

Race, Political Inequality, and Pluralism*

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Abstract

Concerned observers have long believed that racial minorities' interests are underrepresented in governmental decisions. However, prior scholarship has focused on when African Americans are better represented, compared to other African Americans, rather than how African Americans' representation measures up to that of whites. We examine the degree to which the preferences of whites and African Americans correspond with the actions of their U.S. Senators. We find that across a wide array of policies, African Americans are severely underrepresented. Building on prior studies, we find that one cause of African Americans' underrepresentation is the lower likelihood that liberal African Americans are represented by Democrats, compared to liberal whites. Moreover, African Americans are underrepresented in most all issue domains, including those mutually salient for African Americans and whites. Consistent with pluralist notions of democracy and models of re-election minded representative behavior, however, we find that on issues most salient for African Americans, they are actually better represented than whites.

The U.S. prizes political equality, yet its citizens may not be represented equally. As Sidney Verba (2003, 663) put it, “the equal consideration of the preferences and interests of all citizens” is “one of the bedrock principles in a democracy.” However, concerned observers have long believed that racial minorities’ interests are underrepresented in governmental decisions. Through much of American history, national, state, and local governments denied African Americans the full rights of citizenship, enshrining political inequality into law. Although the U.S. has taken steps to increase African Americans’ political power, and public officials have become more responsive to African Americans in recent decades (e.g., Keech 1968; Bullock 1981), “few disagree that blacks continue to be underrepresented in federal, state, and local government” (Guinier 1994, 8).

The possibility that African Americans are underrepresented may strike different normative chords, largely depending on views of how minority groups should be represented.¹ Some might deem this possibility a significant failure of American politics on the bedrock principle of political equality. At the other extreme, some may find the underrepresentation of African Americans’ preferences expected and acceptable given African Americans’ minority status in a system based largely on majority rule. They might argue that since African Americans are a numerical minority, their preferences are bound to be less represented compared to whites. After all, if a minority group has the same political influence as the majority, the individuals in the minority must exert more influence than those in the majority, violating the principle of equality. Thus, it may be acceptable if African Americans are often underrepresented. Still others might contend that any minority group with intense preferences on

¹ See Verba (2003) for an excellent discussion of the benefits and potential drawbacks of political equality.

a particular issue ought to have special influence, so African Americans should be better represented than whites on issues especially important to them, arguing for a more pluralistic model of democracy in which different minorities exert influence in different policy domains.

This third perspective, the notion that intensely held preferences ought to exert special influence, even when those preferences are in the minority, has a long theoretical pedigree. As Dahl (1956, 90) dramatically put it, “Madison might argue that government should be designed to inhibit a relatively apathetic majority from cramming its policy down the throats of a relatively intense minority,” outlining what he termed “the intensity problem.” Even if it is desirable that minority groups should exert extra influence on issues salient to them, Dahl (1956, 119) concluded that there is likely “no solution to the intensity problem through constitutional or procedural rules.” However, despite the lack of constitutional guarantee that intense minorities should prevail, theoretical models of representative behavior show that re-election minded representatives have strong incentives to overrepresent minorities when they have disproportionately intense preferences (e.g., Downs 1957; Fiorina 1974). We examine whether the relative representation of African Americans’ and whites’ preferences varies from issue to issue. Doing so provides both a broader picture of the state of minority representation and a test of an empirical implication of theoretical models of representation.

More practically, the perception that racial minorities are underrepresented has prompted a variety of proposals for improving African Americans’ political equality, ranging from mobilizing racial minorities in elections (e.g., Piven and Cloward 1988; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993), to the creation and maintenance of electoral districts where African Americans constitute a majority of constituents (“majority-minority” districts), to the adoption of cumulative voting (Guinier 1994), proportional representation (Lijphart 1998), and even compulsory voting

(Lijphart 1997). Debate over these reforms has largely guided recent studies of race and representation, with scholars exploring the representational implications of the racial composition of electoral districts, majority-minority districts, and descriptive representation (e.g., Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Tate 2003).

However, the natural and healthy focus on these questions has left other important issues unexplored. In particular, while these studies show that African Americans are better represented as their numbers increase and when they are represented by other African Americans, we do not know whether African Americans are underrepresented *compared to whites*. Moreover, extant studies cannot tell us whether African Americans are more or less equally represented compared to whites across various issue domains. In addition, the focus on the percentage of a constituency that is African American tends to treat African Americans as a monolithic political community rather than a relatively cohesive but still heterogeneous group.

We seek to make three contributions to our understanding of minority groups' representation. First, we examine the relative representation of African Americans and whites to show the extent to which whites as a group are advantaged. Second, we identify sources of these representational disparities. Third, we apply theoretical models of representative behavior to the case of race and representation, which enriches the race and representation literature and provides a new test of these models. Specifically, we ask to what degree the preferences of whites and African Americans correspond with the roll call votes their Senators cast in the 105th to 107th Senates (1997-2002). We find that across the full spectrum of policies, African Americans were severely underrepresented. We also find that this disparity is due in part to the mediating role played by political parties. The lower likelihood that a liberal African American will be represented by a Democratic Senator, compared to a liberal white, is a major cause of

African Americans' underrepresentation. Although underrepresented in most issue areas, African Americans' preferences are not underrepresented in all domains. . As pluralistic models of democracy and theoretical models of re-election minded representatives would predict, we find that African Americans' preferences are *more* likely than whites' to predict their Senators' voting decisions on issues more salient for African Americans.

Background

There is no doubt that African Americans and whites have different political preferences. In fact, Kinder and Sanders (1996, 27) conclude from years of opinion surveys that “the racial divide” in opinion is “a divide without peer.” African Americans and whites differ dramatically on explicitly race-related policies like affirmative action, preferential hiring, college racial quotas, and equal employment policies, and disagree less but still substantially on implicitly race-related policies like federal funding for education, health care, social security, law enforcement, and other social welfare policies (e.g., Kinder and Sanders 1996; Canon 1999; Kinder and Winter 2001). However, it is important to remember that while African Americans are more politically cohesive than whites, there is significant variation among African Americans on a variety of political issues (e.g., Dawson 1994; Elcessor and Leighley 2001).

Scholars have long been concerned that African Americans' distinctive preferences are underrepresented, and have examined the ways elected officials represent their African American constituents. Most studies of race and representation assess how the concentration of African Americans in electoral districts shapes various political outcomes, including public policies (e.g., Keech 1968; Radcliff and Saiz 1995), Democrats' electoral success (Grofman, Griffin, and Glazer 1992), and legislators' activities in office, typically their roll call behavior (Combs,

Hibbing, and Welch 1984; Whitby 1985; Grofman, Griffin, and Glazer 1992; Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Lublin 1997; Canon 1999). These studies, which usually focus on the House of Representatives, find that as the African American population in a district grows, Representatives vote first more conservatively and then (with further growth) more liberally, although these patterns differ by region, district urbanicity, and legislators' party affiliation and race (Combs, Hibbing, and Welch 1984; Grofman, Griffin, and Glazer 1992; Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Canon 1999). In a similar vein, Bullock (1981) found that the advent of African American voting rights in the South produced a noticeable change in the tendency of Southern Representatives to support liberal positions and the roll call alternatives supported by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR).

Although all officials' representation of African Americans remains a central concern, the introduction of racial redistricting and the consequent rise in the number of African American legislators sparked interest in related questions – whether African American officials represent African American constituents appreciably better than white representatives, and whether the benefits of descriptive representation outweigh any costs in substantive representation. On one hand, majority-minority districts have boosted the number of African American representatives in the House (Davidson and Grofman 1994). On the other, concentrating African Americans in electoral districts dilutes their presence in surrounding districts, potentially leading to an increase in the number of more conservative Republicans elected and a decline in the number of more liberal Democrats, ultimately depressing the substantive representation of African Americans (Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996). As a result, the connection between descriptive and substantive representation has become a critical question. Some argue that white officials can represent African Americans just as well as African American officials can (Swain 1993), while

others argue that descriptive representation enhances minority representation on a variety of fronts (e.g., Canon 1999; Mansbridge 1999; Haynie 2001; Tate 2003).

In summary, the race and representation literature has tended to focus on representatives' reactions to the racial composition of their districts and differences in the ways African American and white officials represent their African American constituents. In both approaches, analysts compare the representation of African Americans in some districts to the representation of African Americans in other districts. In contrast, we compare the *relative* representation of African Americans and whites in all districts, asking whether Senators' voting decisions reflect whites' preferences better than African Americans' preferences. Although the absolute level of representation any given group enjoys is certainly important, examining the relative representation of different groups links the study of race and representation to core questions of political equality and the representation of disparate groups in a heterogeneous society.

