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White Residents, Black Incumbents, and a Declining Racial Divide

Zoltan L. Hajnal¹

ABSTRACT

Despite the hopes of the civil rights movement, evidence of the impact of black representation on the well-being of the black community has been limited. By focusing on the white rather than the black community, this article indicates that black representation can have a profound impact. Under black mayors there is fundamental change in the white vote and the racial sentiments expressed by members of the white electorate. With the exception of white Republicans, who are largely immune to the impact of black incumbency, experience with black mayoral leadership leads to decreased racial tension, greater racial sympathy, and increased support of black representation.

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Two questions have commanded much of the attention of scholars interested in black political representation in the United States. The first asks whether white Americans will vote for black candidates (and why or why not this is the case). The second asks whether black representatives, once elected, can improve the economic standing of African Americans. Answers to both of these questions have generally been discouraging. Given the choice, the vast majority of white Americans will vote for a white candidate, even if it means switching parties.¹ Despite the success of a number of highly visible black candidates like former Governor Douglas Wilder, former Mayor Tom Bradley and Congressmen J.C. Watts and despite the increasingly popular belief that race no longer plays a much diminished role in the voting booth (Thernstrom and Thernstrom, 1997; Swain, 1995; Citrin et. al., 1990) 70 to 90 percent of white voters will still vote for the white candidate rather than the black candidate in a typical bi-racial contest (McCrary, 1990; Loewen, 1990; Henry, 1987; Lieske and Hillard, 1984). Race still matters when white voters are faced with a black office-seeker.

And even if black candidates can get elected, their leadership has not greatly improved the economic well-being of African Americans in the city, region, or state where they have been elected. Studies suggest that black incumbents can modestly change local hiring policies and spending priorities (Mladenka, 1989; Eisinger, 1982) but these and other changes have not been dramatic. The overall substantive impact on most members of the black community has been negligible (Singh, 1998; Reed, 1988; Browning, Marshall and Tabb, 1990). "Their elections," in the words of Manning Marable, "can be viewed as a psychological triumph, but they represent no qualitative resolution to the crises of black poverty, educational inequality, crime, and unemployment" (quoted in Perry, 1996:6).

¹ Although the vast majority of whites say in surveys that they would vote for a qualified black candidate for office (Schuman et. al., 1997), quasi-experimental studies suggest that a candidate's race can and does affect the white vote in subtle and important ways (Reeves, 1997; Sigelman et. al., 1995; Terkildsen, 1993).

Scholars have interpreted these results as a sign of a lack of progress for blacks and proof of the ineffectiveness of black leaders (Browning, Marshall and Tabb, 1997; Smith, 1996; Reed, 1988;). This conclusion, however, ignores the potentially positive impact black representation can have on the *white* community and the effect this might have on racial attitudes, tolerance, and future voting behavior.² In what follows, I shift the focus of attention away from black politicians' impact on the African American community and onto their impact on white constituents. Election blacks into public office might not improve the condition of blacks to the degree many people had hoped for, but it might have the less visible but equally consequential effect of educating white voters about black leaders, reducing white fears regarding the types of policies these leaders will enact, and improving race relations as a result. Does experience with black leadership change the racial attitudes and voting behavior of white Americans?³

The Information Model

I argue that black political representation should significantly improve white attitudes toward blacks and increase the likelihood that they will vote for the black candidate in the next election (even if the black incumbent runs against a white challenger) because it imparts critical information to white voters regarding the degree to which black leadership will affect their economic well-being. When black challengers run for office, many white residents fear that black leadership will favor the black community over the white community. By redistributing income, encouraging integration, and generally channelling resources toward the black community, the fear is that there will be a reversal of the racial status quo. Yet as the research shows, this simply doesn't happen. For the vast majority of the white community, their

2 It also ignores the symbolic impact black representation has on the black community (Bobo and Gilliam, 1990).

3 The existing research on this question is extremely thin. Anecdotal evidence from individual cities and districts has led observers to suggest either that a white backlash is under way (Abney and Hutcheson, 1981; Browning et. al., 1997; Sleeper, 1993) or that white voters have supported black incumbents (Applebome, 1993; Watson, 1984; Pettigrew, 1976).

world under black leadership is almost identical to their world under white leadership. Once black leaders have the opportunity to prove that black leadership does not harm white interests, white fear should decline, opposition to black candidates should diminish, and white attitudes toward blacks and black leadership should improve. Black leadership, therefore, serves an enormously important, although difficult to observe, informational role. The greater the number of blacks elected into positions of power, the more whites will learn not to fear such leadership, and the more likely whites should be to vote for black candidates in the future. Thus, the limited impact of black representation on the economic well-being of the black *and the* white community should have a profound impact on white attitudes and behavior toward their black neighbors.

In order to understand the important informational role black leadership plays for the white community, one must first understand why white Americans fear black leadership. Two factors are critical - limited first-hand experience with African Americans in positions of authority and a long history of racial conflict. Normally voters have less information about a challenger than an incumbent but when that challenger is black, information is even more sparse (Popkin, 1995). In most cases, white residents will have little first-hand experience with black leadership. They have not lived under a black mayor, a black representative, a black senator, or a black president. They don't really know what the consequences of black leadership are likely to be. In short, uncertainty is a central feature of black challenger elections.

Without much personal experience with black leadership, white voters are forced to rely on racial stereotypes (Conover and Feldman, 1989). Unfortunately, for black candidates, this inevitably hurts their chances for white support. Without knowing anything about a candidate other than her race, white respondents rate black candidates worse than white candidates on nineteen out of twenty leadership and personality characteristics (Williams, 1990). The typical black candidate is seen as less trustworthy, less able to 'get things done', and even less intelligent.

White opponents can then use these stereotypes and the uncertainty surrounding the election to scare white voters. The first black candidates for mayor in large American cities, for example, were faced

with white opponents who suggested that the white police force would quit, that crime would run rampant, and that the city would quickly become black (Sonenshein, 1993; Rivlin, 1992). Tom Bradley's opponent for the Los Angeles mayoralty simply told voters: "You know what kind of a city we've got. We don't know what we might get. So we'd be taking quite a chance with this particular kind of candidate... Will your city be safe with this man?" (Bergholz, 1973).

Even if a black candidate attempts to counter this fear by running a 'deracialized' or pro-white campaign, white voters are unlikely to view these promises as credible. A long history of racial conflict, racially focused media coverage (Reeves, 1997; Mendelberg, 1994) and persistent white racial stereotypes all lead white residents to question black challengers who promise to serve white interests. Thirman Milner, the first black mayor of Hartford, was typical of black challengers in that he proclaimed: "There is no such thing as black legislation". He stated repeatedly that he planned to be 'mayor of all Hartford.' But in the end, like most black challengers, he won less than a quarter of the white vote despite the fact that Hartford is an overwhelmingly Democratic city (Hajnal, 1998).

