

Race, Political Equality, and Pluralism: Representation in Black and White^{*}

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Abstract

How does African Americans' political influence measure up to that of whites? We discuss three standards of political equality – egalitarianism, proportionality, and pluralism – and examine the degree to which each of these standards is satisfied in the U.S. Senate by analyzing how the preferences of whites and African Americans relate to the actions of their Senators. We find that across a wide array of policy domains, African Americans have less influence than whites, violating an egalitarian standard of political equality. Moreover, African Americans' influence does not improve in states with larger African American populations, contrary to a proportional standard of equality. However, consistent with a pluralist standard of equality, on issues more salient for African Americans, this group exerts equal and perhaps even somewhat more influence compared to whites.

Americans widely value equality in several contexts (e.g., McClosky 1964; Hochschild 1981). And yet, one type of inequality, “disparities in political influence, even if deplored, [is] widely tolerated” (Verba and Orren 1985, 20). Such disparities, defined as “differences in the amount of influence or power wielded by individuals or groups over government policy,” are often assumed to exist within American politics (Verba and Orren 1985, 191).¹ For instance, concerned observers have long believed that African Americans are politically unequal in this way. In fact, there is a widespread perception among leaders in the private and public sectors that African Americans occupy one of the lowest rungs of the political influence ladder (e.g., Verba and Orren 1985, 189; see also Guinier 1994).²

The prospect that African Americans exert less influence on the actions of elected officials than do whites may strike different normative chords among scholars of democratic theory. In large part, normative reactions depend on the standard of political equality one adopts. We focus on three different standards, beginning with the egalitarian principle that different racial groups should exert the same political influence regardless of size. *Egalitarians* would deem the possibility that African Americans wield less influence than whites a significant failure of American politics, arguing that this group’s numerical minority status should not stand in the way of equality of influence (Fiss 1976; Young 1990). In this view, “majority rule is not a reliable instrument of democracy in a racially divided society,” (Carter 1994, xvi) at least insofar as majority rule disadvantages the interests of racial minorities. Others may find the lesser influence of African Americans entirely expected given African Americans’ numerical minority status. This reflects a *proportional* view of political equality, in which groups exert influence in

¹ Note that we use the terms "political inequality," "political stratification," "equality of influence," and "disparity in representation" interchangeably.

² There is some evidence that public officials have become more responsive to African Americans in recent decades (e.g., Keech 1968; Bullock 1981).

proportion to their size. The proportional view would find it acceptable, however regrettable, if African Americans exert only a level of political influence that is proportional to the African American share of an electoral district. Otherwise, African Americans would exert greater influence than whites, violating “[o]ne of the bedrock principles in a democracy . . . the equal consideration of the preferences and interests of all citizens” (Verba 2003, 663). Third, some contend that any minority group with intense preferences on a particular issue ought to have special influence in that issue domain, identifying the *pluralist* standard of political equality. Under this standard, African Americans should be better represented than whites on issues especially important to them (Dahl 1956).

Our task is to determine whether any of these three standards of political equality are satisfied with respect to racial groups’ influence in the American political system.³ Since “the debate over equality of political influence is empirical rather than normative” (Verba and Orren 1985, 184), we provide empirics informing this debate. First, we assess whether African Americans and whites exert equal influence on the decisions of U.S. Senators, as the egalitarian standard of political equality requires. Then we ask if African Americans are more politically equal when they comprise a larger share of their state’s population, as the proportionality standard of political equality demands. Finally, we evaluate whether African Americans exert more equal influence on issues that tend to be more salient to African Americans than whites, as the pluralist standard of political equality requires.

Specifically, we ask how the preferences of whites and African Americans relate to the roll call votes their Senators cast in the 107th Senate (2001-2002). We find that across the full

³ Stated another way, we ask “[h]ow much political inequality is there?” (Verba and Orren 1985, 14). Prior studies tend to compare the representation of some African Americans to the representation of other African Americans, but assessing the extent of political (in)equality requires examination of the relative representation of different groups. If we are to examine the “bedrock principle” of political equality (Verba 2003), we must examine the representation of African Americans relative to that of whites.

spectrum of policies, African Americans have significantly less political influence under an egalitarian standard. Moreover, we find little evidence that the racial composition of states has much bearing on the relative representation of these groups, violating the proportionality principle of equality. However, as pluralistic models of democracy require and theoretical models of congressional roll call behavior predict, we find that on issues more salient for African Americans Senators actually represent their African American constituents as well as, and even somewhat better than, their white constituents.

Background

Political scientists have long been very much concerned with the prospect of political stratification, asking whether some groups have more “power” than others (Dahl 1961; Lindblom 1977). For instance, a series of studies charged that interest organizations do not represent all interests equally well (Schattschneider 1960; Lowi 1969). Others examined public perceptions of disparities in group influence (Form and Rytina 1969; Klorman 1978). These studies are rooted in the belief that “Democracy implies a certain degree of political equality – if not full equality of political influence among citizens, at least some limit to political inequality” (Verba and Orren 1985, 8).

The modern study of race and representation has tended to assume unequal political influence among racial groups and proceeded to examine under what conditions African Americans are *better* represented. 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; 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 affiliations 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 after the 1964 Voting Rights Act 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).

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. 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).

The important point is that 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, in the spirit of the “political stratification” literature we compare the *relative* representation of African Americans and whites, asking whether the relative influence of these groups satisfies three conceptions of political equality.⁴ Significantly, shifting the focus to 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.

Standards of Political Equality

In this section we discuss three standards of political equality by which we can judge the relative influence of racial groups in the American political system – egalitarianism, proportionality, and pluralism. According to the first of these standards, the *egalitarian* principle, African Americans and whites as groups should exert equal influence on the decisions of elected officials (Fiss 1976).⁵ In this view, any governmental action that disadvantages African Americans, even unintentionally, violates the principle of political equality. As one legal scholar has summarized this view, “when [majoritarian] institutions . . . produce outcomes that result in differential provision of public goods and services to political minorities (for example, in the rural South fewer roads being paved in the black side of town) – it seems difficult to resist the conclusion that Madison’s nightmare of ‘majority factionalism’ has become a reality” (Pildes 2000, 119-20). The egalitarian view of political equality among racial groups is not simply an abstract principle, however. Prior to 1976, several federal court decisions found

⁴ For related studies of racial groups’ relative *policy* influence, see Hero 1998; Johnson 2001; Hajnal, Gerber, and Louch 2002.

