired of black people blaming the government for problems when it's their own fault that they have fallen behind. Stop blaming the system!" Mr. Davis' remarks were met with cheers and applause.

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Control Condition- No Race Cue, Neutral Appeal

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ON CAMPAIGN TRAIL, CANDIDATE SAYS, "KIDS ARE FALLING BEHIND"

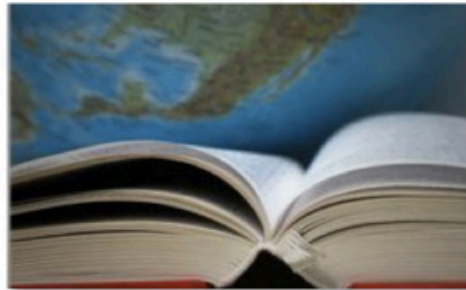
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**Appendix B: Full Wording of Survey Questions from Experiment 1
(Chapters 3 and 4)**

PRE-TEST

Q1. Here are a few statements about some things in our society. Please state whether you agree or disagree with each statement:

a. Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve [**ASKED OF WHITE RESPONDENTS ONLY**]

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

b. Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors. [**ASKED OF WHITE RESPONDENTS ONLY**]

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

c. It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites. [**ASKED OF WHITE RESPONDENTS ONLY**]

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

d. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class. [**ASKED OF WHITE RESPONDENTS ONLY**]

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree

5. Strongly Disagree

Q2. Imagine a seven-point scale on which the characteristics of the people in a group can be rated. A score of “1” means that you think almost all of the people in that group tend to be LAZY. A score of “7” means that you think most people in the group are HARDWORKING. A score of “4” means that you think most people in the group are not closer to one end or the other, and of course, you may choose any number in between. How well do the words “hardworking” and “lazy” describe **Blacks/Whites** as a group? **[ASKED OF EVERYONE ABOUT THEIR RESPECTIVE OUTGROUP]**

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4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

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3. Don't Know

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5. Strongly Disagree

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Q3. Imagine a seven-point scale on which the characteristics of the people in a group can be rated. A score of “1” means that you think almost all of the people in that group tend to be UNINTELLIGENT. A score of “7” means that you think most people in the group are INTELLIGENT. A score of “4” means that you think most people in the group are not closer to one end or the other, and of course, you may choose any number in between. How well do the words “intelligent” and “unintelligent” describe **Blacks/Whites** as a group? **[ASKED OF EVERYONE ABOUT THEIR RESPECTIVE OUTGROUP]**

Q4. How important is being White/Black to your ideas about politics? **[ASKED OF EVERYONE ABOUT THEIR OWN GROUP. WHITES ARE ASKED THE QUESTION ABOUT OTHER WHITES, AND BLACKS ARE ASKED THE QUESTION ABOUT OTHER BLACKS]**

1. Very important
2. Somewhat important
3. Not at all important

Q5. Do you think what happens generally to Black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life? **[ASKED OF BLACK RESPONDENTS ONLY]**

1. Yes
2. No

[IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS “YES,” GO TO Q5B. IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS, “NO,” SKIP Q2B AND GO TO Q6.]

Q5B. Will it affect you a lot, some, or not very much? **[ASKED OF BLACK RESPONDENTS ONLY]**

1. A Lot
2. Some
3. Not Very Much

Q6. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The more influence **whites/blacks** have in politics, the less influence people like me will have in politics, the less influence people like me will have in politics. **[RESPONDENTS ARE ASKED THE QUESTION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OUTGROUP. THEREFORE BLACKS ARE ASKED ABOUT WHITES AND WHITES ARE ASKED ABOUT BLACKS]**

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q7. How much racial discrimination is there in the United States today? (A great deal, a lot, a moderate amount, a little, or none at all)?

1. A great deal
2. A lot
3. A moderate amount
4. A little
5. None at All

POST-TEST

Q1. Please read over the list below, and choose as many (or as few) of the statements that you believe correctly describe the news article you just read?