In the end, the limited information that whites have, the inflammatory campaigns that white opponents run, and the stereotypes that whites rely on all trigger a host of negative projections about the impact of a black victory. White fears range anywhere from concerns that white businesses will leave to fears about school busing (Sonenshein, 1992; Rivlin, 1992). In its most basic form, the fear is simply that a black leader will serve black interests at the expense of white interests. A truck driver in Chicago described white fears of a black victory this way:

I don't know how to say this, but most people are afraid he is going to exert all of his powers for the black community and the white community is going to get nothing. My fear is that he's going to try to push racial integration, which is fine as long as I don't lose my money on my house ... because I can't take the loss (Morganthau, 1983).

These fears then manifest themselves in the white vote. When blacks run for a new office, elections tend to be more competitive, turnout often exceeds normal levels, and partisan identification is

often ignored (Lublin and Tate, 1995; Watson, 1984). The end result is that most black challengers face a white population that votes in almost overwhelming numbers against them.

Why Does Black Incumbency Make A Difference?

Once an African American is elected into office, however, whites obtain important information about the impact black representation has on their lives. Whites can now base their assessments of black leadership on the actual track record of a black incumbent, rather than on stereotypes, exaggerated fears, or the incendiary predictions of white candidates. When white residents don't lose their jobs, when blacks don't move into white neighborhoods in large numbers, and when black crime doesn't proliferate, white residents learn that they have less to fear from blacks and black leadership. A white resident of Los Angeles put it this way: "A lot of people were very suspicious and fearful before Bradley got in. But they never say anything now. I'm sure they have changed their opinions" (USNWR, 1975).

Black political leadership is especially important in the minds of white residents because it marks one of the first times that blacks have authority or control over the white community. When blacks have the power (or are perceived as having the power) to inflict harm on the white community and they choose not to take action, white residents are forced to reevaluate blacks and black leadership. Once black leaders show that the black community is not out to get the white community, white attitudes toward blacks should change and white opposition to black candidates should diminish. **Enduring Racial**

Stereotypes: The Racial Prejudice Model These predictions could be naively optimistic. A plausible argument could be made that black representation - no matter how positive its effect on the white community - will have no effect on white attitudes toward blacks. If racial prejudice is the primary factor behind white opposition to black empowerment, as many have suggested, then there is little reason to suspect that white views or white behavior will change (Hurwitz and Peffley, 1998; Allport, 1954; Adorno et. al., 1950). Racial stereotypes are simply too deeply ingrained (Fazio et. al., 1995; Devine, 1989) and too stable (Fiske, 1998; Rothbart and Oliver, 1993) to be swayed by a single black politician who successfully wins office. Even if the words and actions of black incumbents don't fit whites' racial

stereotypes, whites can use an array of tactics to try to maintain their current stereotypes and create cognitive consistency (Macrae, Hewstone, and Griffith, 1993; Hamilton, 1981). White residents can ignore events that contradict their current views or discount contradictory evidence as an exception to the rule (Macrae, Hewstone, and Griffith, 1993; Weber and Crocker, 1983). Given the intractability of racial stereotypes and the enduring nature of racial prejudice, there is little reason to believe that a single black politician could change the way white Americans think about race.

A White Backlash: The Racial Threat Model It is also possible that black leadership could have a third, more alarming effect on white attitudes and behavior. If, as researchers from Blumer (1958) to Bobo (1983) have suggested, white Americans identify as a group and feel threatened whenever blacks endanger the privileged status of the white community, then white Americans are quite likely to respond negatively to black incumbency. Black electoral victories can be seen as a direct threat to white power. When blacks take over offices that whites have previously held, they disrupt the traditional balance of racial power. The election of African Americans to important leadership positions should, in this case, lead to heightened racial tension and widespread white backlash.

This prediction is supported by an array of white responses to black empowerment in the past. More often than not, when a black presence in the local community increases or when black political power grows, so too does white racial antagonism and white mobilization.⁴ A higher percentage of blacks in the local community has been linked to greater levels of racial conservatism, (Glaser, 1994) an increased sense of threat among whites (Fossett and Kiecolt, 1989; Giles and Evans, 1986), increased white on black violence (Alt, 1994), and increased white support of racist candidates (Giles and Buckner, 1993; Black and Black, 1973). Black bids for electoral office tend to trigger increased white turnout and

⁴ For exceptions to this pattern see Green et al (1998), Kinder and Mendelberg (1995) and Bledsoe et. al. (1995). It may be that only certain types of inter-racial contact (such as equal status contact) lead to improved racial understanding, while others reinforce racial antagonism (Allport, 1954). Unfortunately, the question at hand here (what happens when blacks assume positions of authority over whites) has received little attention.

widespread white defection from the Democratic party (Lublin and Tate, 1995; Watson, 1984). Finally, growing black influence within the Democratic party has also been connected to greater Republican party identification amongst white voters (Huckfeldt and Kohfeld, 1989; Black and Black, 1986). Given this pattern of black empowerment and white backlash, one might expect to find that black representation leads to decreased rather than increased white racial tolerance.

DATA AND MEASURES

To determine which of these three theories is accurate, I look at changes in white racial attitudes and views before and after the transition from a white to a black mayoralty. Although each of the three models of white behavior should apply to any level of political leadership, I focus on the transition from a white to a black mayoralty for theoretical and practical reasons. Theoretically, I believe that the information model of white behavior is likely to be most pronounced at the mayoral level. First, most people know who their mayor is (Cole, 1976). If white residents are to obtain information through direct experience with black leadership, they must know who their leader is. Second, as an executive of a city, mayors can often act unilaterally, unlike legislators at the local, state and federal level who must obtain the support of a majority of their colleagues before acting. This allows individual citizens to track more directly a mayor's impact on policy outcomes. If the streets are cleaned, the mayor has done her job. If garbage piles up, the mayor can be blamed.⁵ A black mayoralty, therefore, provides more information to white residents than would a black legislator and should therefore have a greater effect on white attitudes.

I also choose to study the mayoralty because of the large number of black mayors across the country. In 1993 there were 356 black mayors, 38 of whom served in cities with a population over 50,000 (JCPS, 1994). This provided a sufficient number of cases of black and white mayors in cities with different racial makeups to allow for empirical analysis.

⁵ A poll assessing residents' views of the power of their mayor found that even in Washington, D.C., a city with limited local control, a large majority of city residents believe the mayor "can control" or "exact influence" on almost every issue of concern to the city (Washington Post, June 11, 1978:A1).