Explanations for African Americans' Political Inequality

One reason scholars have not compared the relative representation of white and African American preferences has to do with methods and data, a point we discuss below. Another may simply be that scholars generally assume whites are politically advantaged. After all, there are many reasons to expect racial disparities in representation. First, one important mechanism by which elected officials are responsive to citizens' interests is citizens' selection of like-minded officials. When these officials vote consistent with their own preferences, they also vote consistent with their constituents' preferences (e.g., Miller and Stokes 1963). Since the 1960s, African Americans have overwhelmingly preferred the Democratic Party and its candidates, who have generally taken up African Americans' interests to a greater extent than have Republicans

(Carmines and Stimson 1989). Therefore, generally speaking, when represented by Democrats, African Americans' preferences will be better represented. However, since African Americans are a minority, as a group they may be less able to elect like-minded candidates than are whites. Consequently, the ability of more conservative whites to elect like-minded representatives often outweighs the ability of more liberal African Americans to do the same, meaning many African Americans will be represented by Republicans. When these officials make policy decisions, the decisions will not correspond very closely with African Americans' preferences.

Second, once re-election minded representatives are in office, they have incentives to represent intense preferences among their constituents. As many have shown, Representatives' roll call votes tend to match constituent opinion more closely on matters salient to constituents (e.g., Miller and Stokes 1963; Fenno 1978; Kingdon 1989; Hill and Hurley 1999; Burstein 2003; Hutchings et al. 2004), which may create a representation gap between majorities and minorities. This makes good sense. Voters are more likely to hear about these roll call votes than votes on less salient issues, either at the time they are cast or in the next campaign, and are more likely to take those votes into account when casting their own ballots (e.g., Arnold 1990).

Of course, issue salience may not be uniform across constituencies, which becomes important when officials represent heterogeneous districts. As Fiorina (1974) showed, in districts with heterogeneous groups, both group size and the intensity of the groups' preferences on a particular issue affect officials' responsiveness to group preferences. When an issue is equally salient for two constituency groups, a vote-maximizing Senator will consistently vote according to the preferences of the larger group (in states, always whites). Different issues may be salient to different groups, which may induce members to respond to different groups on different issues (e.g., Downs 1957; Fiorina 1974). When an issue is *disproportionately* salient to

one group, a vote-maximizing Senator will cast roll call votes based on group size and the importance of the issue for each group (Fiorina 1974). Therefore, if a state's population includes a sizeable group of African Americans who hold strong opinions on an issue, this preference intensity might make up for their lack of numbers, inducing Senators to vote more in line with African Americans' preferences. If so, electoral incentives may lead to a pattern of representation that looks quite like pluralistic models of democracy, wherein different groups have disproportionate influence over different policy domains (e.g., Dahl 1956).

Applying these theoretical claims to the relative representation of African Americans and whites, we would expect that on issues of greater or equal salience to whites, Senators' votes would generally reflect whites' preferences since they are the larger group in all states. However, on issues disproportionately salient to African Americans, Senators' votes may favor African Americans' preferences, especially if African Americans comprise a sizeable portion of the electorate. Since most roll calls are presumably on issues of relatively equal salience to whites and African Americans (or of greater salience to whites), Senators' aggregate voting patterns will probably reflect whites' preferences more than African Americans', but this may vary when looking at specific issue domains.

Conceptualizing and Measuring Representation

Representation is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon. This complexity forces scholars to examine different facets of representation. Following the lead of Miller and Stokes (1963), many works examine the extent to which representatives' roll call votes respond to some summary statistic of their district's characteristics, like its mean opinion (Achen 1978; Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993) or some proxy for mean opinion (McCrone and Kuklinski 1979;

Bullock and Brady 1983). This approach provides a measure of legislators' responsiveness to district opinion, estimating the extent to which liberals represent liberal constituencies and conservatives represent conservative constituencies.

This design could be adopted to study responsiveness to groups within districts.² As a practical matter, though, the data requirements for this framework are extremely difficult to meet when studying groups within geographical constituencies. It is difficult to obtain a reliable measure of a district's mean African American opinion because there are relatively few African Americans in electoral districts. Even in our study of U.S. Senators, where electoral districts are entire states, pooling the General Social Survey (GSS) from 1973 to 2000 provides only 32 states with samples of 20 or more African Americans. Predictably, these small samples generally provide unreliable estimates of state-level African American preferences. Using generalizability measures (see Jones and Norrander 1996), we found that African Americans' state-level means for several opinion items, including political ideology and preferences for federal spending on social welfare, crime, education, health care, and racial issues, were unreliable.³ Therefore, we generally cannot use the traditional (i.e., state-level) design.

Instead, we examine a similar aspect of representation, the *correspondence* between individual-level preferences and Senators' roll call votes. Rather than asking how Senators respond to state-level opinion, we ask: across the nation, whose opinions most closely

² For example, Bartels (2002) used a variant of this approach to determine that Senators respond disproportionately to constituents with higher incomes.

³ The generalizability coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. Jones and Norrander (1996, 302) classify values over .7 as "highly reliable," between .6 and .7 as "moderately reliable," and below .6 as "unreliable." These items often yielded coefficients below .5.

correspond to their Senators' votes? Assessing opinion-vote correspondence provides a descriptive measure of one aspect of representation. This correspondence is important in its own right because the extent of opinion correspondence between constituents and Senators influences constituents' evaluations of Senators' performance (Binder, Maltzman, and Sigelman 1998), and these evaluations are one indicator of how well individuals feel they are being represented (Tate 2003). However, we recognize that we are taking a limited look at representation, exploring but one of many facets of a complex phenomenon. Focusing on roll call votes also means ignoring other activities like bill sponsorship, speeches on the floor, working to convince other members to vote a particular way, and other important endeavors (Canon 1999). Furthermore, the up or down nature of roll call votes is a blunt measure of Senators' activities. However, roll call votes are an important substantive activity Senators perform. Assessing the extent to which these votes correspond to the preferences of African Americans and whites provides one way of ascertaining whether, and when, these groups are equally represented.

Methods and Data

To assess the relative degree of correspondence between Senators' votes on one hand and whites' and African Americans' preferences on the other, we model each Senator's vote (or an aggregate measure of votes) as a function of his or her white and African American constituents' opinions, controlling for each respondent's race. If Senators' votes correspond more with whites' preferences, the coefficient for whites' preferences will be greater than that for African Americans' preferences. This model is not intended to explain Senators' votes, but to measure the correspondence between Senators' votes and constituents' preferences. Other factors surely affect Senators' votes, but our initial task is simply to test whether the end product of those other

factors, actual votes, better reflect their white or African American constituents' preferences. If the preferences of whites correspond more with the behavior of their Senators than do those of African Americans, we can conclude that African Americans are underrepresented.

We focus on the Senate as a likely site of inequality.⁴ Although many have examined representation in the Senate generally (e.g., Wood and Hinton Andersson 1998), most studies of race and representation examine the House, meaning we know far less about racial differences in representation in the upper chamber. The Senate may be especially unrepresentative of African Americans' interests since they typically constitute less than 20 percent of a state's population and are never even close to a majority of a state's population. In contrast to the House, there are no majority-African American districts where African American group interests may be especially well represented. Thus, the Senate may be an institution where minorities are especially underrepresented.⁵

⁴ The Senate also offers a comparison of the individual-level approach just described and the traditional, state-level approach. Fortunately, the GSS provides reliable state-level measures of African Americans' and whites' abortion opinions (generalizability coefficients are .88 and .96, respectively). Therefore, we can employ the traditional method, modeling Senators' votes as a function of their state's mean African American opinion and mean white opinion and compare the results with the individual-level results. This comparison is impossible in a study of the House simply because surveys cannot provide reliable district-level preferences. Comparing results from the traditional approach and our individual-level approach shows a great deal of consistency between the methods, lending credence to our approach (Reviewers see Additional Analyses).

⁵ A different view is that the apportionment of the Senate may encourage it to take greater account of the preferences of minority groups of all kinds (Dahl 1956; Lee and Oppenheimer 1999).

As a measure of Senators' *aggregate* voting behavior for each of the 105th to 107th Congresses, we use their W-NOMINATE coordinates, which range continuously from -1 to 1. This version of NOMINATE is appropriate since it permits variation in legislators' scores across terms served. Studies of congressional roll call voting have frequently employed these and alternative versions of NOMINATE scores as dependent variables (e.g., Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Bartels 2002). As a practical matter, W-NOMINATE coordinates are highly correlated with alternative, summary measures of legislator roll call behavior such as interest group ratings and Heckman-Snyder scores (Burden, Caldeira, and Groseclose 2000).

For measures of constituent opinion, we use the GSS ideological self-placement item from 1973-2000 (see Appendix A for GSS question wording). Since W-NOMINATE scores are continuous, we estimated these models using OLS. We map the roll call behavior of each of the respondent's Senators onto each GSS respondent's preferences. This results in models that contain two, and sometimes three, observations per respondent. To account for this relatively minor non-independence of observations, we cluster our estimations by respondent and report robust standard errors. We also weight these estimations using Census data to account for disparities between the GSS sample and actual state populations. Since our measure of correspondence does not specify causal direction, and Senators' voting behavior can influence constituency opinion (e.g., Gerber and Jackson 1992; Hill and Hurley 1999; Hurley and Hill 2003), we try to limit the possibility of reciprocal effects by only including GSS responses that were acquired prior to the relevant roll call or W-NOMINATE score. We also examine, separately, the behavior of first-term Senators, whose votes could not have shaped their constituents' preferences. All roll call and opinion measures are coded with conservative

alternatives higher, so positive estimates for white and African American opinion indicate positive correspondence. We describe additional variables as they arise in the analysis.⁶

Results

Before we examine the representation of these groups, we note that, as expected, African American and white GSS respondents differed significantly on the items we used (see Table 1). As a group, African Americans are significantly more liberal in their general orientation toward politics, and more supportive of increased federal spending on education, fighting crime, health care, welfare, and addressing racial inequality, yet more pro-life on abortion policy. Note that the substantial standard deviations for African Americans' opinions on all items point to important variation among African Americans. Studies relying only on demographic data necessarily overlook this substantial variation among African Americans, but by using survey data, our analysis will take these differences into account.