⁵ As Justice Lewis Powell recognized, “The concept of ‘representation’ necessarily applies to groups: groups of voters elect representatives, individual voters do not” *Davis v. Bandemer*, 478 U.S. 109, 167 (1986).

that state actions creating racially disparate policy impacts violated the 14th Amendment's equal protection requirement.⁶ For instance, in one case a federal appeals court invalidated an examination procedure New York City used to fill school supervisory positions because it resulted in racially disparate outcomes. In 1976, the Supreme Court ruled that absent evidence of discriminatory intent, facially neutral governmental actions that disadvantage racial minorities are not subject to special judicial scrutiny to determine their constitutionality.⁷ However, the Court indicated that Congress could pass laws banning racially disparate policy impacts, and Congress has proceeded to do so. For instance, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act now allows employment discrimination to be established by proof of discriminatory impact, and the 1982 Amendments to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 permit proof of discriminatory impact to establish a violation of that law.⁸

To test the egalitarian principle in the context of the relative representation of racial groups, we will assess whether African Americans' preferences exert equal influence on the decisions of Senators compared to whites, even when whites vastly outnumber African Americans in a state. If racial groups do not exert equal influence, we will conclude that under an egalitarian standard of political equality, African Americans are unequal.

A second standard by which we might judge the political equality of government decision making is that of *proportionality*. "The basic characteristic" of the proportional model is that

⁶ See *Castro v. Beecher*, 459 F.2d 725, 732-33 (1st. Cir. 1972); *Chance v. Bd. Of Exam'rs*, 458 F.2d 1167, 1176-77 (2d. Cir. 1972).

⁷ *Washington v. Davis*, 426 U.S. 229 (1976). A prominent constitutional law scholar disagrees with this view: "Minorities can also be injured when the government is 'only' indifferent to their suffering or 'merely' blind to how prior official discrimination contributed to it and how current official acts will perpetuate it" (Tribe 1988, 1516-19).

⁸ See *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.*, 401 U.S. 424 (1971) and *Thornburg v. Gingles*, 478 U.S. 30 (1986).

“all groups influence a decision in proportion to their numerical strength” (Steiner 1971, 63). By extension, proportionality requires that each individual exert the same influence on a given decision. As Sidney Verba described this equality standard, “Political equality refers to the extent to which citizens have an equal voice in governmental decisions” (2003, 663). The proportional standard of political equality is also consistent with Downs’ median voter theorem, in which all citizens participate equally in determining the policy position adopted by the winning candidate (Downs 1957).

In this view, evidence of racially unequal policy outcomes merely suggests, and does not prove, that individuals are politically unequal.⁹ Instead, evidence that individual African Americans exert less influence than individual whites is required. As applied to the relative representation of racial groups, the proportional standard of political equality requires that as the African American share of a state’s population increases, African Americans should exert greater influence on the decisions of Senators.

A third standard of political equality, the *pluralist* view, argues that intensely held preferences ought to exert special influence, even when those preferences are in the minority. This view 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.” Though he thought it desirable that minority groups should exert extra

⁹ As Guinier (1994, 14) put it, “the purpose is not to guarantee ‘equal legislative outcomes’; equal opportunity to influence legislative outcomes regardless of race is more like it.”

influence on issues they deem salient, Dahl (1956, 119) concluded that there is likely "no solution to the intensity problem through constitutional or procedural rules."¹⁰

In addition to these normative advocates of pluralism, others have theoretically and empirically investigated pluralist features of the political system. For instance, despite the lack of a constitutional guarantee that intense minorities should prevail, theoretical models of representative behavior show that re-election minded legislators have incentives to overrepresent minorities when they have disproportionately intense preferences (e.g., Downs 1957; Fiorina 1974). Specifically, Fiorina (1974) proved that a minority group which cares more about an issue than the majority will have disproportionate influence on a legislator who seeks to maximize votes. The proliferation of interest organizations that monitor elected officials' behavior in an issue domain and convey it to citizens in distilled form also facilitates this mechanism.

Moreover, empirical studies have shown that on issues they care more about, groups are more likely to pay attention to information in the media and election campaigns, and to make choices between candidates based on these salient issues (Iyengar 1990; Hutchings 2001, 2003). In particular, African Americans have been shown to pay greater attention than whites to civil rights issues in the media, and African Americans more than whites were able to identify their Senator's vote on Justice Thomas' appointment to the Supreme Court (Iyengar 1990; Hutchings 2001). There is also evidence that legislators' roll call patterns are more sensitive to the racial composition of their district on issues more salient for racial minorities (Lublin 1997; Hutchings 1998; Canon 1999).

¹⁰ In particular, Dahl analyzed whether the U.S. Senate and the Supreme Court acted to protect the interests of intense minorities, and concluded that they do not.

Applying the pluralist standard of political equality to the relative representation of racial groups, we will examine whether African Americans are at least as influential as whites on issues more salient for African Americans. Our aim is to evaluate whether this, or either of the other two standards of political equality among racial groups are satisfied in the U.S. Senate. Next, we describe the data and method we will use to make these determinations.

Methods and Data

We focus on the Senate to evaluate these standards of political equality between racial groups. Although many have studied representation in the Senate generally (e.g., Wright 1989; Wood and Hinton Andersson 1998; Fowler 2005), most studies of race and representation examine the House, meaning we know far less about racial differences in representation in the upper chamber. Yet the Senate may be especially unresponsive to African Americans' interests, since African Americans typically constitute less than 20 percent of a state's population and, in contrast to the House, there are no majority-African American districts where African American group interests may be especially well represented. Historically, there also have been very few African American Senators. These factors make the Senate a "less likely case" to uncover political equality across racial groups under any of the standards we examine.