1. It dealt with education
2. It showed a black candidate
3. It dealt with the environment
4. It showed a candidate with glasses
5. It dealt with a candidate who tried to appeal to racial feelings

Q2. Please let us know if the story you read made you feel any of the following emotions?

	Yes	No
Anxious		
Proud		
Happy		

Hopeful		
Afraid		
Excited		
Happy		
Depressed		
Sad		
Uneasy		
Disgusted		
Hopeless		

Q3. We'd like to get your feelings toward the candidate you just read about. We'll use something called the feeling thermometer and here's how it works. We'd like you to rate the candidate using the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the person. Ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the person and that you don't care too much for that person. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the person. **(SLIDING THERMOMETER)**

Q4. Do the following words describe candidate, Greg Davis extremely well, quite well, or not well at all:

	Extremely Well	Quite Well	Not Well At All
Intelligent			
Inexperienced			
Trustworthy			

Hardworking			
Fair			
Competent			

Q5. Where would you place candidate Greg Davis on the following scale?

1. Extremely liberal
2. Liberal
3. Slightly liberal
4. Moderate, middle of the road
5. Slightly conservative
6. Conservative
7. Extremely conservative

Q6. In general, do you think the policies of Greg Davis will favor Whites over Blacks, Blacks over Whites, or will they treat both groups the same?

1. Will Favor Whites over Blacks
2. Treat Both Groups the Same
3. Will Favor Blacks over Whites

Q7. On the average Black/African-American students have worse test scores and graduation rates than white students. Do you think these differences are....

a. Mainly due to home life/environment/upbringing?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Somewhat Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Somewhat Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

1. Strongly Agree
2. Somewhat Agree
3. Don't Know

4. Somewhat Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

c. Because education is not a priority for black parents?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Somewhat Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Somewhat Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

d. Because of biased/racist attitudes toward blacks?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Somewhat Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Somewhat Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

e. Because of black students' lack of interest?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Somewhat Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Somewhat Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q8. Should federal spending on education be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

1. Increased
2. Kept About the Same
3. Decreased

Q9. On the average Black/African-American students have worse test scores and graduation rates than White students. This is called the "achievement gap." Should federal spending on the achievement gap be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

1. Increased
2. Kept About the Same
3. Decreased

Q10. Please tell me whether you would vote for or against the following proposition.
Would you vote for or against a system giving parents government funded school vouchers to pay for tuition at a private school?

1. Favor
2. Neither Favor, Nor Oppose
3. Oppose

Appendix C: Mock Campaign Mailers Used in Experiment 2 (Chapter 5)

Control (Racially Neutral, No Partisanship Cue)

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

In the United States Senate, I'll be fighting to make a difference for YOU. A vote for Greg Davis on Tuesday, November 8th, means a vote for:


Home ownership for families


High-quality health care


Investing in small businesses


Protecting senior citizens


Educating our children

To learn more:
www.GregDavis.org
888-248-3957 (phone)

Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 1: Black Democrat, Exclusively Black Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
DEMOCRAT FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

In the United States Senate, I'll be fighting to make a difference for YOU. A vote for Greg Davis on Tuesday, November 8th, means a vote for:

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Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 2: Black Democrat, Exclusively White Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
DEMOCRAT FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

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Protecting senior citizens

Educating our children

To learn more:
www.GregDavis.org
888-248-3957 (phone)

Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 3: Black Democrat, Three White Images and Two Black Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
DEMOCRAT FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

In the United States Senate, I'll be fighting to make a difference for YOU. A vote for Greg Davis on Tuesday, November 8th, means a vote for:

Home ownership for families

High-quality health care

Investing in small businesses

Protecting senior citizens

Educating our children

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888-248-3957 (phone)**

Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 4: White Democrat Exclusively Black Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
DEMOCRAT FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

In the United States Senate, I'll be fighting to make a difference for YOU. A vote for Greg Davis on Tuesday, November 8th, means a vote for:

- 
Home ownership for families
- 
High-quality health care
- 
Investing in small businesses
- 
Protecting senior citizens
- 
Educating our children

To learn more:
www.GregDavis.org
888-248-3957 (phone)

Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 5: White Democrat, Exclusively White Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
DEMOCRAT FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

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Educating our children

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Treatment 6: White Democrat, Three White Images and Two Black Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
DEMOCRAT FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

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Home ownership for families

High-quality health care

Investing in small businesses


Protecting senior citizens

Educating our children

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www.GregDavis.org
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Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 7: Black Republican, Exclusively Black Images




VOTE GREG DAVIS REPUBLICAN FOR UNITED STATES SENATE


In the United States Senate, I'll be fighting to make a difference for YOU. A vote for Greg Davis on Tuesday, November 8th, means a vote for:




Home ownership for families




High-quality health care



Investing in small businesses



Protecting senior citizens



Educating our children

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www.GregDavis.org
888-248-3957 (phone)

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Treatment 8: Black Republicans, Exclusively White Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
REPUBLICAN FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

In the United States Senate, I'll be fighting to make a difference for YOU. A vote for Greg Davis on Tuesday, November 8th, means a vote for:

- Home ownership for families
- High-quality health care
- Investing in small businesses
- Protecting senior citizens
- Educating our children

To learn more:
www.GregDavis.org
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Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 9: Black Republicans, Three White Images and Two Black Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
REPUBLICAN FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

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Home ownership for families

High-quality health care

Investing in small businesses

Protecting senior citizens

Educating our children






**To learn more:
www.GregDavis.org
888-248-3957 (phone)**

Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 10: White Republican, Exclusively Black Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
REPUBLICAN FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

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- 
Home ownership for families
- 
High-quality health care
- 
Investing in small businesses
- 
Protecting senior citizens
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Educating our children

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888-248-3957 (phone)

Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 11: White Republicans, Exclusively White Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
REPUBLICAN FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

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-  High-quality health care
-  Investing in small businesses
-  Protecting senior citizens
-  Educating our children

To learn more:
www.GregDavis.org
888-248-3957 (phone)

Paid for by the Davis for Senate Campaign

Treatment 12: White Republicans, Three White Images and Two Black Images

**VOTE GREG DAVIS
REPUBLICAN FOR
UNITED STATES SENATE**

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Home ownership for families

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Appendix D: Full Wording of Survey Questions from Experiment 2 (Chapter 5)

Q1. Here are a few statements about some things in our society. Please state whether you agree or disagree with each statement:

a. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

b. Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

c. It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as Whites.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

d. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q2. Imagine a seven-point scale on which the characteristics of the people in a group can be rated. A score of "1" means that you think almost all of the people in that group tend to be LAZY. A score of "7" means that you think most people in the group are

HARDWORKING. A score of “4” means that you think most people in the group are not closer to one end or the other, and of course, you may choose any number in between. How well do the words “hardworking” and “lazy” describe **Blacks** as a group?
[RANDOMIZE THE ORDER IN WHICH 2 AND 2A ARE ASKED]

Q2a. Imagine a seven-point scale on which the characteristics of the people in a group can be rated. A score of “1” means that you think almost all of the people in that group tend to be LAZY. A score of “7” means that you think most people in the group are HARDWORKING. A score of “4” means that you think most people in the group are not closer to one end or the other, and of course, you may choose any number in between. How well do the words “hardworking” and “lazy” describe **Whites** as a group?

Q3. How important is being White to your ideas about politics?

4. Very important
5. Somewhat important
6. Not at all important

Q4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The more influence **Blacks** have in politics, the less influence people like me will have in politics, the less influence people like me will have in politics.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Don't Know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

Q5. Please read over the list and choose those groups you feel particularly close to—people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things. Select as many or as few, as you wish: **[PLEASE RANDOMIZE AND RECORD THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARE SHOWN TO THE RESPONDENT]**

Poor people
Asian-Americans
Liberals
The Elderly
Blacks
Labor unions
Feminists
Southerners
Business people
Young people
Conservatives
Hispanic-Americans
Women

Working-class People
Whites
Middle-class People
Men

Q6. When it comes to politics, do you usually think of the following groups as extremely liberal, slightly liberal, moderate or middle of the road, slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative, or haven't you thought much about this?