⁶ The GSS does not sample from Hawaii, Idaho, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, and South Dakota. We pooled the surveys over time to accumulate large enough samples of African Americans to conduct a parallel state-level analysis and to permit comparisons between states with large and small concentrations of African Americans. To check whether masking changes over time by pooling affected our results, we also ran the analyses with shorter data sets. Compared to the results from the pooled dataset, the coefficients changed a little, usually generating a larger gap between the coefficients for African American and white opinion. However, the standard errors are larger, which is to be expected from decreasing the sample size. Consequently, the p-values for tests of parameter equality rose substantially. In general, the truncated data tell much the same story the pooled data tell, but with less precision. Analyses with various truncated datasets point to the same conclusions we draw below.

Table 1
Racial Differences in Opinion

	<u>Whites</u>		<u>African Americans</u>		<i>Range</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	
Ideology	4.16	1.33	3.80	1.42	1-7
Abortion	1.34	0.33	1.42	0.34	1-2
<i>Increase federal spending on:</i>					
Education	1.49	0.65	1.28	0.49	1-3
Fighting Crime	1.37	0.59	1.29	0.57	1-3
Health Care	1.43	0.61	1.27	0.52	1-3
Race	1.99	0.71	1.20	0.44	1-3
Welfare	2.39	0.74	1.81	0.82	1-3

Data: GSS 1973-2000

All differences significant at the .0001 level.

All variables coded so conservative (pro-life, less spending) values are higher.

We begin our analysis of correspondence with a simple model of W-NOMINATE scores as a function of constituents' general ideology. These models provide a sort of raw measure of relative racial representation. They tell us, given all the factors that influence Senators' votes, the extent to which African Americans are underrepresented. These models indicate that, across the full spectrum of issues, African Americans' ideologies correspond much less with their Senators' behavior than do the ideologies of whites (see Table 2).⁷

⁷ We include respondent race in our models because we are essentially interacting race with opinion. The interpretation of its effect is complex. The coefficient tells us the effect of race when opinion equals zero. Since zero is always the more liberal position in our coding, if the race coefficient is positive, we can infer that liberal African Americans are represented by more conservative Senators than are equally liberal whites. Since interpretation of the coefficient varies with the values of opinion, making it cumbersome to discuss, and because it is of less interest than the opinion coefficients, we do not discuss it at length.

Table 2
Correspondence Between Ideology and Senator W-NOMINATE Scores, by Race

<i>Congress</i>	<i>105th</i>	<i>106th</i>	<i>107th</i>
White Ideology	0.035** [0.003]	0.037** [0.003]	0.036** [0.003]
Black Ideology	0.015* [0.007]	0.015* [0.007]	0.015* [0.006]
Race	0.098** [0.030]	0.080** [0.030]	0.076** [0.028]
Constant	-0.226** [0.012]	-0.269** [0.013]	-0.309** [0.013]
<i>Marginal Effects</i>	0.210 0.090	0.224 0.089	0.216 0.090
p - value	0.006	0.002	0.002
N	58,008	63,956	68,211

Robust standard errors in brackets; + denotes $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

P-values are from two-tailed hypothesis tests that the white and black ideology coefficients are equal.

Hypothesis tests for the equality of the African American and white ideology parameters show that whites were significantly better represented in all three congresses (see p-values in the bottom panel of Table 2). To compare the magnitude of the relationships between constituents' ideologies and their Senators' votes, we simulated the difference between the expected W-NOMINATE score of the most liberal whites' Senators and the most conservative whites' Senators. We then compare this to the difference in the expected score of the most liberal and most conservative African Americans' Senators. The difference between these marginal effects provides an indication of the degree to which Senators' votes correspond better with whites'

opinions.⁸ Over these three Senates, the magnitude of correspondence is dramatically greater for whites. The correspondence of African Americans' ideologies with their Senators' roll call decisions is only around 40 percent that of whites.⁹

Finding that African Americans are generally underrepresented compared to whites is itself novel and important. We discuss some of the normative and empirical implications of this evidence in the conclusion. In the next sections, we "unpack" this result in an effort to see what causes the disproportionate representation of racial groups.

Partisanship and Political Inequality

We begin with the selection of like-minded Senators as a path to preference-roll call correspondence. We first examine a familiar question in a unique way -- whether Senators' party affiliations mediate the effect of citizens' preferences in Senators' roll call decisions, closing the representation gap between racial groups. That is, do liberals elect Democrats, who then vote

⁸ Note that we are interested in the relative correspondence of whites' and African Americans' preferences more than the level of either marginal effect on its own. We could calculate this just as easily using a smaller increment than minimum (most liberal) to maximum (most conservative) shift in opinion. Marginal effects were simulated using CLARIFY (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003).

⁹ Because Senator voting may affect the answers of GSS respondents (e.g. Hill and Hurley 1999), we estimated another model like that reported in Table 2 for first-term Senators, pooled over the three Congresses. These Senators' votes had not yet had an opportunity to shape their constituents' preferences, so we can be confident that a model of their roll call decisions is not affected by endogeneity. We find that first-term Senators are responsive to white ideology but not to African American ideology [Reviewers see Table R-1].

liberally? We then move to the related question of whether liberal whites are better able than liberal African Americans to elect Democratic Senators.

If Senators' party affiliations play a mediating role, three conditions will be met: first, Senators' party affiliations must be related to their roll call behavior; second, accounting for this must decrease the effect of white/African American ideology on roll call voting; and third, white/African American ideology must predict Senators' party affiliations (Baron and Kenney 1984). To test the first two conditions, we re-estimated the models reported in Table 2, controlling for Senators' party affiliations (see first three columns of Table 3). In each Congress, Senator party predicts roll call decisions, and after accounting for Senators' party affiliations, the substantive difference between the effect of whites' and African Americans' ideologies becomes minute and statistically insignificant. The mediating effect of party explains virtually the entire representation gap.

To improve our understanding of how Senators' party affiliations close the representation gap, we examine whether white citizens' preferences predict their Senators' party affiliations better than do African Americans' preferences. If whites' preferences are better "matched" with their Senators' party affiliations, whites will be better represented even when Senators simply vote the "party line." To test this, we estimated a probit model of Senators' party affiliations, as a function of white and African American ideology and citizens' race (Table 3, last three columns). The results of these models show that liberal whites are more likely to be represented by Democrats than are conservative whites, but the same is not true for African Americans. Liberal African Americans are not any more likely than conservative African Americans to be

represented by Democrats. Moreover, the coefficient for whites' ideologies is two to three times the size of the coefficient for African Americans' ideologies.¹⁰

Table 3
The Role of Party Affiliation in African American Underrepresentation

Dependent Variable	W-NOMINATE Coordinate			Republican		
	<i>105th</i>	<i>106th</i>	<i>107th</i>	<i>105th</i>	<i>106th</i>	<i>107th</i>
<i>Congress</i>						
White Ideology	.008** [.001]	.006** [.001]	.009** [.001]	.053** [.005]	.055** [.005]	.051** [.005]
Black Ideology	.005** [.002]	.006** [.001]	.006** [.002]	.020 [.012]	.014 [.011]	.016 [.012]
Black	.025** [.008]	.023** [.006]	.046** [.009]	.142** [.052]	.099* [.049]	.054 [.053]
Republican	1.29** [.002]	1.46** [.001]	1.35** [.002]	---	---	---
Constant	-.769** [.003]	-.860** [.002]	-.762** [.003]	-.201** [.022]	-.237** [.022]	-.416** [.023]
p-value	.12	.68	.23	---	---	---
N	58,008	63,956	68,072	58,008	63,956	68,072

Robust standard errors in brackets; + denotes $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Issue Salience and Political Inequality

Senators' votes across all issues generally reflect their white constituents' preferences significantly more than those of their African American constituents. However, this may change

¹⁰ We also ruled out the possibility that our findings merely reflect Senators' responsiveness to co-partisans (e.g. Bullock and Brady 1983) by estimating separate models like those appearing in Table 2 for the Senators affiliated with each party. In these analyses, Senators of both parties were marginally more responsive to white ideology.

in specific issue domains.¹¹ Recall that the theoretical literature suggests that when issues are equally salient for whites and African Americans or more salient for whites, Senators should vote according to whites' preferences, but should consider favoring African Americans on issues disproportionately salient to them. To test this hypothesis, we examine votes in domains differentially salient to whites and African Americans — roll call votes on abortion policy and roll calls identified as “key votes” by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR). To identify abortion votes, we used the National Right to Life Committee's (NRLC) list of “key votes” on abortion. The NRLC has identified 26 "Key Votes" since 1996. These include 10 roll calls in the 105th Senate, 8 in the 106th, 1 in the 107th, and 7 in the 108th.¹² The LCCR designated 20 Key Votes, which generally dealt with social welfare issues (see Appendix B), in the 105th Senate, and 14 each in the 106th and 107th Senates.