The most common approach to studying representation assesses legislators' *responsiveness* to constituent opinion, estimating the extent to which liberal legislators represent liberal constituencies and conservative legislators represent conservative constituencies (e.g., Achen 1978; Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Erikson and Wright 2000). We follow in this tradition, but note that another conceptualization of representation supports our

conclusions.¹¹ We focus on Senators' roll call votes, but appreciate that these are just one of the important ways legislators represent racial groups (e.g., Canon 1999; Tate 2003). To determine the responsiveness of Senators' votes to whites' and African Americans' preferences, we model each Senator's votes as a function of his or her mean white and mean African American constituents' opinions. If Senators' votes respond more to whites' preferences, the coefficient for whites' preferences will be greater than that for African Americans' preferences. These models are not intended to explain Senators' votes, but to describe the correspondence between Senators' votes and constituents' preferences. Other factors surely affect Senators' votes, but our task is simply to test whether the end product of those other factors, actual votes, better reflect their white or African American constituents' preferences under various conditions. If the preferences of whites are a better predictor of the behavior of their Senators than are those of African Americans, we can conclude that Senators are less responsive to variation in African American opinion.¹²

Dependent Variables

As a measure of Senators' *aggregate* voting behavior, we first use their *W-NOMINATE* coordinates for the 107th Congress, which range continuously from -1 to +1 (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 1997). This version of NOMINATE is appropriate since it measures behavior in a single legislative term independent of other terms. Analyses of congressional roll call voting have regularly used various versions of NOMINATE scores as dependent variables (e.g.,

¹¹ In additional analyses and following Achen (1978), we found that on most issues, Senators also are more "proximate" to the mean state white opinion than to the mean state African American opinion, but that racial groups are equally distant on issues particularly salient for African Americans [Reviewers see Additional Analyses Table R-1].

¹² For an example of this general approach as applied to the influence of business interests, public opinion, and other factors on foreign policy, see Jacobs and Page (2005).

Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Bartels 2002). As a practical matter, W-NOMINATE coordinates correlate highly with alternative, summary measures of legislator roll call behavior like interest group ratings and Heckman-Snyder scores (Burden, Caldeira, and Groseclose 2000). To locate roll calls on issues more salient for African Americans in the 107th Senate, we follow others in relying on the Leadership Council on Civil Rights' (*LCCR*) identification of Key Votes (Lublin 1997; Canon 1999; Whitby 1997). We measure Senators' tendency to oppose the *LCCR*'s position on a subset of these votes that most clearly affected the lives of African Americans, creating a 0-12 scale based on 12 votes.¹³ We note that while some of these votes relate to explicitly racial issues such as voting rights and prosecuting hate crimes, others are only implicitly racial, such as education funding and support for community technology centers. While these implicitly racial issues are more salient to African Americans, they are likely not as salient as explicitly racial issues. We test whether African Americans exert greater influence on both explicitly and implicitly racial issues, which is a conservative test of the pluralist standard of political equality. African Americans' relative influence may be even greater on explicitly racial issues.

Independent Variables

Following the lead of Miller and Stokes (1963), many works examine the extent to which representatives' roll call votes relate 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

¹³ See Appendix B for a complete listing of the *LCCR* votes. Omitted from the creation of the index are votes concerning bilingual education and the prohibition of groups that deny membership on the basis of sexual orientation from meeting in public schools. Because abstention is treated as a "no" vote in the construction of this scale, we repeated our estimations using the proportion of votes in which a Senator opposed the position of the *LCCR*, among votes in which the Senator took part. This did not affect the conclusions we draw from the results reported in the text, so we report the models that use the scale to ease interpretation of the results.

opinion (Bullock and Brady 1983). These studies of representation tend to treat citizens as an undifferentiated group. However, this design can be adopted to study responsiveness to groups *within* electoral districts. For example, Bartels (2002) used a variant of this approach to determine that Senators respond disproportionately to constituents with higher incomes. Others have demonstrated that elected officials are especially responsive to their re-election constituency, to state party elites, and to independent voters (Fenno 1978; Bullock and Brady 1983; Wright 1989). As a practical matter, though, the data requirements are difficult to meet when studying groups within geographical constituencies. In our case, we are confronted by the difficulty that there are relatively few African Americans in many states. Fortunately, the National Annenberg Election Study (NAES) provides a huge sample (over 50,000 respondents) with at least 50 African Americans and an average of more than 200 African Americans sampled in 26 states.¹⁴ These samples generally provide sufficiently reliable estimates of state-level African American preferences to generate parameter estimates using standard errors-in-variables methods. Therefore, as our measure of constituent opinion, we use 2000 NAES¹⁵ ideological and issue self-placement items, which immediately preceded the 107th Congress (see Appendix A for question wording).¹⁶

¹⁴ These states include AL, AR, CA, CT, FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, MI, MO, MS, NJ, NY, NC, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WI. The mean number of white and African American respondents per state was 1,527 and 201, respectively.

¹⁵ We combine the NAES national cross-section data, which were obtained between December 1999 and January 2001, the Super Tuesday cross-section, and the Second Tuesday cross-section, for a total of 57,197 respondents. For the sampling protocol for the NAES, see Romer et al. (2003).

¹⁶ Since our measure of representation does not specify causal direction, and Senators' voting behavior can influence constituency opinion (e.g., Gerber and Jackson 1992; Hurley and Hill 2003), we try to limit the possibility of reciprocal effects by utilizing NAES responses that were acquired prior to the relevant W-NOMINATE or LCCR score.