Data

To assess changes in white racial attitudes under black mayors, I utilize data from a pooled sample of the American National Election Study (ANES) from the years 1980 to 1992. The ANES contains an array of questions gauging white racial attitudes and political orientation and is therefore a valuable tool for this purpose. By pooling samples from the years 1980 to 1992 I can obtain an ample number of white responses from a wide variety of cities with black and white mayors.⁶ Details on the sampling, survey instruments and other methodology concerning the survey can be found in Miller et. al. (1994). Data on the race of mayors and council members come from the National Roster of Black Elected Officials. Other data on city level characteristics such as racial demographics and median income come from the relevant census publications (Census, 1964-1994; City and County Data Book, 1994; 1990).

Measures of White Racial Attitudes

I look for change in white views on three broad arenas of race relations: 1) perceptions of change in the status of blacks, 2) perceptions of a black threat, 3) general feelings toward blacks.

I choose these three areas because each addresses a critical aspect of the information model. First, white residents must recognize the limited impact of black incumbents before there can be any positive change in white views of blacks and black leadership. White residents must, in short, see that blacks have not made real gains relative to whites. To see if this is, in fact, the case, I examined white responses to the following question on the *status of blacks*:

How much real change do you think there has there been in the position of black people in the past few years? (answers are coded: 1- a lot, .5- some, 0-not much at all)

Second, if experience with black incumbents does prove to white residents that they have little to fear from black leadership, then this should be reflected in a white perceptions of a *black threat*.

⁶ Within this pooled sample there are 1605 white respondents living in 18 cities with black mayors. The population of these black mayoral cities ranges from 10 to 76 percent black. Across the whole pooled sample, there are 6543 respondents from 70 cities represented in the data.

Specifically, after the election of a black challenger, perceptions of a black threat should decline. To see if racial threat does decline under black incumbents, I examined white responses to the following question:

Some say that the civil rights people have been trying to push too fast. Others feel they haven't pushed fast enough. How about you: Do you think that civil rights leaders are trying to push too fast, are going too slowly, or are they moving about the right speed?" (answers are coded: 1- too fast, .5- about the right speed, 0- too slowly)⁷

Finally, I look at general attitudes toward blacks to see if white residents are generalizing about the larger black community from their experiences under black incumbents. If whites are not discounting the words and actions of black incumbents as an isolated or anomalous event, then their feelings toward blacks more generally should change. In order to measure white views of the black community, I examined white responses to all of the remaining ANES questions in the pooled sample that tapped views about race relations without getting into specific policy debates.

Of these questions, the most general measure of white views toward blacks was a *black feeling thermometer*. For the feeling thermometer, white respondents were asked how 'warmly' or 'favorably' they felt toward blacks as a group, on a scale from 0 to 100. Since different respondents can assign very different meaning to the same value on the scale (ie. what does a value of 60 mean?), I controlled for each respondent's feelings toward whites on a similar feeling thermometer.⁸ The result is then a measure of how warmly respondents felt toward blacks as a group, relative to their feelings toward whites.⁹

The four remaining race questions in the pooled sample are as follows:

7 Although a broader array of questions might be preferred, this single measure has several advantages. First, the question is a direct and explicit measure of racial threat in the political arena. It seems clear that, if white respondents are concerned about the threat from black political leadership, then they are more apt to believe that civil rights leaders are pushing too fast. In fact, Bobo (1983) has argued that this question is a measure of white feelings of group conflict and is thus a key indicator of the state of race relations. Second, empirical tests have shown that responses to the question are based, at least in part, on objective measures of racial threat. Bobo's (1983) research indicates that responses to this civil rights push question are significantly, if weakly, correlated with recent or imminent changes in local racial policy making.

8 The following results are almost identical with or without feelings toward whites controlled. The scale has a mean response of .45 (std. dev. = .10).

9 This scale can also be viewed as a measure of prejudice (Hurwitz and Peffley, 1998; Allport, 1954). The more whites prefer whites as a group over blacks as a group, the more they can be seen as prejudiced.

- * 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.
- * Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcome prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without special favors.
- * Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve.
- * Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

In each case, respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement (For each question, responses were 1=agree strongly, 2=agree somewhat, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=disagree somewhat, and 5=disagree strongly).

On the surface each of these four questions addresses a different issue (eg. Do blacks work hard? vs. Are blacks distinct from other minorities?). Yet each focuses on one central element of race relations: the extent to which blacks face barriers in American society. The four questions are not only linked conceptually, they are also linked empirically. Answers to the four questions are highly correlated with inter-item correlations ranging from a low of .39 to a high of .59. Thus I was able to create what I call a *racial sympathy scale* using these four questions.¹⁰ To create the scale, responses to each question were ordered from most to least sympathetic to blacks. Individual responses were then added together and the scale was normalized to a 0-1 range.¹¹ The reliability of the scale is high, with a cronbach's alpha

¹⁰ This scale can be viewed as a measure of racial resentment or symbolic racism (Kinder and Sears, 1981). It is, in fact, almost identical to a racial resentment scale developed by Kinder and Sanders (1996). Using their similar scale, Kinder and Sanders showed that racial resentment is central to white opposition to government efforts to help blacks.

¹¹ I tried two alternate tests to ensure the robustness of my results. First, I repeated the following analysis with each individual question, rather than the whole scale. Although statistical significance usually declines, there are few substantive changes to the results. Second, I used maximum likelihood estimation confirmatory factor analysis to develop a latent factor representing the main theme of these four questions. When I substituted the latent factor into the following analysis, the results were almost identical. Black leadership leads to increased recognition of the barriers facing the black community, however white views are measured.

of .77.¹²

If black representation does change white views about blacks as a group, then it should be reflected on both the black feeling thermometer and the racial sympathy scale.

Model

To determine which of the three theories of white political behavior (information, racial prejudice, or racial threat) is most accurate, I look for change in white racial attitudes during the transition from a white to a black mayoralty. Specifically I compare the attitudes of a representative sample of white respondents in cities with a white mayor to the attitudes of a similar sample of white respondents during the tenure of a black mayor.

In order to ensure that any differences between black-run and white-run cities are really a function of black leadership, I control for demographic and socioeconomic factors known or suspected to affect white racial attitudes. Thus the model includes the following independent control variables: 1) personal socioeconomic characteristics: age, education, income, gender, employment status, home ownership, and the number of years the respondent has been living in the city and 2) contextual variables: percent of the city that is black, level of urbanism, year of the interview, and residence in the south.¹³ All independent variables are coded 0 to 1 for ease of interpretation.

RESULTS

Does black representation affect white racial attitudes? Table One clearly demonstrates that experience with black mayoral leadership leads to significant, positive change in white racial attitudes.

12 The scale is centered on a value of .40 indicating that most white respondents are slightly more resentful than sympathetic on these questions. Scores are distributed normally. Standard deviation is 0.24.