While abortion is generally more salient to whites, the LCCR votes were on issues generally more salient to African Americans.¹³ To show this, we estimated probit models using pooled National Elections Studies data from 1974 to 2000, and found that African Americans

¹¹ In addition to examining relative representation in different domains, another methodological reason to examine specific domains is that the ideological scale's meaning is not always clear for African Americans, who tend to be liberal on economic issues and conservative on social issues (McClain and Stewart 2002, 66-70). Therefore, the ideology measure may be more “noisy” for African Americans, depressing the amount of estimated correspondence. The items on specific policies may be more meaningful and clear, presumably making them more comparable for whites and African Americans.

¹² A summary of the NRLC Key Votes can be provided by the authors on request. This is the one instance where our analysis extends slightly beyond the 105th - 107th Congresses.

¹³ A series of studies have relied on LCCR votes to identify roll calls disproportionately important to African Americans (e.g. Lublin 1997; Canon 1999).

were significantly less likely than whites to mention abortion as the nation's most important problem ($p < .01$). Of the 106 Respondents who identified abortion as the nation's most important problem, just 4 were African American. Additionally, multinomial logit models using pooled GSS data from 1972 to 1987 showed that African Americans were more likely than whites to indicate that abortion was "not important at all" as an issue to them ($p = .000+$). The LCCR votes we analyze concern social welfare and public order policies (e.g., unemployment, aid to education, health care, assistance for African Americans, racial integration, civil rights, crime). According to the NES, during our period of study nearly 60 percent of African Americans identified one of these issues as the nation's most pressing, while only 35 percent of whites did so. Therefore, we expect whites to be advantaged on abortion votes and African Americans to be better represented on LCCR votes.¹⁴

To estimate probit models of Senators' votes on these issues, we used GSS abortion items in models of the NRLC abortion votes, and GSS items related to civil rights and social welfare policies (attitudes toward increasing or decreasing federal spending to improve conditions for African Americans, education, health care, and welfare assistance, and to reduce crime) in models of LCCR votes.¹⁵ Where bills related to more than one GSS item, we estimated separate

¹⁴ Although abortion is less salient to African Americans, African Americans' opinions on abortion tend to be more conservative than those of whites (Jelen and Wilcox 2003). Since many African Americans are represented by Republican Senators, and Republicans generally advocate pro-life positions, this is one issue on which many African-Americans and Republicans agree, so perhaps African Americans will not be as severely underrepresented on abortion votes.

¹⁵ We excluded NRLC and LCCR votes for which there was no related opinion item. For example, we excluded NRLC votes not explicitly relating to abortion (e.g., votes on euthanasia or lobbying restrictions). To determine whether GSS items were sufficiently related to LCCR roll call votes, we

models for each relevant opinion item. All items were coded so the most conservative options were higher.

Table 4 presents results for the abortion votes. In every case, both groups' opinions were significantly related to Senators' votes. However, the parameter estimates for whites are almost always larger than those for African Americans. Tests of whether the coefficients for whites and African Americans differ show that Senators' votes corresponded significantly more with whites' than African Americans' opinions in 7 of the 25 votes (at the .05 level, 11 of 25 at the .10 level; see column second from right). In contrast, correspondence was never significantly greater for African Americans. For these probit models, the marginal effects report the difference in the probability that the most pro-life whites' (or African Americans') Senators voted in a pro-life fashion as compared to the most pro-choice whites' (African Americans') Senators. For the 7 votes where Senators corresponded with whites' opinions more, Senator correspondence with African Americans' opinions was on average about two-thirds that of whites'.¹⁶

independently rated the nexus for the roll calls and the GSS federal spending items from zero to five.

Only those roll calls receiving an average nexus rating of at least four were included in the analysis (see Appendix B for a list of LCCR votes and related GSS items).

¹⁶ We also modeled the same abortion roll calls using state-level means for white and African American opinion in the 32 states with more than 20 African Americans in the GSS sample (Reviewers see Table R-2). In this framework, whites' opinions were significantly related to Senators' votes for 14 of 25 votes at the .05 level and 19 of 25 votes at the .10 level. In contrast, African Americans' opinions were never related to votes at the .05 level and were related at the .10 level only twice. Thus, the results using the traditional method and our individual-level approach overlap considerably.

Table 4
Preference-Vote Correspondence on Senate Abortion Votes

<i>Senate RC #</i>	White Opinion	Black Opinion	Race	Constant	<i>Marginal Effects</i>		Test p-value	N
105th Congress								
<i>RC13</i>	0.41** [0.02]	0.42** [0.04]	0.00 [0.07]	-0.65** [0.03]	0.16	0.17	0.83	60,560
<i>RC71</i>	0.38** [0.02]	0.36** [0.05]	0.11 [0.07]	-0.32** [0.03]	0.15	0.14	0.56	60,560
<i>RC129</i>	0.42** [0.02]	0.48** [0.05]	-0.01 [0.08]	-0.45** [0.03]	0.16	0.18	0.26	60,560
<i>RC167</i>	0.41** [0.02]	0.37** [0.04]	0.09 [0.07]	-0.59** [0.03]	0.16	0.15	0.41	60,109
<i>RC190</i>	0.41** [0.02]	0.38** [0.04]	0.06 [0.07]	-0.57** [0.03]	0.16	0.15	0.57	60,085
<i>RC215</i>	0.33** [0.02]	0.22** [0.05]	0.12+ [0.07]	-0.75** [0.03]	0.13	0.08	0.03	60,414
<i>RC105</i>	0.40** [0.02]	0.41** [0.04]	-0.02 [0.07]	-0.55** [0.03]	0.16	0.16	0.82	60,560
<i>RC176</i>	0.46** [0.02]	0.38** [0.05]	0.10 [0.07]	-0.60** [0.03]	0.18	0.15	0.10	56,378
<i>RC277</i>	0.38** [0.02]	0.36** [0.05]	0.11 [0.08]	-0.32** [0.03]	0.15	0.14	0.62	60,560
<i>RC282</i>	0.36** [0.02]	0.33** [0.05]	0.05 [0.07]	-0.49** [0.03]	0.14	0.13	0.49	58,987
106th Congress								
<i>RC148</i>	0.44** [0.02]	0.39** [0.04]	0.06 [0.07]	-0.68** [0.03]	0.18	0.16	0.28	60,560
<i>RC197</i>	0.44** [0.02]	0.39** [0.04]	0.08 [0.07]	-0.68** [0.03]	0.18	0.15	0.23	60,117
<i>RC336</i>	0.43** [0.02]	0.41** [0.04]	0.01 [0.07]	-0.70** [0.03]	0.17	0.16	0.66	60,161
<i>RC337</i>	0.44** [0.02]	0.41** [0.04]	0.02 [0.07]	-0.71** [0.03]	0.17	0.16	0.63	60,033
<i>RC338</i>	0.45** [0.02]	0.41** [0.05]	0.00 [0.08]	-0.74** [0.03]	0.18	0.16	0.36	59,011
<i>RC340</i>	0.46** [0.02]	0.37** [0.05]	0.17* [0.07]	-0.45** [0.03]	0.18	0.15	0.08	59,011
<i>RC134</i>	0.44** [0.02]	0.39** [0.04]	0.06 [0.07]	-0.68** [0.03]	0.18	0.15	0.28	60,201
107th Congress								
<i>RC160</i>	0.42** [0.02]	0.28** [0.06]	0.17+ [0.09]	-1.04** [0.03]	0.15	0.09	0.02	53,477
108th Congress								
<i>RC47</i>	0.49** [0.02]	0.32** [0.05]	0.24** [0.08]	-0.69** [0.03]	0.20	0.13	0.00	59,844
<i>RC48</i>	0.44** [0.02]	0.32** [0.05]	0.23** [0.08]	-0.90** [0.03]	0.17	0.12	0.03	60,229
<i>RC49</i>	0.54** [0.02]	0.42** [0.06]	0.18** [0.09]	-0.70** [0.03]	0.21	0.17	0.06	58,326
<i>RC51</i>	0.55** [0.02]	0.43** [0.06]	0.21** [0.09]	-0.68** [0.03]	0.22	0.17	0.06	58,897
<i>RC192</i>	0.48** [0.02]	0.34** [0.05]	0.22** [0.08]	-0.77** [0.03]	0.19	0.13	0.01	59,963
<i>RC267</i>	0.51** [0.02]	0.40** [0.05]	0.17* [0.08]	-0.87** [0.03]	0.20	0.15	0.05	56,925
<i>RC402</i>	0.55** [0.02]	0.42** [0.06]	0.26** [0.09]	-0.75** [0.03]	0.22	0.17	0.04	57,971

Robust standard errors in brackets; + denotes $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

The story is much different for the LCCR votes. In many instances, Senators' votes were completely unrelated to preferences of both African Americans and whites (see Table 5). It is difficult to say whether this reflects a weaker nexus between these GSS survey items and the

LCCR roll calls than was the case for abortion and general ideology items, or a lesser degree of correspondence on these votes generally. In either case, since the items are the same for both groups, the relative correspondence of each group remains meaningful. On these LCCR measures, Senators' votes corresponded *more to African Americans' preferences* than to whites' preferences in 7 of 21 models, while they corresponded more to whites' preferences only twice. For these votes, on average, white opinion has virtually no connection to Senator behavior, but African Americans' opinions increased the probability of Senators casting "liberal" votes by about five percentage points.