The NAES offers several attractive features. First, as others have done, we pool various survey waves over time (Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993; Brace et al. 2002). An advantage of the NAES, compared to other data sources, is that it does not require aggregation over a long period of time to obtain the large number of respondents our approach requires (just over a year). Pooling over longer periods raises concerns about aggregating data that may not be stable over time. Another advantage of the NAES is its sampling method. The NAES used a Random Digit Dialing (RDD) procedure, rather than a stratified clustered sample (as used by the National Election Studies). The stratified sampling method is typically designed to draw a sample that is representative of the nation, but not states (see Brace et al. 2002). For example, a survey may sample several respondents in a major population center like Cincinnati, but not the other areas in that state. Such a sample would not necessarily be representative of all of Ohio. The RDD design, however, more closely approximates the ideal of making everyone in a state equally likely to be sampled, thereby generating more representative state-level samples. In fact, the NAES state samples appear to be quite representative.¹⁷ The measure of overall state ideology we generate is highly correlated with the percentage of the 2000 presidential vote George Bush received minus the percentage Al Gore received (.93), and Erikson Wright, and McIver's state ideology measure (.94).¹⁸ The geography of state white and African American ideology also

¹⁷ To evaluate the representativeness of the NAES state-level samples, we compared the demographics of the NAES data to the reported state demographics in the 2000 U.S. Census. We found that in the 26 states on which we focus, the proportion of the population that is African American in the NAES and in the Census correlate at .98. The state median income correlates with the (collapsed) NAES income self-placement scale at a .85 level. The percentage of state residents who live in urban settings and have college degrees in the NAES and the census correlate at .88 and .87, respectively.

¹⁸ As an additional validity check, we correlated our measures of white ideology and African American ideology with updated Erikson, Wright, and McIver pooled CBS/New York Times data (1978-1993). The two measures of white ideology were highly correlated (both .94), while the two measures of African American ideology were somewhat less highly correlated (.58). This may be attributable to the changing attitudinal composition of the African American population (e.g., Dawson 1994; Tate 2003), given that our data is obtained more than two decades after EWM's data begins.

comports with intuition.¹⁹ Still, as a robustness check we also re-estimated our models, where possible, using an updated version of Erikson, Wright, and McIver's (1993) CBS/New York Times data. The two datasets generate similar results.

Measuring mean white and African American preferences using the NAES is straightforward for respondent ideology, but it is more complicated to measure respondents' underlying attitude on issues relating to the LCCR key votes. To capture this attitude, we used principal components factor analysis with three NAES items related to “LCCR-like” issues: whether the federal government should spend more to provide health insurance, whether the federal government should do more to end job discrimination against African Americans, and whether poverty is a serious national problem.²⁰ This analysis retained one principal factor (eigenvalue = 1.54), with factor loadings of .56, .57 and .60 for the three items. We then generated a factor score for each respondent answering all three items, and use the state white and African American means of these scores to measure respondents' *LCCR Ideology*.

The NAES items provide relatively reliable state-level measures. Under standard definitions of reliability (see Jones and Norrander 1996)²¹, state-level mean white attitudes were highly reliable for both measures (see Table 1). In contrast, African Americans' state-level means for LCCR ideology were moderately reliable, and their ideological orientations were less reliable. To compensate for the lower reliability of the measures for African Americans, in all estimations where we anticipate that African Americans may be underrepresented, we use an

¹⁹ For instance, African American Ideology is more conservative in the South (FL, LA, NC) and more liberal in the Northeast (MA, NJ, NY) and Pacific Coast (CA).

²⁰ See item wording in Appendix A.

²¹ 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.”

errors-in-variables estimator to account for measurement error in African American opinion, while assuming that white opinion is measured perfectly. This will boost the estimated relationship between African Americans' opinions and Senators' action, thereby minimizing the amount of political inequality we will find. We also attempt to account for different measurement error in the preferences of whites and African Americans by sampling among whites so the white state mean opinions are based on the same sample sizes as the African American state mean opinions.

TABLE 1
RELIABILITIES OF STATE-LEVEL MEANS

	r
<i>Whites</i>	
Ideology	.97
LCCR Ideology	.96
<i>African Americans</i>	
Ideology	.53
LCCR Ideology	.64

To summarize, we calculated the mean opinion of whites and African Americans in each of the 26 states for these items, yielding *White Ideology*, *African American Ideology*, *White LCCR Ideology*, and *African American LCCR Ideology*. All roll call and opinion measures are coded with conservative alternatives higher, as are the roll call scores, so positive estimates for white and African American opinion indicate positive responsiveness.

Results

We present four sets of results. First, we confirm that the attitudes of whites and African Americans differ considerably in the areas we investigate. Thereafter, we assess whether

African Americans' distinctive preferences are generally less influential in the decisions Senators make, which would violate the equalitarian standard of political equality. Third, we determine whether political influence is more equal in states with larger African American populations, as the proportionality principle demands. Finally, we examine whether there are issue domains particularly salient for African Americans in which this group is politically equal under a pluralist standard of equality.

Racial Differences in Preferences

If whites and African Americans share similar preferences, Senators cannot respond more to the preferences of whites than to those of African Americans. Prior studies have shown that 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., Canon 1999; Kinder and Winter 2001). Moreover, 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; Gilliam 1996; Canon 1999; Tate 2003).

As expected, African American and white NAES respondents differed significantly on the items we employ - ideological orientation and the LCCR Ideology factor score (see Figure 1).²² Positive values in Figure 1 indicate that the mean white opinion in a state was more conservative than the mean African American opinion. As a group, African Americans are

²² Note that the values in Figure 1 cannot be compared across issues because they have unequal variances.