13 I also include in each model a dummy variable for cities that are within twelve months of the transition from a white to a black mayoralty. I do so for two reasons. First, there is usually heightened racial tension during the transition year. As a result, white respondents are likely to be less rather than more racially tolerant in the time period surrounding the election of a city's first black mayor. Second, these white residents in cities that have just been taken over by black mayors have had little experience with black leadership and hence little time to learn what the consequences of black leadership are.

As predicted by the information model, white perceptions of racial threat significantly decline ($p < .05$) under black mayors. Also, as predicted by the information model, white Americans appear to generalize about blacks as a group from their experiences with black mayoral leadership. Under black mayors, white residents feel significantly warmer toward blacks as a group and they are significantly more sympathetic to the plight of blacks. In short, black political representation leads to improved views of the black community. **TABLE ONE HERE**

The only area where there is no significant change under a black mayoralty is in white perceptions of the pace of racial change. Although this finding is puzzling at first, the lack of difference between black-led and white-led cities on this measure may not conflict with the information model. If black mayors have little impact on the pace of racial change and white residents recognize this, then there is little reason to expect that white perceptions of racial change will differ across the two types of cities.

The Problem of Causality

Overall then, Table One strongly suggests that the election of black candidates marks the beginning of a new stage in American race relations. With blacks in control of many American cities, white residents are learning not to fear and possibly even to accept blacks and black leadership. But the analysis in Table One overlooks an important issue. By simply comparing black mayoral cities to white mayoral cities we can't be sure if the difference has been caused by black mayoral leadership. The causal arrow might be reversed. More positive racial attitudes among the white residents of a city could lead to the election of a black mayor.¹⁴ In other words the question is: does black incumbency alter racial attitudes or do the racial attitudes of residents affect the likelihood of having a black mayor?

In Table Two I address this question by employing a two-stage least-squares model, which is

¹⁴ However, the characteristics of the white community seem to have little impact on the election of a black mayor. In the most extensive study of this question Karnig and Welch (1980) found that measures of black rather than white socioeconomic status were by far the most important determinants of the presence of a black mayor. In the pooled ANES sample analyzed here black mayors were more likely in poor, large, primarily black, and southern cities - not cities where one would expect white residents to be especially racially tolerant.

designed to deal with the problem of causality.¹⁵ In this new model, the impact of white attitudes on whether or not a city has a black mayor is controlled in the first stage before the impact of a black mayor is assessed in the second stage.¹⁶ The overwhelming conclusion from Table Two is once again that black leadership does matter and that a black mayoralty does lead to significant positive change in white views on race. Living under a black mayor reduces white racial fears and it improves white views toward blacks more generally. **TABLE TWO HERE**

As Table Two also shows, the effects of black incumbency appear to be quite substantial compared to the other independent variables. In most cases, the effects of black mayoral leadership are on par or are greater than the effects of a respondent's education. In other words, moving from a white-led to a black-led city decreases whites' sense of racial threat and improves white feelings toward blacks about as much obtaining a graduate degree. The only factors that appear to be more important determinants of white racial views are the respondent's political ideology (liberal vs conservative) and the proportion of blacks in the city. Self-described conservatives tend to feel more threatened by blacks and they tend to feel less warmly toward blacks as a group, a pattern that lends support to scholars who have claimed that there is a close link between conservatism and racial animosity (Kinder and Sanders, 1996). Similarly, the strong relationship between the proportion of blacks in a city and white racial views reaffirms a long line of research. Here as in previous research, racial composition matters (see for example Glaser, 1994; Giles

15 As a secondary check on the direction of causality I reanalyzed the data with a different sample of respondents. In this alternate model I included only white respondents from cities that had a black mayor at any point in their history. This meant that any positive change in white attitudes under black leadership was less likely to be the result of city-to-city differences, and was more likely to be directly related to the racial transition of power. This analysis tends to confirm the results from the two-stage-least-squares regression.

16 In order to perform two stage-least-squares regression, I first devised a treatment or first-stage equation modelling the presence of a black mayor in the city. The treatment equation included three exogenous variables that were absent from the outcome equation (percent of the city that voted democratic in the 1988 presidential election, median income in the city in 1989 and the percent of adults in each city with a college degree in 1990) and proved to be an adequate predictor of black mayoral presence. Results for this first stage are presented in the appendix.

and Evans, 1986). The larger the black population, the more whites feel threatened and the less positively they view blacks

When do Whites Attitudes Change? The results so far strongly support the information model. Black representation seems to have a profound, positive impact on the way white residents view the black community. However, the test for change in white racial attitudes has, up to this point, been a blunt one. Even with the addition of the two-stage least-squares model, the test is still largely a comparison of respondents living in black mayoral cities with respondents living in white mayoral cities. Little attention has been paid to the element of time or more specifically to number of years that whites have experienced black representation.

If, however, the informational model is accurate and the gains made under black mayors really are a function of experience with black leadership, then it is imperative that we look at changes over time. If changes in white racial attitudes really are a function of information garnered from the actions of black incumbents, then white views should not change overnight. Rather we should see that as the years under a black mayoralty go by, whites should feel less and less threatened and they should express increasingly positive racial attitudes.

In Table Three I test this proposition by looking at the impact of a black mayoralty over time. The dependent variables are the same: the status of blacks, black threat, the black feeling thermometer, and the racial sympathy scale. The independent variable in this case is the length of time a city has experienced a black mayoralty. In order to ensure that the results are not skewed by very racially tolerant respondents from one or two cities with decades of black mayoral leadership, I normalized the years of black leadership in each city. Thus in each city the length of time under black leadership is measured on a scale from 0 to 1, with 0 being the first year a black mayor was elected and 1 being the last year of black

leadership.¹⁷ This allows me to compare respondents at the beginning of a black mayor's tenure with respondents later in the tenure of black leadership.**TABLE THREE HERE**

The results are clear and consistent. As the years under a black mayor go by, white respondents feel a decreasing sense of threat, they feel more favorably toward blacks as a group, and they are more racially sympathetic. In each case the effects are highly significant ($p < .01$). In short, the longer white residents experience black leadership, the more their views of blacks improve.¹⁸

These survey results closely match anecdotal evidence from the transition period in many of these cities. Maynard Jackson's mayoral victory in Atlanta, for example, was followed by a period of bitter racial confrontation. It was only after the black mayor played a pivotal role in breaking a strike of low-paid, mostly black garbage workers that he began to receive more support from the white community. According to one advisor, Jackson's actions helped make whites "less paranoid" (Scott, 1977). Similarly in Birmingham, survey data suggest that racial tension actually increased immediately after the election of Richard Arrington as mayor (Russakof, 1983). But by the time he ran for reelection, Arrington and other local politicians were complaining that the national news media was no longer covering the campaign because Birmingham and its politics lacked the racial animosity of old (Russakof, 1983). In short, experience with black leadership matters.