Table 5
Preference-Vote Correspondence on LCCR Key Votes

<i>LCCR</i> <i>RC #</i>	White		Black		Race		Constant		<i>Marginal Effects</i>			N
	Opinion		Opinion						Whites	Blacks	p-value	
105th Congress, First Session												
<i>RC3</i>	-0.02	[0.01]	0.11**	[0.04]	-0.14**	[0.05]	-0.03	[0.02]	-0.01	0.09	0.00	48,934
<i>RC5</i>	0.07**	[0.01]	0.16**	[0.03]	-0.08	[0.05]	-0.99**	[0.02]	0.04	0.11	0.01	48,446
105th Congress, Second Session												
<i>RC5</i>	0.01	[0.01]	0.10*	[0.04]	-0.04	[0.06]	-0.84**	[0.02]	0.00	0.07	0.04	48,934
<i>RC8</i>	-0.02 ⁺	[0.01]	0.12**	[0.04]	-0.11 ⁺	[0.06]	0.08**	[0.02]	-0.02	0.09	0.00	47,152
106th Congress, First Session												
<i>RC2</i>	-0.01	[0.01]	0.04	[0.04]	-0.12*	[0.05]	-0.03	[0.02]	0.00	0.03	0.22	48,142
<i>RC8</i>	-0.01	[0.01]	0.06 ⁺	[0.04]	-0.13*	[0.05]	-0.05*	[0.02]	-0.01	0.05	0.04	46,792
<i>RC9</i>	-0.01	[0.01]	0.04	[0.03]	-0.09 ⁺	[0.05]	0.05*	[0.02]	-0.01	0.03	0.22	48,594
106th Congress, Second Session												
<i>RC3</i>	0.01	[0.01]	0.09**	[0.03]	-0.13*	[0.05]	-0.32**	[0.02]	0.01	0.07	0.03	47,970
107th Congress, First Session												
<i>RC3</i>	-0.02	[0.01]	0.04	[0.04]	-0.09	[0.05]	-0.26**	[0.02]	-0.01	0.03	0.15	48,296
<i>RC4</i>	0.08**	[0.01]	0.10*	[0.05]	-0.04	[0.07]	-0.39**	[0.03]	0.06	0.08	0.64	45,840
<i>RC5</i>	-0.02	[0.01]	0.04	[0.04]	0.01	[0.06]	-0.13**	[0.02]	-0.01	0.03	0.20	48,296
<i>RC5</i>	0.07**	[0.01]	0.12**	[0.04]	0.04	[0.06]	-0.27**	[0.02]	0.06	0.09	0.28	48,078
<i>RC5</i>	0.12**	[0.01]	0.11*	[0.05]	0.18**	[0.07]	-0.39**	[0.03]	0.09	0.08	0.82	45,840
<i>RC5</i>	0.00	[0.01]	-0.06*	[0.02]	0.20**	[0.06]	-0.16**	[0.03]	0.00	-0.05	0.02	47,676

<i>RC6</i>	-0.01	[0.01]	0.05	[0.04]	-0.11 ⁺	[0.06]	-0.14 ^{**}	[0.02]	-0.01	0.04	0.11	45,906
<i>RC7</i>	-0.03 [*]	[0.01]	0.07 ⁺	[0.04]	-0.21 ^{**}	[0.06]	-0.56 ^{**}	[0.02]	-0.02	0.05	0.02	45,592
<i>RC8</i>	-0.01	[0.01]	0.06	[0.04]	-0.14 ^{**}	[0.05]	-0.21 ^{**}	[0.02]	-0.01	0.05	0.10	47,715
<i>RC9</i>	0.01	[0.01]	-0.08 ^{**}	[0.02]	0.19 ^{**}	[0.06]	0.14 ^{**}	[0.03]	0.00	-0.06	0.00	47,274
<i>RC9</i>	0.10 ^{**}	[0.01]	0.10 [*]	[0.04]	0.12 [*]	[0.06]	-0.04 ⁺	[0.02]	0.08	0.07	0.95	45,463
<i>RC9</i>	-0.01	[0.01]	0.01	[0.04]	0.02	[0.06]	0.16 ^{**}	[0.02]	0.00	0.01	0.62	47,885
<i>RC9</i>	0.06 ^{**}	[0.01]	0.08 [*]	[0.04]	0.04	[0.05]	0.06 ^{**}	[0.02]	0.05	0.06	0.78	47,673

Robust standard errors in brackets; ⁺ denotes $p < .10$; ^{*} $p < .05$; ^{**} $p < .01$

It is instructive to note the measures on which roll call voting better reflected African Americans' preferences. Although the LCCR identifies votes it deems crucial to the advancement and protection of civil rights, which means many of its key votes will be disproportionately salient to African Americans, some LCCR votes may also be salient to whites. We would expect African American preferences to be better reflected on votes more specifically salient to minorities. In large measure, this is the case. African Americans' preferences were better reflected in votes on funding for local public schools, health insurance for low-income children, programs addressing school dropout problems, programs designed to attract better public school teachers, and hate crime legislation, all of which impinge disproportionately on the lives of minorities. In contrast, the measures of broadest salience, the two tax cut votes in the 107th Congress (LCCR roll calls 5 and 9), were the only two measures where Senators' votes reflected whites' preferences significantly more than African Americans'.¹⁷ Thus, in general, on issues that are particularly salient to African Americans, they are often better represented.

As Fiorina (1974) notes, when an issue is disproportionately salient to disparate groups, vote maximizing representatives must consider both the salience of the issue to the groups and

¹⁷ Note that if we exclude the tax cut models and only consider the other measures that may be more disproportionately salient to African Americans, African Americans' preferences are significantly better represented in just over half the remaining votes (7 of 13).

the size of the groups. The larger the intense minority, the greater influence it should exert. This theoretical claim resonates with studies of the House demonstrating that under some circumstances, Representatives who hail from districts with larger African American populations vote more liberally and/or receive more favorable LCCR ratings (e.g. Cameron et al. 1996). Others also show that districts with significant African American populations are more likely to be represented by Democrats (Grofman, Griffin, and Glazer 1992). We examined whether the preferences of African Americans who reside in states with sizeable African American populations better predict their Senators' voting decisions on nonsalient and salient issues.

To do so, we estimated models for states where African Americans comprise at least as large a percentage of the population as they do in Texas (17 states), the Southern state with the smallest percentage of African Americans (11.5 percent). We only summarize the results due to space constraints. [Reviewers see Tables R-3 to R-6]. In both domains, African Americans' preferences are better reflected in states where they comprise a sizeable minority. In states with large African American populations, African Americans are significantly better represented than whites on LCCR votes, but are only represented equally well in states with fewer African Americans. Similarly, African Americans in states with larger African American populations were represented roughly equally on abortion votes, but in states with fewer African Americans, they are significantly underrepresented on abortion votes. On abortion votes, the average correspondence for African Americans was about half that of whites in states with few African Americans, but about equal in states with many African Americans. On LCCR votes, African Americans' views rarely corresponded with Senators' decisions in states with small African

American populations, but their correspondence was about eight times that of whites in states with sizeable African American populations.¹⁸

Conclusion

We have investigated the extent to which African Americans are underrepresented compared to whites, in the sense that their preferences correspond less with their Senators' voting decisions. We found that African Americans are severely underrepresented across the broad range of Senators' voting behavior, such that liberal African Americans are not much more likely than their conservative counterparts to be represented by a liberal Senator. The reason whites are better represented is that liberal whites are more likely to be represented by Democratic Senators, while the same cannot be said for liberal African Americans. Moreover, African Americans are better represented on issues differentially salient for them, and are underrepresented on issues

¹⁸ We also tested whether the preferences of African Americans who resided in states with significant African American populations were more likely to predict their Senators' party affiliations and aggregate roll call behavior. We found that in states with larger African American populations, the likelihood that a liberal African American would be represented by a Democratic Senator was nearly half that of whites, while in states with smaller African American populations the likelihood was only a tenth that of whites. Representation also is quite a bit more equal in states with large African American populations. African Americans' ideological views were reflected in Senator voting patterns in states with relatively large concentrations of African Americans, but not in states with few African Americans. In states with smaller African American populations, correspondence is only about a tenth that of whites, compared to nearly one-half that of whites in states with larger concentrations of African Americans. It is important to note, however, that although African Americans are *more* equally represented in states where they constitute a significant portion of the population, they remain significantly underrepresented even in those states.

less salient for them, issues such as abortion, and issues equally salient for whites and African Americans, such as tax cuts.