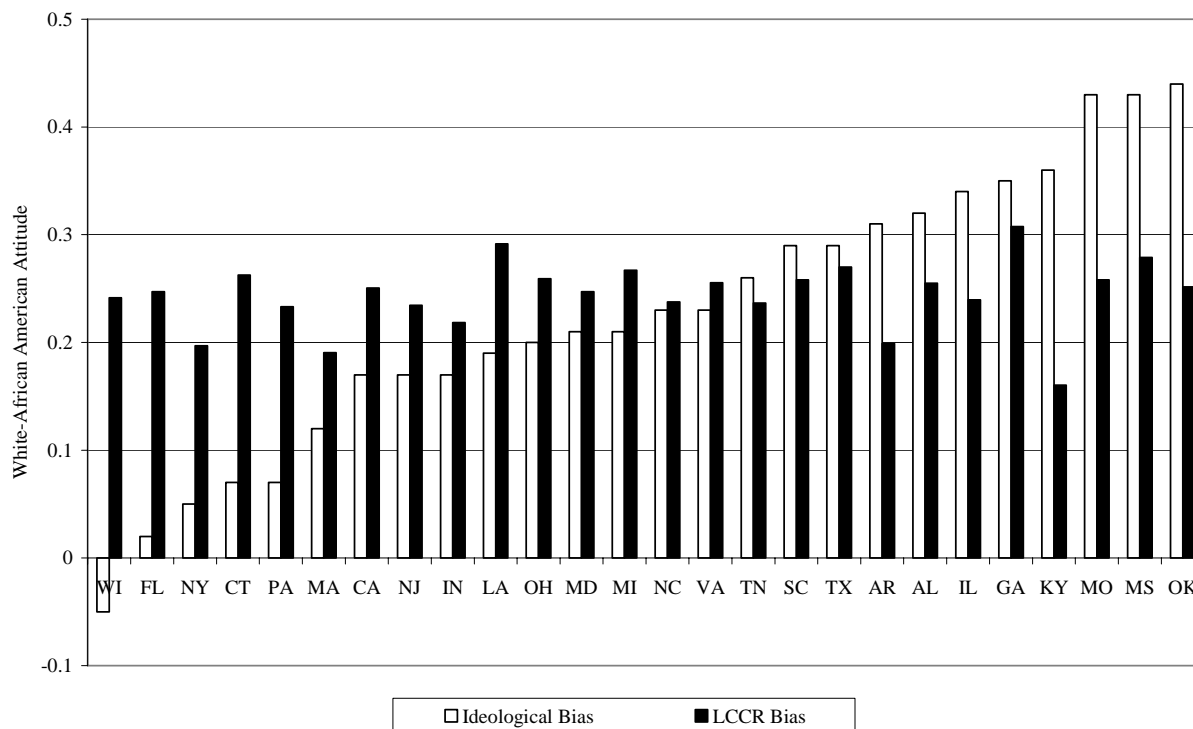
significantly more liberal than whites in their general orientation toward politics, and in most states this difference is statistically significant ($p < .10$ in 20 of 26 states, two-tailed test).²³

African Americans are also more supportive of increased federal spending on health insurance, more concerned about poverty, and more eager for the federal government to do more to stop job discrimination against African Americans - and thus not surprisingly their LCCR Ideology factor scores are significantly more liberal than those of whites ($p < .01$ for all 26 states). In sum, on the issues we analyze there is plenty of disagreement between whites and African Americans and thus the possibility of disparate influence.

The noticeable variation in the difference between whites' and African Americans' attitudes across states on both measures begs explanation. For instance, larger differences in white and African American ideology appear to exist in the South compared to the Nonsouth. Explaining geographic variation in the difference between whites' and African Americans' attitudes is an interesting and important question, and insofar as we know, unanswered. However, the principal purpose of this study is to examine whether variation in these differences in attitudes relates to the manner in which elected officials vote on public policies, and so for our purposes it is sufficient to demonstrate that the differences exist.

²³ We also compared white and African American ideology using Erikson, Wright, and McIver's pooled CBS/New York Times measures of ideology (1976-1993), which were measured on a three-point scale. We found that among the 33 states that contained more than 50 African Americans in the EWM data, 27 states show a significant difference between white and African American ideology ($p < .10$).

Figure 1: Racial Bias in State Preferences



Source: State means calculated using NAES (2000) data.

Testing the Egalitarian View

In our view, scholars generally assume, without direct evidence, that whites are politically advantaged. This assumption makes sense. After all, there are many circumstantial reasons to expect that racial disparities in political influence exist.²⁴ It is nonetheless important to document the *extent* of racial inequalities in influence. Knowing this will tell us how far from the egalitarian standard of political equality we currently are.

²⁴ For instance, patterns of political participation (e.g., Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), African Americans' numerical minority status, and this group's lesser voting power (Bartels 1998), all point to more influence by whites.

We analyze Senators' relative responsiveness on all issues with a simple model of W-NOMINATE scores as a function of whites' and African Americans' general ideologies (Table 2). Taken as a whole, these models provide a sort of raw, descriptive measure of relative responsiveness across racial groups. They are not intended to account for all the intervening considerations that come between citizens' opinions and Senators' decisions. They tell us, given all the factors that influence Senators' votes, the extent to which Senators are less responsive to variation in African American ideology across our 26 states (52 Senators).²⁵ First, comparing the first two columns in Table 2, we observe that white ideology is a better predictor of Senators' W-NOMINATE scores than is African American ideology, even accounting for the lower reliability of our African American ideology measure using an errors-in-variables estimator.²⁶ Indeed, only the estimate for white ideology is statistically significant. In some states (especially in the South), both whites and African Americans are more conservative than their counterparts in other states, so white ideology is related to African American ideology (Pearson's $r = .50$). African American ideology might be spuriously related to Senator roll call voting, weakly though it is, based on its correlation with white ideology. When both white and African American ideology are included in a single model, white ideology becomes an even better predictor of Senators' voting behavior, relative to African American ideology.²⁷ Indeed, the

²⁵ Out of concern that the two observations for each state exhibit correlation in the independent variables, we also estimated separate models of each state's junior and senior Senators. In these models, once again Senators are responsive to variation in white but not African American ideology.

²⁶ We also estimated this model using Senators' second-dimension W-NOMINATE scores as the dependent variable. In some historical periods, these second-dimension scores appear to measure legislators' voting behavior on racial issues (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). We found that neither White nor African American Ideology predicted Senators' second-dimension scores in the 107th Senate.