The other important finding in Table Three is that black mayoral leadership significantly affects white views of the pace of racial change. As illustrated by the first row of the table, the longer a city has experienced black leadership, the more likely whites are to believe that the pace of change has slowed.

The pattern of change in white views is much clearer in Figure One. The bars in Figure One represent mean responses to the black status question at different time periods before, during, and after

17 If the city still has a black mayor today, I use 1999 as the final year of black leadership.

18 As a secondary test, I repeated the analysis with a non-normalized scale (the number of years under black leadership). The results were almost identical, however the level of significance of the effects of black leadership on white racial attitudes declined in some cases.

the election of a black mayor. The higher the bar, the more whites feel that real changes are taking place and blacks are gaining. **FIGURE ONE HERE**

The pattern is generally what one would expect given an information model of white political behavior. White perceptions of black gains closely mirror change in mayoral leadership. White respondents who live in cities experiencing a transition from a white to a black mayor believe that blacks have made significant gains. It is only over time as the real impact of a black mayoralty becomes clear that white residents realize that black gains have not been, in fact, all that significant. By the end of black leadership in a city, white residents believe that the position of blacks is improving more slowly than it was before the onset of black mayoral leadership.¹⁹

A Broader Impact: The White Vote

The results are clear. The onset of black representation signals a new stage in racial politics and the beginning of a real transformation in white racial views. While this change in white racial views is important in and of itself, it begs a second question. Namely, does the information that white residents get from black incumbency translate into concrete changes in white behavior? More specifically, does the heated white opposition that black candidates typically face diminish after they get elected and become incumbents?

Although a definitive answer to this question is beyond the scope of this article, a review of the existing evidence strongly suggests that white voters are changing their minds about black leadership. First, the few empirical studies that do compare black incumbents and black challengers all find that black incumbents do remarkably well with white voters (Hajnal, 1998; Vanderleeuw, 1990; Bullock, 1984; Watson, 1984). Bullock's study of 52 congressional, citywide and countywide elections in the Atlanta area found that black incumbents received more than twice as many white votes as black challengers. There is a dramatic change in the white vote even in the same city with the same black candidate running. Hajnal's

¹⁹ T-tests indicate that mean differences between most of the time periods are statistically significant ($p < .05$).

(1998) analysis of mayoral elections in 46 cities found that on average black challengers increased their white vote by 25 percent when they ran for reelection for the first time.²⁰

What is even more impressive is the change in white turnout that occurs under black incumbents. Black mayoral challengers often face record turnout (Watson, 1984). Black incumbents usually face below average turnout (Lublin and Tate, 1995). This decline in white turnout and the increase in white support of black incumbents can have a dramatic effect on the total opposition that black incumbents face. In the typical case a black mayoral incumbent faces half the opposition that he or she faced when they ran and won as a challenger (Hajnal, 1998).

But perhaps the best evidence of a change in the thinking and behavior of white voters is the change in the tone of elections after a city elects its first black mayor. When black challengers run for office to become a city's first black mayor, elections tend to focus on race and racial transition. These elections are often characterized as ugly, racialized affairs in which the choice is literally 'black versus white'. Phrases like "racist tactics", "race dominated", "highly polarized", and "race conscious" are common.²¹ In contrast, when black incumbents run for reelection, the election is more likely to be about the candidates' records, their styles and the issue preferences of voters. Black incumbent reelection bids tend to be "surprisingly uneventful" with "ho-hum voters", "low-key amity among the candidates" and "almost dignified politicking".²² Black incumbents are probably more aware of these changes than anyone

20 The same overall pattern can be observed at the Congressional level. Although black congressional candidates fair poorly when they run against white incumbents or in open seat elections in minority black districts, once elected congressional incumbents do extremely well. Of all the black house members in the twentieth century, only 25 have served in districts that were minority black. But once elected these black house members are nearly invincible. In minority black districts incumbent black congress members have won reelection 97 percent of the time (82 out of 85 cases). Data from majority white and mixed districts also indicate that black house members win their reelection bids with more white support than they received as candidates (Swain, 1995; Bullock and Dunn, 1997).

21 These quotes are from newspaper accounts of black challenger elections in Flint (1983), Memphis (1991), Los Angeles (1969), Chicago (1983), and Atlantic City (1984).

22 These quotes are from newspaper accounts of black incumbent elections in Newark (1974), Memphis (1995), and Atlantic City (1986).

else. As Tom Bradley put it:

Race, in my judgement, was not a relevant issue. Never should have been. But it took the experience of the people to be convinced that it should not and would not become a factor in how you serve the interests of this city. And having seen that demonstration, I don't think anybody can make a case now or in the future that the color of a candidate's skin is a factor and should be of any significant concern (Ingwerson, 1981).

Bradley may have been overly optimistic about the future, but it is clear that black representation makes a difference. By showing white residents that they have little to fear from black leadership, black representation not only alters the way white residents view blacks, it leads to a significant increase in white support for black leadership.

Who Changes Their Mind?

There is, however, a second less encouraging story to tell about white reactions to black representation. To say that black representation leads to significant positive change in white racial attitudes and white voting behavior is not to say that all white Americans change their minds about blacks and black leadership. In fact, even among black incumbents it is fairly unusual that they receive the support of a majority of all white voters. Despite their experiences with black representation, many, if not most, white Americans remain resistant to blacks and black leadership.

Given the different racial agendas of the Republican and Democratic parties (Carmines and Stimson, 1989; Huckfeldt and Kohfeldt, 1989) and given the possible link between conservatism and anti-black affect (Kinder and Sanders, 1996; Kinder and Sears, 1981), one might predict that white Republicans will be more resistant to the information that black representation provides. White Democrats, on the other hand, may be much more receptive to a positive view of blacks and black leadership that fits into their larger political agenda. In this case one would expect to find that most if not all of the positive change in racial attitudes and voting behavior that occurs under black mayoral leadership would be confined to white Democrats.

In Table Four I test this proposition by separating out the responses of white Democrats, Republicans, and moderates to black mayoral leadership.²³ The dependent variables are the same racial attitude questions we examined earlier. The only change to the model is that in Table Four I interact the years under a black mayor variable with dummy variables for Democratic, Republican, and independent party identification. By focusing on the interaction terms in each model one can see whether time under black representation has a positive, negative, or null effect on each particular group. **TABLE FOUR**
HERE

Table Four confirms that white Democrats and white Republicans respond differently to black representation. The Table shows that experience with black mayoral leadership leads to significantly more positive racial views for Democrats. As the years under a black mayor go by, white Democrats perceive less racial change, they feel a decreasing sense of threat, they feel more favorably toward blacks as a group, and they are more racially sympathetic. In all but one case the effects are highly significant ($p < .01$). For white moderates, there is also significant, positive change in white views over time. In contrast, black mayoral leadership appears to have no impact or even a marginally negative impact on the racial views of white Republicans.