As noted above, readers' normative reactions to these findings will depend on their views of minority representation. On one hand, although during the period of study African Americans comprised less than 35 percent of any state's population, their views were reflected in Senators' votes by about half to two-thirds the degree of whites' preferences. Further, on issues of greatest concern to African Americans, their views were often reflected more than their white counterparts' views. On the other hand, some may contend that African Americans' preferences ought to be more equally reflected in votes on all policies, not just those most view as especially important to the African American community.

Despite the fact that the results will strike readers differently, the empirical evidence informs discussions of race and representation and reforms designed to balance the representation of these racial groups. These results build a firmer foundation for studies that investigate avenues to enhance the representation of African Americans (e.g., Swain 1993; Mansbridge 1999; Tate 2003). Simply put, we show that African Americans really are underrepresented, which provides an empirical basis for such studies. However, future efforts should take into account our evidence that African Americans are not underrepresented in all issue domains.

This analysis has shown that the re-election incentive helps to protect minority rights. Although Dahl (1956) concluded that it is impossible to forge constitutional guarantees that intense minorities will influence policy, we show that the electoral incentives outlined by Downs and Fiorina, which compel elected officials to consider the salience of issues for various groups of voters, largely solves "the intensity problem." Finding that correspondence with groups'

preferences varies by salience of the issue domain reinforces earlier findings that the connection between constituency preferences and representatives' votes is stronger for salient issues. More importantly, it shows a further implication of the importance of salience—different groups are represented in different issue domains, just as pluralistic models of democracy suggest. One way for African Americans to improve their political equality, then, is to identify and work on behalf of concerns important to the African American community and convey to office holders that those issues are indeed salient.

Our results also suggest that African Americans' minority status contributes to the gap in representation. Thus, increasing the concentration of African Americans in electoral districts may make representation more racially equitable. Here, the Senate limits both our conclusions and prospects for reform. We found that African Americans are less underrepresented in states where they constitute at least 11.5 percent of the population, but our analyses cannot say what happens when African Americans constitute a majority, or near majority, in electoral districts. We simply cannot answer this question in the context of the Senate. We plan to explore this question by looking at the House, which will shed light on institutional differences in the representation of minority interests. Politically, if equalizing African Americans' representation requires increasing the concentration of African Americans in districts, the racial balance of representation may remain fairly fixed in the Senate since district lines cannot be redrawn and African Americans seem unlikely to increase their state concentrations through their residential decisions. Thus, to the extent that African American representation depends on district racial composition, little is likely to change in the near future in the Senate.

Finally, these findings advance our understanding of why African Americans are less likely to vote in elections (e.g., Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Citizens generally are less

likely to vote if they feel less "externally" efficacious (Abramson and Aldrich 1982), and African Americans feel less efficacious than do whites (e.g., Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Our results provide a reason for this — African Americans are less well represented. Thus, underrepresentation may depress turnout among African Americans.

We provide a picture of the overall disparity in representation between two racial groups. The extent to which Senators reflect these groups' preferences varies across issues and state racial contexts, but generally works to African Americans' disadvantage. We identify two sources of this inequality, but future work should continue to isolate the causes of unequal representation.

Appendix

A. Question Wording of General Social Survey

Abortion: Following Brace, et al. (2002), we measure opinion as a respondent's mean response to the following questions:

Please tell me whether or not you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if:

Defect: there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby.

No More Children: she is married and does not want any more children.

Health: the woman's own health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy.

Poor: the family has a very low income and cannot afford any more children.

Rape: she became pregnant as a result of rape.

Single: she is not married and does not want to marry the man.

Ideology: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal--point 1--to extremely conservative-- point 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

Spending (LCCR) items: All items used in LCCR models ask respondents: "We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount."

Crime: "halting the rising crime rate"

Education: "improving the nation's education system"

Health care: "improving and protecting the nation's health"

Race: “improving the conditions of blacks”

Welfare: “welfare”

B. Brief Description of LCCR Roll Call Votes and Associated GSS Items

<i>Date</i>	<i>Roll Call #</i> <i>Senate LCCR</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>GSS Item</i>	<i>Brief Description</i>	
<i>105th Congress, First Session</i>					
9.11.97	232	3	Labor/HHS Appropriations	Education	Measure to award funds for elementary and secondary education programs directly to local agencies.
6.26.97	135	5	Revenue Reconciliation	Health	Provision of \$48 billion to states to expand health insurance coverage for low-income children.
<i>105th Congress, Second Session</i>					
4.23.98	101	5	Education Savings Act	Education	Amendment to provide assistance to address school dropout problems
4.21.98	86	8	Education Savings Act	Education	Authorize \$7.2 million for a federal program to forgive \$8,000 in unpaid student loans for college graduates who become public school teachers.
<i>106th Congress, First Session</i>					
10.7.99	317	2	Education Accountability	Education	Measure to direct \$200 million of education funds for states and local school districts to implement accountability provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
5.5.99	101	8	Financial Services Modernization Act	Education	Amendment to establish a national grant program to help schools create dropout prevention programs.
3.11.99	47	9	Education	Education	Allows participating states to waive

Flexibility
Partnership
Act

federal rules usually required to use federal education funds. Wellstone (D-MN) amendment would only authorize a waiver of Title I of the ESEA, if the school serves at least thirty-five percent of children from low-income families.

106th Congress, Second Session

6.20.00	136	3	Hate Crimes Prevention Act	Crime	Kennedy/Smith amendment to strengthen current hate crimes law against race-color-religion or national origin-based crimes and extend the law to cover crimes motivated by gender, sexual orientation and disability.
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107th Congress, First Session

4.4.01	69	3	Budget Resolution	Education	Harkin amendment to reduce tax cut to increase education spending
5.9.01	96	4	Community Technology Centers	Race	Create community technology centers to provide residents of economically distressed communities access to information technology and training.
5.10.01	98	5	Budget Resolution/ Tax Cut	Education, Health, Race, Welfare	Tax cuts limiting increases in various domestic programs
5.10.01	99	6	Student Testing	Education	Authorization of funding to help states ensure quality testing and allow for consideration of multiple measures rather than single tests in evaluating schools and students.
5.10.01	100	7	Bilingual Education	Education	Authorization of \$750 million for bilingual education programs.
5.15.01	103	8	Class Size Reduction	Education	Spend \$7.1 billion to reduce class size by hiring more teachers
5.26.01	107	9	Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001	Education, Health, Race, Welfare	Vote on conference bill to cut taxes, limiting increases in various domestic programs

Additional Analyses for Reviewers

This section discusses additional analyses referred to in the text but omitted for space concerns. As noted, one important methodological reason we examine the Senate is to compare our individual-level analysis of correspondence to more traditional, state-level (or district-level), analyses of responsiveness, where legislators' behavior is modeled as a function of district/state mean opinion (e.g., Miller and Stokes 1963; Achen 1978; Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993; Hill and Hurley 1999). To compare the two approaches, we used the same data, the GSS. Although the GSS does not draw state-level samples, Brace, et al. (2002) found that it produces highly reliable measures of state opinion. However, as mentioned, state-level means for African American and white opinion in most domains is unreliable, but the GSS does provide reliable measures for abortion opinion (generalizability coefficients are .88 and .96 for African Americans and whites respectively). We used the GSS abortion items pooled from 1973-2000 to model Senators' NRLC roll call votes.¹⁹

As Table R-2 shows, the state-level and individual-level approaches reach similar conclusions. Whites' opinions were significantly related to Senators' votes in 14 of 25 votes at the .05 level and 19 of 25 votes at the .10 level. In contrast, African Americans' opinions were never related to votes at the .05 level and were related at the .10 level only twice. For every vote

¹⁹ Erikson, Wright, and McIver (1993) similarly pooled individual survey data over time to measure state-level opinion. Average state sample sizes in the GSS were 751 and 138 for whites and African Americans respectively. States with fewer than 20 African Americans in the sample were excluded from the state-level analysis. Recall that the GSS does not sample in six states and 12 states sampled fewer than 20 African Americans, leaving 32 states in the analysis. Only pre-roll call respondents were included in the models to minimize the impact of Senators' votes on constituent opinion.

registering a significant difference in correspondence at the individual-level, in the traditional framework white opinion was significantly related to Senators' votes and African Americans' opinions were not. In fact, since the traditional framework found more significant substantive and statistical differences between whites and African Americans, the individual-level correspondence approach may actually be more conservative, suggesting that disparities in representation we find elsewhere in this analysis may be even greater than estimated. These results lend credence to the findings our approach generates.

The remaining tables report the full results described in the text. Table R-1 presents a NOMINATE model for first-term Senators. Tables R-3 and R-4 present the abortion votes for states with large and small African American populations. Tables R-5 and R-6 present the results for LCCR votes in the same way.