[RANDOMIZED]

	Extremely Liberal	Liberal	Slightly Liberal	Moderate or Middle of the Road	Slightly Conservative	Conservative	Extremely Conservative	Haven't Thought Much About This
Teachers								
Latinos								
Corporate Executives								
Farmers								
Senior Citizens								
Blacks								
Homeowners								
Students								
Small Business Owners								
Whites								

POST-TEST

You just viewed the campaign ad from the candidate Greg Davis, who is running for the U.S. Senate in a neighboring state. Please evaluate his positions and answer each question, trying not to skip questions. Your responses are confidential.

Q7. Please read over the list below, and choose as many (or as few) of the statements that you believe correctly describe the ad you just read?

1. It dealt with the environment
2. It showed a Black candidate
3. It dealt with the war in Afghanistan
4. It showed a candidate with glasses
5. It dealt with a candidate who tried to appeal to racial feelings

Q8. We'll use something called the feeling thermometer and here's how it works. We'd like you to rate the candidate using the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the person. Ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the person and that you don't care too much for that person. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the person.

Q9. How likely is it that you would vote for Greg Davis for the U.S. Senate?

1. Very Unlikely
2. Unlikely
3. Likely
4. Very Likely

Q10. Do the following words describe candidate, Greg Davis extremely well, quite well, well, or not well at all:

	Extremely Well	Quite Well	Not Well At All
Intelligent			
Inexperienced			
Trustworthy			
Hardworking			
Fair			
Competent			

Q11. Where would you place candidate Greg Davis on the following scale?

- 1 Extremely liberal
- 2 Liberal
- 3 Slightly liberal
- 4 Moderate, middle of the road
- 5 Slightly conservative
- 6 Conservative
- 7 Extremely conservative

Q12. Next, thinking about the following issues, please state which political party—the Democrats or the Republicans do you think would do a better job?

	Democrats	Neither Party	Republicans
Helping Senior Citizens			
Improving Health Care			
Improving the Economy			
Reducing Crime			
Reforming Public Education			

[RANDOMIZED]

Q13. Do you like the Democratic Party, dislike it, or neither like nor dislike it?

1. Like
2. Neither Like Nor Dislike
3. Dislike

Q14. Do you like the Republican Party, dislike it, or neither like nor dislike it?

1. Like
2. Neither Like Nor Dislike
3. Dislike

Q15. Next, thinking about the following issues, please state whether you think Greg Davis would do a good job of handling each issue if elected to office?

	Good Job	Neither a Good Job Nor a Poor Job	Poor Job
Helping Senior Citizens			
Improving Health Care			
Improving the Economy			
Reducing Crime			
Reforming Public Education			

Q16. In general, do you think the policies of Greg Davis will favor Whites over Blacks, Blacks over Whites, or will they treat both groups the same?

4. Will Favor Whites over Blacks
5. Treat Both Groups the Same
6. Will Favor Blacks over Whites

Q17. Which of the following groups do you think Greg Davis will help if elected to office? (You can choose as many or as few as you like) **[PLEASE RANDOMIZED]**

- Teachers
- Latinos
- Corporate Executives
- Farmers
- Senior Citizens
- African Americans
- Homeowners
- Students

Small Business Owners
Whites

Q18. Does Greg Davis favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose affirmative action policies for Blacks in the workplace?

1. Favor
2. Neither favor nor oppose
3. Oppose

Q19. Does Greg Davis want federal spending on Social Security to be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

1. Increased
2. Kept About the Same
3. Decreased

Q20. Finally, this last question is about President Barack Obama. Do you approve, disapprove, or neither approve nor disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

1. Approve
2. Neither approve nor disapprove
3. Disapprove

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