The same pattern emerges if one does not look at change over time under black leadership but instead simply compares whites in cities with a black mayor to whites in cities with a white mayor as was done in Tables One and Two. White Democrats who live in cities with a black mayor have significantly more positive views of blacks than white Democrats who live in cities with a white mayor [analysis not shown]. Also under black mayors, white moderates have marginally more positive racial views, and white Republicans' racial views do not change.²⁴ The same pattern is also evident when one looks at the actual

23 Democrats are respondents who thought of themselves as Democrats. Republicans are respondent who identified as Republican. Moderates are respondents who identified as Independents or expressed no party preference.

24 Although one could argue that this pattern is the result of the defection of 'racist' white Democrats from the party, there are two factors which make this highly unlikely. First, since most Democratic defectors became Independent or moderates rather than Republicans, one would expect any negative

vote in mayoral elections involving black incumbents. In the few cases where the vote is broken down by both race and party identification, it is clear that when black candidates gain white support as incumbents, the bulk of the increase comes from white Democrats (Sonnenshein, 1993; Pettigrew, 1976). White Republicans, in contrast, tend to vote against black candidates whether they are challengers or incumbents.²⁵

What this suggests is that the information model does not apply to white voters equally. White Democrats and white moderates appear to be quite willing to incorporate the information that they receive from their experience with black representation. For these two groups, an information model readily accounts for their response to black leadership. In contrast, white Republicans tend to be less open to change. The results in Table Four suggest that white Republicans are either ignoring or discounting the words and actions of black incumbents. Thus, it appears that for white Republicans a racial prejudice or racial stereotype model of political behavior is more appropriate.

This also suggests that black representation has a polarizing effect on the white community. Democrats are becoming more and more racially liberal, while Republicans are becoming marginally more racially conservative. In fact, the racial gap between white Democrats and white Republicans more than doubles in size under black mayoral leadership. Table Five illustrates this growing gap by presenting the difference between mean Democratic views and mean Republican views across the same series of racial questions. As the first column of Table Five reveals, the gap between white Democrats and white Republicans in cities with a white mayor seems rather small. On two of the four questions, the difference is not even statistically significant ($p < .05$). Although it is difficult to interpret the meaning of each of the

change to be among moderates, not Republicans. Second, it seems unlikely that the gradual defection of whites from the Democratic party over time could account for both the changes in white views under the presence of a black mayor and the changes in white views as the years under black leadership go by, especially given that each regression model includes a control for the year of the survey.

25 Ironically this suggests that racial considerations are most consequential when white Democrats vote. Whether white Democrats support a black candidate seems to be greatly affected by their views of blacks and black leadership. In contrast, white Republicans are likely to vote against liberal, black candidates, no matter what their racial views are.

individual numbers in the first column of the Table, it is not difficult to see that the gap grows dramatically under black mayors. In cities with a black mayor, the gap between white Democrats and white Republicans on all but one of the four questions more than doubles. If the racial views of white Democrats and white Republicans were not that far apart before the onset of black leadership, that is no longer the case. On matters of race, black representation means even greater division between Democrats and Republicans. **TABLE FIVE HERE**

IMPLICATIONS

Two questions have commanded the attention of scholars interested in black representation. Researchers have either asked if whites will vote for blacks or they have asked if black representation improves the economic well-being of the black community. Although both of these questions are of vital importance in assessing the potential impact of black representation, they ignore a compelling aspect of black representation, namely its effect on the *white* community. By focusing on the relationship between black incumbents and the white community and by asking a new question about black representation, this article has offered a different, much more promising story of black representation.

Four lessons in particular can be drawn from this study. The first and most obvious lesson is that black representation does matter. Previous research has bemoaned the fact that black representation has not resolved the crises of black poverty, educational inequality, crime, and unemployment and scholars have interpreted this as a sign of the ineffectiveness of black representation (Singh, 1998; Smith 1996; Marable, 1992; Reed, 1988). What the present research shows is that the 'politics as usual' that occurs under black representation can have an enormously positive impact on white Americans. Black representation may not lead directly to an end to racial inequality but it does lead to a fundamental change in the white vote and in the racial sentiments expressed by at least part of the white electorate.

This transformation of white attitudes, in turn, suggests that race is not fixed in the minds of many white Americans. Many white Americans clearly do respond to changes in the racial environment. As new information about black Americans emerges, the views of many white Americans are apt to change. This is

not to say that white Americans don't hold inaccurate racial stereotypes, it is simply to point out that many white Americans are not blind and resolute on matters of race. Change is possible.

This research also highlights the critical role that information can play in the racial arena. White residents often oppose black challengers because they have little experience with black representation and are uncertain about how black leadership will affect their lives. A black incumbent can, however, provide white Americans with unbiased information about black representation that makes it far more likely that whites will support black representation. This suggests that it may be critical for future black challengers to point to the past successes of past black incumbents. If, for example, a black challenger can clearly demonstrate to white voters in Boston that black control in Atlanta, Los Angeles, and other cities has led to economic prosperity rather than economic decline, it may be possible to greatly increase black representation across the country.

A fourth and final lesson to draw from this research is that black challengers and black incumbents do not face the same racial concerns and obstacles to electoral success. When studies find little evidence of anti-black voting (Swain, 1995; Citrin et al, 1990), it is important to note that the research focuses on black incumbents. Similarly, when other research finds widespread anti-black voting (McCrary, 1990; Loewen, 1990), it is equally important to note that the focus is on voting in black challenger elections. In short, future studies will have to understand that white support of black candidates may depend less upon racial tolerance than on the status of the candidate as incumbent or challenger.

All of these conclusions imply that much of the existing debate on racial politics in America is misguided. On one side of this debate, pessimists have repeatedly claimed that there has been little or no progress in reducing racial divisions within the American political arena. According to these authors race and racial prejudice remain *the* primary factor in American politics in general and in white voting preferences in particular (Reeves, 1997; Bell, 1992; McCrary, 1990; Huckfeldt and Kohfeld, 1989).

Robert Starks, for example, insists that "Race is such an overriding factor in American life that to support its elimination or diffusion as a factor in elections through deracialization is folly" (1991:217). Thus the

reason why most bi-racial electoral contests end up in racialized voting patterns and the reason why so few black candidates are elected outside of majority black places is clear: white voters are still not willing to overlook race.