Table R-1
Correspondence Between Ideology and Senator W-NOMINATE Scores,
First-Term Senators

White Ideology	0.016** [0.004]
Black Ideology	0.006 [0.006]
Race	-0.019 [0.029]
Constant	-0.448** [0.015]
N	23,970

Robust standard errors in brackets; + denotes $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table R-2
State-Level Models of Senate Abortion Votes

<i>Senate RC #</i>	White		African American		Constant	<i>Marginal Effects</i>		N	
	Opinion		Opinion			Whites	Blacks		
105th Congress									
<i>RC13</i>	6.29 ⁺	[3.70]	5.66 ⁺	[3.02]	-16.61 ^{**}	[4.48]	0.49	0.54	58
<i>RC71</i>	5.99	[3.66]	3.16	[2.98]	-12.18 ^{**}	[3.94]	0.44	0.30	58
<i>RC129</i>	5.81	[3.71]	4.28	[3.00]	-13.60 ^{**}	[4.00]	0.44	0.40	58
<i>RC167</i>	8.54 [*]	[3.85]	1.83	[3.07]	-14.07 ^{**}	[4.13]	0.63	0.18	57
<i>RC190</i>	5.57	[3.65]	3.31	[2.93]	-12.06 ^{**}	[3.90]	0.43	0.33	57
<i>RC215</i>	7.11 ⁺	[3.74]	2.05	[2.99]	-12.84 ^{**}	[4.08]	0.51	0.22	58
<i>RC105</i>	6.66 ⁺	[3.69]	5.07 ⁺	[3.01]	-16.20 ^{**}	[4.41]	0.51	0.48	58
<i>RC176</i>	12.83 ^{**}	[4.40]	0.36	[3.56]	-17.71 ^{**}	[4.68]	0.80	0.04	53
<i>RC277</i>	5.99	[3.66]	3.16	[2.98]	-12.18 ^{**}	[3.94]	0.44	0.30	58
<i>RC282</i>	5.16	[3.67]	3.24	[2.99]	-11.50 ^{**}	[3.85]	0.40	0.34	57
106th Congress									
<i>RC148</i>	9.55 [*]	[3.91]	0.87	[3.11]	-14.12 ^{**}	[4.12]	0.68	0.08	58
<i>RC197</i>	5.73	[3.60]	2.23	[2.91]	-10.86 ^{**}	[3.80]	0.44	0.25	57
<i>RC336</i>	6.28 ⁺	[3.65]	3.48	[2.95]	-13.49 ^{**}	[4.10]	0.50	0.35	57
<i>RC337</i>	6.28 ⁺	[3.65]	3.48	[2.95]	-13.49 ^{**}	[4.10]	0.50	0.34	57
<i>RC338</i>	8.19 [*]	[3.88]	3.85	[3.13]	-16.67 ^{**}	[4.62]	0.60	0.39	57
<i>RC340</i>	8.33 [*]	[3.87]	1.97	[3.21]	-13.59 ^{**}	[4.05]	0.56	0.20	57
<i>RC134</i>	9.58 [*]	[3.93]	0.62	[3.13]	-13.83 ^{**}	[4.12]	0.69	0.05	57
107th Congress									
<i>RC160</i>	11.36 [*]	[4.47]	0.01	[3.50]	-15.65 ^{**}	[4.78]	0.72	0.02	52
108th Congress									
<i>RC47</i>	16.15 ^{**}	[4.69]	-2.82	[3.62]	-17.61 ^{**}	[4.77]	0.89	-0.28	56
<i>RC48</i>	14.15 ^{**}	[4.64]	-0.98	[3.51]	-17.86 ^{**}	[4.91]	0.84	-0.09	57
<i>RC49</i>	21.10 ^{**}	[5.31]	-2.02	[4.05]	-25.15 ^{**}	[6.11]	0.94	-0.18	54
<i>RC51</i>	16.56 ^{**}	[4.60]	-1.26	[3.74]	-20.06 ^{**}	[4.94]	0.87	-0.11	55
<i>RC192</i>	14.85 ^{**}	[4.61]	-1.73	[3.54]	-17.62 ^{**}	[4.76]	0.86	-0.17	57
<i>RC267</i>	14.76 ^{**}	[4.87]	-1.85	[3.71]	-17.42 ^{**}	[4.86]	0.85	-0.18	54
<i>RC402</i>	15.45 ^{**}	[4.48]	-1.81	[3.61]	-17.76 ^{**}	[4.43]	0.85	-0.19	56

Robust standard errors in brackets; ⁺ denotes p < .10; ^{*} p < .05; ^{**} p < .01

Table R-3
Abortion Votes, States with Large African American Populations

RC#	White Opinion		Black Opinion		Race		Constant		<i>Marginal Effects</i>		P-value	N
									Whites	Blacks		
105th Congress												
rc13	.31**	[.03]	.42**	[.05]	-.29**	[.08]	-.33**	[.04]	.12	.16	.05	30,702
rc71	.23**	[.03]	.29**	[.06]	-.13	[.09]	.10*	[.04]	.08	.10	.33	30,702
rc129	.31**	[.03]	.45**	[.05]	-.29**	[.09]	-0.03	[.04]	.11	.14	.02	30,702
rc167	.30**	[.03]	.35**	[.04]	-.17*	[.07]	-.22**	[.04]	.12	.13	.36	30,251
rc190	.32**	[.03]	.35**	[.05]	-.16*	[.08]	-.26**	[.04]	.12	.13	.50	30,702
rc215	.33**	[.03]	.20**	[.05]	-.01	[.09]	-.59**	[.04]	.13	.08	.03	30,702
rc105	.32**	[.03]	.40**	[.05]	-.24**	[.08]	-.28**	[.04]	.13	.15	.16	30,702
rc176	.32**	[.03]	.38**	[.05]	-.22**	[.08]	-.28**	[.04]	.13	.14	.27	30,330
rc277	.23**	[.03]	.29**	[.06]	-.13	[.09]	.10*	[.04]	.08	.10	.33	30,702
rc282	.29**	[.03]	.30**	[.05]	-.16 ⁺	[.08]	-.23**	[.04]	.11	.12	.90	30,702
106th Congress												
rc148	.38**	[.03]	.44**	[.05]	-.19*	[.08]	-.48**	[.04]	.15	.17	.27	30,702
rc197	.37**	[.03]	.41**	[.05]	-.15 ⁺	[.08]	-.47**	[.04]	.15	.16	.47	30,702
rc336	.37**	[.03]	.46**	[.05]	-.24**	[.08]	-.54**	[.04]	.15	.18	.09	30,702
rc337	.37**	[.03]	.46**	[.05]	-.24**	[.08]	-.54**	[.04]	.15	.18	.09	30,702
rc338	.43**	[.03]	.48**	[.05]	-.18 ⁺	[.09]	-.71**	[.04]	.17	.19	.49	29,383
rc340	.33**	[.03]	.36**	[.05]	-.05	[.08]	-.22**	[.04]	.13	.14	.58	29,383
rc134	.38**	[.03]	.44**	[.05]	-.19*	[.08]	-.48**	[.04]	.15	.17	.27	30,702
107th Congress												
rc160	.37**	[.03]	.34**	[.07]	.12	[.11]	-1.1**	[.05]	.12	.11	.70	25,305
108th Congress												
rc47	.45**	[.03]	.36**	[.06]	.13	[.10]	-.66**	[.05]	.18	.14	.20	30,583
rc48	.39**	[.03]	.37**	[.05]	.13	[.09]	-.90**	[.04]	.15	.14	.78	30,583
rc49	.51**	[.04]	.47**	[.07]	.09	[.11]	-.67**	[.05]	.20	.19	.62	29,636
rc51	.51**	[.04]	.48**	[.07]	.11	[.11]	-.65**	[.05]	.20	.19	.68	29,636
rc192	.45**	[.03]	.36**	[.06]	.12	[.10]	-.71**	[.05]	.18	.14	.19	30,702
rc267	.46**	[.03]	.46**	[.06]	-.06	[.10]	-.74**	[.05]	.18	.18	.93	27,664
rc402	.51**	[.03]	.47**	[.07]	.18 ⁺	[.11]	-.76**	[.05]	.20	.19	.62	28,113