²⁷ We also randomly sampled among whites to create measures of white and African American ideology that were based on the same state sample sizes. Estimating the model reported in Table 2, column 3 using these measures yielded a coefficient for white ideology that was somewhat smaller (2.82) and statistically significant ($p=.02$), while the coefficient for African American ideology remained negative and

estimate for African American ideology is negative. In sum, these models indicate that, across the full spectrum of issues, Senators are much less responsive to African Americans' preferences.²⁸

TABLE 2
RACIAL DIFFERENCES IN POLITICAL INFLUENCE,
107TH SENATE W-NOMINATE SCORES

<i>Estimator</i>	<i>OLS</i>	<i>Eivreg</i>	<i>Eivreg</i>
White Ideology	3.23* [.54]	---	4.22* [.94]
African American Ideology	---	2.52 [1.63]	-2.57 [2.04]
Constant	-10.49* [1.73]	-7.63 [4.91]	-5.97 [3.96]
p – value	---	---	.02
N	52	52	52
R ²	.42	.08	.47

Standard errors in brackets; * denotes $p < .05$; Eivreg denotes errors-in-variables regression. Reported p-value is the result of a two-tailed hypothesis test that the white and African American ideology coefficients are equal.

To illustrate the magnitude of the relationships between constituents' ideologies and their Senators' votes, we simulated the difference between the expected W-NOMINATE score of the

insignificant. To guard against the possibility that white and African American ideology are collinear, we also regressed Senators' W-NOMINATE scores on the *difference* between white and African American ideology, finding that as whites become more conservative relative to African Americans within states, Senators across the country become more conservative in their roll call behavior ($p < .05$).

²⁸ As a robustness check, we also estimated these models using the Erikson, Wright, and McIver's pooled CBS/New York Times data (1976-1993). In this data, the reliability of White Ideology is .98, while the reliability of African American Ideology is .83. Regressing Senators' W-NOMINATE scores on the EWM measures of state ideology, we again find that the parameter estimate for White Ideology is much greater than the estimate for African American Ideology. We do not use the EWM data for the analyses reported in the text because it does not have items that allow us to measure LCCR Ideology.

states at the 25th and 75th percentiles of the white and African American ideology distributions using the estimates in column 3.²⁹ The difference between these marginal effects provides an indication of the degree to which Senators' votes respond better to whites' opinions. In the 107th Senate, the magnitude of responsiveness is dramatically greater for whites. These simulations reveal that a conservative shift in white ideology would lead to an increase of *.90 points* on the -1 to +1 W-NOMINATE scale, which rivals the effect of Senators' party affiliations on these scores. By comparison, a similar, conservative shift in African American ideology would not even have a positive effect on Senators' conservatism (-.12).

In short, Table 2 suggests that Senators respond much more to their white constituents than their African American constituents. However, an alternative interpretation of the results in Table 2 is that they reflect Senators' attentiveness to their co-partisan constituents, who are more likely to be white than African American by virtue of the composition of state populations (e.g., Powell 1982; Bullock and Brady 1983). Since members of Congress are especially responsive to the co-partisans in their state or district (e.g., Fiorina 1974; Bullock and Brady 1983; Hurley and Hill 2003) and the group of whites may be comprised disproportionately of co-partisans, our results may just reflect Senators' disproportionate responsiveness to co-partisans rather than to whites per se. We test this possibility by asking whether co-partisan whites are advantaged over co-partisan African Americans. In unreported analyses, we found that even among each Senator's co-partisans, whites are much better represented [Reviewers see Additional Analyses Table R-2]. In fact, like African Americans at large, Senators as a group do not respond to their

²⁹ Note that the ranges of white (.56) and African American (.48) ideology are similar. Note also 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 shift in opinion. Marginal effects were simulated using CLARIFY (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003).

African American constituents at all, even when they identify with their Senators' party. Based on this analysis, we can be fairly sure our results in Table 2 are not spurious.³⁰

Finding that African Americans have less political influence compared to whites on a broad array of issues is itself novel and important. We discuss some of the normative and empirical implications of this evidence in the conclusion. The point we emphasize at this juncture is that by this evidence, U.S. Senators' roll call patterns do not satisfy the egalitarian standard of political equality. However, perhaps this standard of political equality is too exacting. We next explore whether this gap in the relative representation of racial groups diminishes in states with larger African American populations.

Testing the Proportional View

In this section, we ask whether the voting patterns of Senators satisfy the requirements of the proportional standard of political equality among racial groups. Specifically, we ask if the difference in influence we uncovered in Table 2 is diminished in states with larger African American populations. In a perfectly proportional system, for example, in a hypothetical state where African Americans and whites comprised equal shares of the state population, these groups would exert equal influence.

As noted above, prior work focusing on the U.S. House has shown that as the African American proportion of an electoral constituency grows, Representatives vote first more

³⁰ A second, alternative interpretation of these results is that Senators' roll call voting may have a much greater influence on the ideologies of whites than on those of African Americans. This would be consistent in some respects with evidence that elite behavior can affect constituent opinion (e.g., Gerber and Jackson 1992; Hurley and Hill 2003). However, while several studies show that citizens' attitudes on specific issues may be influenced by their elected officials' roll call voting, we have not located a study showing that citizens' general ideological orientations are subject to such influence. It seems more likely that a Senator's vote on a minimum wage bill would influence their constituents' opinions on the minimum wage than that the same vote, or a series of votes, would alter constituents' identifications as liberals, moderates, or conservatives.

conservatively and then (with further growth) more liberally, although a number of factors condition this relationship (Combs, Hibbing, and Welch 1984; Grofman, Griffin, and Glazer 1992; Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Canon 1999). Our approach is unique in looking at the Senate, where the distribution of racial composition is quite different, in our use of state racial composition as a factor moderating African American opinion rather than proxying it, and in our focus on the political equality of racial groups.

If individual African Americans exert the same influence as individual whites, African Americans as a group will be more equally influential as the size of the African American population in states increases. We assess whether African American Ideology is better represented in states with larger African American populations. We do so by interacting African American Ideology with the percentage of each state's population comprised of African Americans. If Senators respond to their African American constituents more when they constitute a larger part of their constituency, the parameter estimate for this interaction term will be positive and statistically significant. We regress Senators' W-NOMINATE scores on White Ideology, African American Ideology, the proportion of each state's population that is African American, and the interaction of this proportion and African American Ideology. We find that the interaction term fails to reach statistical significance (see Table 3), meaning African Americans' relative influence does not increase as the size of the African American population within states increases. Excluding the White Ideology term from this model does not alter these results in any important way. Finally, when we allow for the conditional effect to be quadratic rather than linear we still do not find evidence of a systematic but nonlinear relationship. From any angle, state racial composition does little to improve the representation of African Americans' preferences.