Optimists, on the other hand, see tremendous progress in the arena of racial politics (Swain, 1995; Thernstrom and Thernstrom, 1997). Racism, they argue, is largely a phenomenon of the past. America is now more color-blind than ever. In Abigail Thernstrom's words, "Whites not only say they will vote for black candidates; they do so" (Thernstrom, 1995:A15). If racist voting occurs, it is prevalent only in isolated electoral contests. Thus, when a black candidate loses an election, she is very likely to have lost for the same reasons that a white candidate loses an election.

The important changes in white racial views that occur under incumbent black mayors suggest, however, that the debate has been addressing the wrong question. The key question is not *if* race is central in the minds of white voters. The much more important question is *when* is race central in the minds of white voters. Arguing whether or not there has been any progress on the racial front does not, in the end, help us to understand how race 'works' in American politics. As this research shows, race and its role in American politics is too complex to answer with an either/or debate. If we really want to describe and understand American politics, we have to find out when 'racist' voting is more likely, when 'color-blind' politics are more likely to emerge, and ultimately why these differences occur.

The overarching message of this research is one of both caution and hope. First, we should not overestimate the impact of black representation. Racial conflict does not end with the onset of black representation, as the riots in Los Angeles graphically illustrated; not everyone changes their minds about blacks and black leadership, as the data on white Republicans shows; and more blacks need to get elected in the first place, a problem that is only slowly being rectified (JCPS, 1994). On the other hand, there are real signs of progress. Every new black leader provides more information to the white community and reduces their fear of black representation in general. It is no longer possible to claim, as Sam Yorty did in Los Angeles in 1969, that the city's police force would quit en masse if Tom Bradley, a black man were

elected mayor. Too many police forces have stayed intact despite the election of a black mayor for this type of threat to ring true. There is also no denying the positive trend in white racial attitudes over the past few decades (Schuman et. al., 1997). Black representation may not be responsible for all of this change, but it can account for some of it.

And finally, what of the future? What will happen when America elects its first black president? What impact will more female, Latino, or Asian-American incumbents have on attitudes toward each of these groups? In the end, expanded minority representation is unlikely to address all of America's ills, but if it can foster even slightly better understanding among groups, then it is a goal well worth pursuing.

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**Table One. The Impact of Black Representation on White Racial Attitudes
(O.L.S. Regression)**

	Sense of Black Gain	Sense of Black Threat	Black Feeling Thermometer	Racial Sympathy
Black Mayor (1=yes 0=no)	.00 (.02)	-.03 (.01)*	.02 (.01)**	.04 (.01)**
Education	-.14 (.02)**	-.19 (.02)**	.05 (.01)**	.21 (.02)**
Income	.02 (.03)	.02 (.02)	.00 (.01)	.01 (.02)
Age	.28 (.03)**	.15 (.03)**	-.04 (.01)**	.01 (.02)
Gender (1-male)	.01 (.01)	.03 (.01)**	-.00 (.01)	-.02 (.01)**
Ideology (1-liberal)	-.21 (.03)**	-.32 (.03)**	.06 (.01)**	.28 (.02)**
Party ID (1-Democrat)	-.00 (.02)	-.03 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	.02 (.01)
Employment Status (1-unemployed)	.00 (.03)	-.05 (.03)	.00 (.01)	-.01 (.02)
Years Living In City	.02 (.02)	0.1 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.01)
Percent Black In City	.06 (.04)	.10 (.04)**	-.04 (.01)**	-.13 (.03)**
Level of Urbanism	-.04 (.02)	.00 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	.07 (.02)**
South (1=yes)	.08 (.02)**	.03 (.01)**	-.01 (.00)*	-.03 (.01)*
Year	-.12 (.02)**	-.06 (.02)**	.01 (.01)*	.00 (.01)
First Year of Black Mayoralty (1=yes)	.05 (.03)	-.00 (.03)	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.02)
Constant	25 (3.6)**	12 (3.5)**	-1.9 (1.1)	-.35 (2.5)
adj. R2	.11	.14	.07	.20
n	2886	2820	2914	2461
Source: American National Election Study Cumulative Data File (1982-1992) Figures are unstandardized coefficients with their standard errors. ** p<.01 *p<.05				

**Table Two. The Impact of Black Representation on White Racial Attitudes
(Two Stage Least-Squares Regression)**

	Sense of Black Gain	Sense of Black Threat	Black Feeling Thermometer	Racial Sympathy
Black Mayor (1=yes 0=no)	-.07 (.08)	-.15 (.07)*	.10 (.03)**	.11 (.05)*
Education	-.19 (.03)**	-.20 (.02)**	.04 (.01)**	.25 (.02)**
Income	.01 (.03)	-.02 (.03)	.00 (.01)	-.02 (.02)
Age	.28 (.04)**	.15 (.03)**	-.05 (.01)**	.00 (.03)
Gender (1-male)	.01 (.01)	.03 (.01)*	-.00 (.00)	-.03 (.01)**
Ideology (1-liberal)	-.16 (.04)**	-.28 (.03)**	.05 (.01)**	.23 (.03)**
Party ID (1-Democrat)	-.05 (.06)	-.09 (.02)**	.00 (.01)	.07 (.02)**
Employment Status (1-unemployed)	.03 (.04)	-.08 (.04)*	.01 (.01)	.01 (.03)
Years Living In City	.02 (.02)	-.01 (.02)	.00 (.01)	-.02 (.02)
Percent Black In City	.15 (.10)	.26 (.09)**	-.12 (.03)	-.25 (.08)**
Level of Urbanism	-.02 (.03)	.01 (.02)	.02 (.01)*	.06 (.02)**
South (1=yes)	.09 (.02)**	.03 (.02)	-.01 (.00)**	-.02 (.01)
Year	-.16 (.03)**	-.03 (.02)	-.00 (.01)	-.00 (.02)
First Year of Black Mayoralty (1=yes)	.06 (.06)	.06 (.05)	-.05 (.02)**	-.05 (.04)
Constant	.81 (.04)**	.78 (.04)**	.42 (.01)**	.15 (.03)**
adj. R2	.12	.14	.01	.21
n	2233	2181	2280	1911
Source: American National Election Study Cumulative Data File (1982-1992) Figures are unstandardized coefficients with their standard errors. ** p<.01 *p<.05				