Robust standard errors in brackets

Avg. .14 .15

⁺ denotes p < .10; * p < .05; ** denotes p < .01

Table R-4
Abortion Votes, States with Small African American Populations

RC#	White Opinion		Black Opinion		Race		Constant	<i>Marginal Effects</i>			N	
								Whites	Blacks	p-value		
105th Congress												
rc13	.50**	[.03]	.37**	[.10]	.29*	[.14]	-.94**	[.04]	.19	.14	.20	29,858
rc71	.51**	[.03]	.38**	[.11]	.18	[.16]	-.68**	[.04]	.20	.15	.27	29,858
rc129	.52**	[.03]	.39**	[.10]	.2	[.14]	-.82**	[.04]	.20	.15	.20	29,858
rc167	.50**	[.03]	.30**	[.10]	.31*	[.15]	-.91**	[.04]	.20	.11	.07	29,858
rc190	.48**	[.03]	.36**	[.10]	.22	[.14]	-.84**	[.04]	.19	.14	.26	29,383
rc215	.33**	[.03]	.31**	[.09]	.16	[.13]	-.90**	[.04]	.12	.11	.81	29,712
rc105	.45**	[.03]	.36**	[.10]	.18	[.14]	-.78**	[.04]	.18	.14	.35	29,858
rc176	.59**	[.03]	.34**	[.12]	.41*	[.18]	-.91**	[.05]	.23	.13	.06	26,048
rc277	.51**	[.03]	.38**	[.11]	.18	[.16]	-.68**	[.04]	.20	.15	.27	29,858
rc282	.41**	[.03]	.38**	[.11]	.16	[.16]	-.72**	[.04]	.16	.15	.75	28,285
106th Congress												
rc148	.50**	[.03]	.23*	[.11]	.42**	[.15]	-.85**	[.04]	.20	.08	.02	29,858
rc197	.50**	[.03]	.29**	[.10]	.38**	[.14]	-.87**	[.04]	.20	.10	.04	29,415
rc336	.49**	[.03]	.28**	[.10]	.38**	[.14]	-.86**	[.04]	.19	.10	.04	29,459
rc337	.49**	[.03]	.28**	[.10]	.39**	[.14]	-.87**	[.04]	.19	.10	.04	29,331
rc338	.47**	[.03]	.30**	[.10]	.30*	[.15]	-.76**	[.04]	.19	.11	.09	29,628
rc340	.56**	[.03]	.38**	[.12]	.33*	[.17]	-.65**	[.04]	.22	.15	.14	29,628
rc134	.50**	[.03]	.21*	[.10]	.44**	[.15]	-.87**	[.04]	.20	.08	.01	29,499
107th Congress												
rc160	.46**	[.03]	.22*	[.10]	.32*	[.15]	-.99**	[.04]	.17	.07	.03	28,172
108th Congress												
rc47	.54**	[.03]	.25*	[.11]	.43*	[.17]	-.73**	[.04]	.21	.09	.02	29,261
rc48	.49**	[.03]	.24*	[.10]	.45**	[.15]	-.92**	[.04]	.19	.08	.02	29,646
rc49	.57**	[.03]	.27*	[.11]	.41*	[.17]	-.72**	[.04]	.22	.11	.01	28,690
rc51	.59**	[.03]	.31**	[.12]	.44*	[.18]	-.71**	[.05]	.23	.12	.03	29,261
rc192	.50**	[.03]	.23*	[.10]	.40**	[.15]	-.83**	[.04]	.20	.08	.01	29,261
rc267	.55**	[.03]	.24*	[.11]	.50**	[.15]	-.98**	[.04]	.21	.08	.01	29,261
rc402	.59**	[.03]	.32**	[.12]	.45**	[.17]	-.74**	[.05]	.23	.12	.03	29,858

Robust standard errors in brackets

Avg. .20 .11

+ denotes p < .10; * p < .05; ** denotes p < .01

Table R-5
LCCR Key Votes, States with Large African American Populations

RC#	White Opinion		Black Opinion		Race	Constant	<i>Marginal Effects</i>			N		
							Whites	Blacks	P-value			
105th Congress, 1st Session												
rc3	.00	[.01]	.14**	[.04]	-.29**	[.06]	.12**	[.03]	.00	.11	.00	24,700
rc5	.10**	[.02]	.16**	[.04]	-.13*	[.06]	-.90**	[.03]	.06	.11	.16	24,640
105th Congress, 2nd Session												
rc5	-.04*	[.02]	.13**	[.05]	-.13 ⁺	[.07]	-.80**	[.03]	-.02	.09	.00	24,700
rc8	-.01	[.02]	.16**	[.04]	-.31**	[.07]	.34**	[.03]	.00	.10	.00	23,019
106th Congress, 1st Session												
rc2	.01	[.01]	.10*	[.04]	-.21**	[.06]	-.02	[.02]	.01	.08	.03	24,700
rc8	.01	[.02]	.12**	[.04]	-.24**	[.06]	-.02	[.03]	.01	.09	.01	22,558
rc9	.00	[.01]	.08*	[.04]	-.15**	[.06]	.02	[.02]	.00	.06	.04	24,700
106th Congress, 2nd Session												
rc3	.02	[.02]	.10*	[.04]	-.20**	[.06]	-.19**	[.03]	.01	.08	.05	24,408
107th Congress												
rc3	.01	[.02]	.09*	[.04]	-.18**	[.06]	-.23**	[.03]	.01	.07	.06	24,700
rc4	.06**	[.02]	.20**	[.06]	-.20*	[.08]	-.38**	[.04]	.04	.16	.01	23,730
rc5	-.02	[.02]	.08 ⁺	[.05]	-.06	[.07]	-.08**	[.03]	-.01	.06	.05	24,700
rc5	.14**	[.02]	.12**	[.04]	.11	[.07]	-.31**	[.03]	.11	.10	.76	24,640
rc5	.11**	[.02]	.21**	[.05]	.04	[.08]	-.33**	[.04]	.09	.16	.08	23,730
rc5	-.01	[.02]	-.07*	[.03]	.18*	[.07]	-.08*	[.04]	-.01	-.06	.06	24,396
rc6	.00	[.02]	.11*	[.05]	-.18**	[.07]	-.20**	[.03]	.00	.09	.02	24,700
rc7	-.02	[.02]	.13**	[.05]	-.21**	[.08]	-.76**	[.03]	-.01	.09	.00	24,386
rc8	.00	[.02]	.12*	[.05]	-.22**	[.07]	-.24**	[.03]	.00	.10	.02	24,119
rc9	.01	[.02]	-.10**	[.03]	.28**	[.07]	.02	[.04]	.00	-.08	.00	24,396
rc9	.13**	[.02]	.18**	[.06]	.14 ⁺	[.08]	-.23**	[.04]	.10	.13	.37	23,730
rc9	-.01	[.02]	.06	[.05]	-.01	[.07]	.05 ⁺	[.03]	-.01	.05	.13	24,700
rc9	.12**	[.02]	.11*	[.05]	.12 ⁺	[.07]	-.14**	[.03]	.09	.09	.91	24,640

Robust standard errors in brackets

Avg. .02 .08

⁺ denotes p < .10; * p < .05; ** denotes p < .01

Table R-6
LCCR Key Votes, States with Small African American Populations

RC#	White Opinion		Black Opinion		Race		Constant	<i>Marginal Effects</i>		p-value	N	
								Whites	Blacks			
105th Congress, 1st Session												
rc3	-.02	[.02]	-.01	[.08]	.05	[.10]	-.18**	[.03]	-.02	.00	0.83	24,234
rc5	.02	[.02]	.12	[.08]	-.07	[.11]	-1.07**	[.04]	.01	.07	.22	23,806
105th Congress, 2nd Session												
rc5	.04*	[.02]	.02	[.08]	.12	[.11]	-.87**	[.03]	.02	.02	.06	24,234
rc8	-.02	[.02]	-.01	[.08]	.08	[.10]	-.16**	[.03]	-.01	-.01	.96	24,133
106th Congress, 1st Session												
rc2	-.01	[.02]	-.12	[.08]	.11	[.11]	-.03	[.03]	-.01	-.09	.21	23,442
rc8	-.03 ⁺	[.02]	-.07	[.08]	.08	[.10]	-.07*	[.03]	-.02	-.05	.61	24,234
rc9	-.01	[.02]	-.07	[.08]	.09	[.11]	.07*	[.03]	-.01	-.06	.52	23,894
106th Congress, 2nd Session												
rc3	.02	[.02]	.04	[.07]	-.16	[.10]	-0.48**	[.03]	.01	.03	.77	23,562
107th Congress												
rc3	-.03 ⁺	[.02]	-.13 ⁺	[.07]	.14	[.10]	-.30**	[.03]	-.02	-.08	.20	23,596
rc4	.10**	[.02]	-.21*	[.09]	.47**	[.12]	-.40**	[.04]	.08	-.13	.00	22,110
rc5	-.01	[.02]	-.12	[.08]	.15	[.11]	-.19**	[.03]	-.01	-.08	.18	23,596
rc5	.01	[.02]	.06	[.07]	-.04	[.10]	-.23**	[.03]	.01	.05	.48	23,438
rc5	.11**	[.02]	-.25**	[.09]	.53**	[.12]	-.43**	[.04]	.09	-.15	.00	22,110
rc5	.01	[.02]	-.03	[.05]	.09	[.10]	-.24**	[.04]	.01	-.02	.45	23,280
rc6	-.03	[.02]	-.10	[.07]	.19 ⁺	[.10]	-.06*	[.03]	-.02	-.07	.34	21,206
rc7	-.05**	[.02]	-.03	[.06]	.02	[.08]	-.34**	[.03]	-.04	-.02	.78	21,206
rc8	-.02	[.02]	-.10	[.08]	.11	[.11]	-.17**	[.03]	-.02	-.07	.34	23,596
rc9	.01	[.01]	-.04	[.03]	.21**	[.08]	.25**	[.03]	.01	-.03	.20	22,878
rc9	.09**	[.01]	-.16**	[.06]	.50**	[.08]	.10**	[.03]	.07	-.13	.00	21,733
rc9	-.01	[.01]	-.09	[.06]	.23**	[.08]	.29**	[.02]	-.01	-.07	.15	23,185
rc9	.01	[.01]	.00	[.05]	.14 ⁺	[.08]	.26**	[.02]	.01	.00	.85	23,033

Robust standard errors in brackets

Avg. .01 -.04

⁺ denotes p < .10; * p < .05; ** denotes p < .01

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