The most likely explanation for this, in our view, is that the size of African American populations in most states is not large enough to boost African Americans' political equality, especially given this group's lower voting power (Bartels 1998). Indeed, prior studies of the House of Representatives find that as the size of a district's African American population increases, there is not a liberalizing effect on Representative voting until African Americans comprise about 40% of the district, a level no state approaches (Cameron, et al. 1996; Lublin 1997).

TABLE 3
STATE RACIAL COMPOSITION AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE, 107TH SENATE

African American Ideology *	-3.209
% African American	[8.115]
African American Ideology	-0.434
	[1.307]
% African American	6.768
	[24.710]
White Ideology	4.626*
	[0.650]
Constant	-13.236*
	[4.133]
N	52
R ²	0.54

Standard errors in brackets; * denotes $p < .05$.

Based on these results, we conclude that Senators' voting patterns do not satisfy a proportional standard of political equality. As the African American proportion of state populations increases, African Americans are not more equally influential. This conclusion is particularly troubling, for these results tell us that in the Senate, individual African Americans

and whites do not have “an equal voice in government decisions” as a proportion of their share of state populations.

Testing the Pluralist View

We have seen that Senators’ votes across all issues, as captured by their W-NOMINATE scores, generally reflect their white constituents’ preferences much more than those of their African American constituents. We have also seen that as African Americans’ share of state populations increases, responsiveness does not improve. This section continues the comparison of relative representation across racial groups, asking whether political equality varies across issue domains.³¹

The theoretical literature suggests that when issues are more salient for whites, Senators should vote according to whites’ preferences, but should give greater weight than they otherwise would to African Americans’ preferences on issues disproportionately salient to this group (e.g., Fiorina 1974). We examine roll calls on issues more salient for African Americans, as captured by LCCR votes. We follow a series of studies that have relied on LCCR votes to identify roll calls disproportionately important to African Americans (e.g. Bullock 1981; Whitby 1997; Cameron et al. 1996; Lublin 1997; Hutchings 1998; Canon 1999). The LCCR votes we analyze primarily concern social welfare policies (e.g., economic security, health care, aid to education, voting rights). There is considerable independent evidence that these issues are currently more salient for African Americans than whites. For instance, in the NAES, African Americans were

³¹ A 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 estimated relationship between preferences and Senator action. The items on specific policies may be more meaningful and clear, presumably making them more comparable for whites and African Americans.

more likely than whites to conclude that the number of Americans lacking health insurance is a serious problem ($p < .001$). Similarly, the NAES data show that African Americans are more likely than whites to indicate that the amount of poverty in the U.S. is a serious problem ($p < .001$). Therefore, since minority groups with intensely held preferences should be better represented than their minority status would suggest, we suspect African Americans may be more equally represented on LCCR votes.

TABLE 4
POLITICAL INFLUENCE, 107TH SENATE LCCR SCORES

<i>Estimator</i>	<i>OLS</i>	<i>OLS</i>	<i>OLS</i>
White LCCR Ideology	13.77* [4.52]	---	3.70 [5.60]
African American LCCR Ideology	---	24.10* [5.70]	20.85* [7.55]
Constant	4.21* [.92]	25.28* [4.60]	22.20* [6.57]
p – value	---	---	.16
N	52	52	52
R ²	.16	.26	.27

* denotes $p < .05$

Reported p-value is from two-tailed hypothesis test that the white and African American LCCR Ideology estimates are equal.

Indeed, the pattern of Senators' responsiveness to racial groups is much different on the LCCR votes. Note first that we do not give African American opinion the advantage of an errors-in-variables estimator for these models, so any advantage or equality in responsiveness African Americans enjoy cannot be attributed to the estimator we employ. In these models, Senators' votes responded *more to African Americans' preferences* than to whites' preferences, both in the bivariate and multivariate estimations (Table 4, columns 1-3).

Next, we estimated marginal effects for LCCR votes using the model reported in Table 4, column 3. For these votes, as African Americans' LCCR Ideologies changed from the 25th to the 75th percentile in the distribution, becoming more opposed to LCCR positions, Senators opposed the LCCR's position on about 3.5 more votes. In contrast, a similar change in white LCCR ideology would reduce support on just 0.7 votes.³² In general, on issues that are particularly salient to African Americans, Senators are more responsive, indeed about five times more responsive, to variation in African American opinion.

Based on these findings, we conclude that Senators' voting patterns satisfy a pluralist standard of political equality. On the issues African Americans care most about, their influence not only rivals that of whites, it appears to exceed whites' influence. This is particularly impressive in the Senate, a venue that may be especially biased against minority groups like African Americans. Even here, in the Senate, African Americans exert influence beyond their numbers in domains of greater salience to the African American community.

Conclusion

We have investigated whether the pattern of racial differences in representation satisfies three different standards of political equality. Our findings contribute to our knowledge of "how much equality there is [rather than] how much there should be" (Verba and Orren 1985, 20). We found that the egalitarian standard of political equality is not satisfied by current patterns of racial representation. Nor is the manner in which whites and African Americans are represented consistent with a proportional conception of political equality. Even when taking the size of the African American population in a state into account, the Senate is not equally responsive to

³² The ranges of white (.64) and African American (.50) opinion are similar.

African Americans' preferences outside those areas of greater salience to African Americans. This appears to be a violation not just of the principle that groups should be equally represented, but that each individual in a group ought to exert the same influence as an individual in another group. However, African Americans are actually *better* represented than whites on issues differentially salient for African Americans, which satisfies a pluralist conception of political equality.