**Table Three. How Time Under Black Leadership Affects White Racial Views
(O.L.S. Regression)**

	Sense of Black Gain	Sense of Black Threat	Black Feeling Thermometer	Racial Sympathy
Years Under a Black Mayorality (1-last year, 0- first year)	-.14 (.06)*	-.19 (.05)**	.07 (.02)**	.12 (.04)**
Education	-.13 (.04)**	-.18 (.04)**	.05 (.01)**	.21 (.03)**
Income	.02 (.05)	.03 (.04)	-.00 (.01)	.01 (.03)
Age	.28 (.06)**	.16 (.05)**	-.04 (.02)*	.00 (.04)
Gender (1-male)	.01 (.02)	.03 (.02)	-.00 (.01)	-.02 (.02)
Ideology (1-liberal)	-.20 (.06)**	-.32 (.05)**	.07 (.02)**	.28 (.04)**
Party ID (1-Democrat)	.00 (.04)	-.03 (.03)	-.01 (.01)	.02 (.03)
Employment Status (1-unemployed)	.00 (.06)	-.05 (.05)	.00 (.02)	-.02 (.04)
Years Living In City	.02 (.03)	.01 (.03)	-.01 (.01)	-.03 (.02)
Percent Black In City	.07 (.06)	.05 (.06)	-.02 (.02)	-.08 (.04)*
Level of Urbanism	-.03 (.04)	.00 (.04)	.01 (.01)	.07 (.03)*
South (1-yes)	.07 (.03)**	.04 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.03 (.02)
Year	-.04 (.05)	.04 (.04)	-.03 (.01)	-.06 (.03)
Constant	.77 (.06)**	-7.8 (8.2)		
adj. R2	.10	.14	.09	.21
n	863	847	800	800

Source: American National Election Study Cumulative Data File (1982-1992)

Figures are unstandardized coefficients with their standard errors.

** p<.01 *p<.05

Table Four. How Time Under Black Leadership Affects The Views of Democrats, Republicans, and Moderates (O.L.S. Regression)

	Sense of Black Gain	Sense of Black Threat	Black Feeling Thermometer	Racial Sympathy
Years Black Mayor * Democrat	-.26 (.07)**	-.13 (.05)*	.15 (.02)**	.17 (.05)**
Years Black Mayor * Moderate	-.09 (.06)	-.11 (.05)*	.08 (.02)**	.09 (.04)*
Years Black Mayor *Republican	.05 (.07)	-.08 (.06)	-.04 (.02)*	-.03 (.05)
Education	-.13 (.04)**	-.18 (.04)**	.05 (.01)**	.22 (.03)**
Income	.03 (.05)	.02 (.04)	-.02 (.02)	-.01 (.03)
Age	.29 (.06)	.14 (.05)**	-.04 (.02)*	-.03 (.04)
Gender (1-male)	.01 (.02)	.03 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.02)
Ideology (1-liberal)	-.20 (.06)**	-.32 (.05)**	.06 (.02)**	.28 (.04)**
Party (1-Democrat)	.23 (.08)**	.03(.06)	-.16 (.02)**	-.13 (.05)*
Employment Status (1-unemployed)	.00 (.06)	-.05 (.05)	.00 (.02)	-.01 (.04)
Years Living In City	.01 (.03)	.01 (.03)	-.01 (.01)	-.02 (.02)
Percent Black In City	.09 (.06)	.05 (.06)	-.03 (.02)	-.09 (.04)*
Level of Urbanism	.00 (.04)	.02 (.04)	-.01 (.01)	.05 (.03)
South (1-yes)	.07 (.03)**	-.03 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	-.03 (.02)
Year	.29 (.06)**	.00 (.00)	-.02 (.01)	-.04 (.03)
Constant	13 (8.9)	.50 (7.9)	5.3 (2.7)	8.1 (6.0)
adj. R2	.11	.13	.14	.20
n	863	847	800	800

Source: American National Election Study Cumulative Data File (1982-1992)

Figures are unstandardized coefficients with their standard errors.

** p<.01 *p<.05

Table Five. Black Representation and the Polarization of the White Community

	Difference Between Mean Democratic and Mean Republican View	
	No Black Mayor	Cities With A Black Mayor
Sense of Black Gain ^a	-.01	-.08**
Sense of Black Threat ^a	-.06**	-.11**
Black Feeling Thermometer ^a	.01	.03**
Racial Sympathy ^a	.04**	.11**
Source: American National Election Study Cumulative Data File (1982-1992)		
* Indicates that difference between Democratic and Republican Mean is significant (p<.05)		
** (p<.01)		
^a All dependent variables coded 0-1.		

APPENDIX A

Coding and Descriptive Statistics-Independent Variables

Education. Coded as a 6 category variable: 0 = completed less than 9th grade, .2 = 9-12 years, .4 = high school diploma, .6 = 1-3 years college, .8 = bachelor's degree, 1.0 = graduate degree. Mean = .61 Std Dev = .31.

Age. Age in years normalized to 0-1. Mean = .34 Std Dev = .22.

Gender. Coded as 1=male. Mean = .46 Std Dev = .50.

Employment. Coded as 1=unemployed, 0 otherwise. Mean = .04 Std Dev = .19.

Ideology. Coded as a 7 category variable: 0 = very conservative, .17 = conservative, .33 = somewhat conservative, .50 = moderate, .67 = somewhat liberal, .83 = liberal, 1 = very liberal. Mean = .46 Std Dev = .22.

Partisan Identification. Coded as a 7 category variable: 0 = strong Republican, .17 = weak Republican, .33 = independent/Republican, .50 = independent, .67 = independent/Democrat, .83 = weak Democrat, 1.0 = strong Democrat. Mean = .51 Std Dev = .34.

Years Living In City. Years of residence in municipality normalized. Mean = .29 Std Dev = .31.

Percent Black In City. Percent black normalized. Mean = .26 Std Dev = .19.

South. Coded as 1=south, 0 otherwise. Mean = .26 Std Dev = .44.

Urbanism. Coded as 3 category variable: 0 = central city of 50 largest metropolitan areas, .50 = central city of other metro areas, 1.0 = suburb of metropolitan area. Mean = .61 Std Dev = .28

APPENDIX B

Predicting a Black Mayoralty: The First Stage of the Two Stage Least Squares Regression	
	<i>Black Mayor</i> <i>1=black mayor, 0=no black mayor</i>
Median Income in City ¹	.28 (.05)**
Percent With College Degree in City ¹	.37 (.13)**
Republican Vote in 1988 in City ¹	-.22 (.08)**
Education	.01 (.03)
Income	.01 (.03)
Age	.01 (.02)
Gender (1-male)	.01 (.01)
Ideology (1-liberal)	.03 (.04)
Party ID (1-Democrat)	-.03 (.02)
Employment Status (1-unemployed)	.01 (.04)
Years Living In City	-.01 (.02)
Percent Black In City	1.6 (.05)**
Level of Urbanism	-.01 (.03)
South (1-yes)	-.10 (.02)**
Year	.13 (.02)**
Constant	-.56 (.07)**
n	2461
adj R2	.38
Source: American National Election Study Cumulative Data File (1982-1992)	
Figures in parathenese are standard errors.	
¹ Exogenous variables not included in the second stage.	
** p<.01 *p<.05	