Whether evidence of equality under the pluralist standard is sufficient to allay concerns about violations of political equality under the other two standards is a matter for normative debate. As noted above, readers' normative reactions to these findings will depend on their views of minority representation.³³ Some may contend that African Americans' preferences ought to be more equally reflected in votes on all policies, not just those most viewed as especially important to the African American community. Many will be troubled by our finding that African Americans as individuals appear to exert less influence than whites, even after accounting for African Americans' smaller share of the population.

Our empirical evidence informs discussions of race and representation and reforms designed to bring the political influence of these racial groups more toward balance. 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 as groups *and* as individuals really do have less political influence on a wide array of policies, which provides an empirical basis for such studies. This is significant, because "the ability to influence the government . . . is a fundamental democratic

³³ In the words of Verba and Orren (1985, 8), "The issue of how much political equality is necessary for practical democracy . . . is not settled."

right” which is important “for its own sake and for the sake of the other rights it protects” (Verba and Orren 1985, 182).

However, our results demonstrate that future efforts to improve the representation of minority groups should be specific about what standards by which they evaluate relative influence. As we have seen, different standards yield different conclusions. It is not enough to say we desire equal influence for minority groups. We must be clear about what type of equality we are seeking. In a similar vein, academic studies of race and representation as well as practitioners’ attempts to alter the relative influence of constituent groups should also be specific about which issues are involved. Research and reform efforts should reflect our findings and similar findings in extant research that patterns of representation differ across issue domains (e.g., Hurley and Hill 2003; Wlezien 2004).

In more broadly theoretical terms, this analysis also 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 solve “the intensity problem.” Finding that responsiveness to 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 (Hutchings 1998; 2003). 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, to convey to office holders that those issues are indeed salient for the group, and to pursue other strategies to get those issues on the legislative agenda.

Finally, these findings advance our understanding of why African Americans are less likely to participate in elections (e.g., Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Citizens are less likely to vote if they feel "externally" inefficacious (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 politically unequal based on two of the three standards of equality we have examined. This may depress turnout among African Americans, which will further undermine their chances for equal influence since turnout enhances representation (Bartels 1998; Martin 2003).

We provide a picture of the overall differences in representation between two racial groups. The extent to which Senators reflect these groups' preferences varies across issues, but generally works to African Americans' disadvantage. Perhaps most disconcerting, even under a proportional standard of political equality, African Americans appear to be politically unequal. These findings thus serve as a reminder that "[t]he history of racial inequality represents a particularly serious departure from the fabled American egalitarianism" (Verba and Orren 1985, 4), but also point to significant progress, showing that African Americans have garnered equal political influence under one conception of equality.

Appendix

A. Question Wording of National Annenberg Election Study (NAES)

Health Insurance: Providing health care for people who do not already have it - should the federal government spend more money, on this, the same as now, less, or no money at all?

Ideology: Generally speaking, would you describe your political views as very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, or very liberal?

Job Discrimination: Trying to stop job discrimination against blacks - should the federal government do more about this, the same as now, less, or nothing at all?

Poverty: The amount of poverty in the United States - is this an extremely serious problem, serious, not too serious, or not serious at all?

B. Brief Description of Roll Call Votes

Votes used to Create LCCR Score, 107th Senate

<i>Date</i>	<i>Roll Call #</i> <i>Senate LCCR</i>	<i>Brief Description</i>
2.1.01	---	1 Ashcroft confirmation as Attorney General
3.8.01	18	2 Hatch motion to table Durbin amendment to predatory lending bill which would invalidate claims against borrowers if the lender had violated the Truth in Lending Act
4.4.01	69	3 Harkin amendment to reduce tax cut to increase education spending
5.9.01	96	4 Create community technology centers to provide residents of economically distressed communities access to information technology and training.
5.10.01	98	5 Tax cuts limiting increases in various domestic programs
5.10.01	99	6 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.

5.15.01	103	8	Spend \$7.1 billion to reduce class size by hiring more teachers
5.26.01	107	9	Vote on conference bill to cut taxes, limiting increases in various domestic programs
2.14.02	31	11	Vote on amendment which would restore right to vote in federal elections to felons who have fully served their prison sentences
2.27.02	38	12	Motion to table amendment to permit use of other means of verification than photo identity for voters who register by mail
6.11.02	147	13	Cloture motion on the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, which would enhance the federal response to hate crimes
9.26.02	226	14	Cloture vote on bill creating Department of Homeland Security including civil service protections for workers

Additional Analyses for Reviewers

Measuring Representation Differently

In this set of additional analyses, we confront the possibility that the measure of representation we use - responsiveness - might affect our findings. For instance, it is not difficult to imagine configurations of white and African American preferences, and of Senator roll call voting, in which African Americans are "nearer" on average to their individual Senators, but where Senators *as a group* are more responsive to the variation in white opinion.³⁴ To rule out the possibility that our findings are driven by our use of responsiveness as a definition of representation, we will briefly consider an alternative measure of representation. Namely, other representation studies have focused on the *centrism* of legislators, or the distance between legislators and their mean constituent (Miller 1964; Achen 1978; Powell 1982).

To assess Senators' relative centrism, we must determine the distance between Senators' aggregated roll call decisions and their white and African American constituents' attitudes. The lack of a common scale for legislators and their constituents has confounded legislative scholars for decades (Miller 1964; Achen 1978; Wright 1978; Kuklinski 1978; Powell 1982; 1989). The earliest approach was simply to transform the scales measuring Senators' decisions and constituents' attitudes to the same range (Miller 1964; Achen 1978; Burden 2004). Another distance measure recognized that the range of constituent opinion may be greater than the range of legislator behavior (Powell 1982). Yet another tack was to standardize both measures (Wright

³⁴ For instance, if whites' preferences vary linearly between .2 and 1 on a 0-1 scale while African Americans' preferences vary randomly between 0 and .1, and Senators' voting patterns vary linearly between 0 and .1, Senators will be more responsive to whites' preferences although they are closer to African Americans.

1978).³⁵ One reason for this proliferation of distance measures is that each has been subject to criticism of one form or another. Rather than adjudicating between the merits and demerits of these measures, we use as many of them as possible in our analysis. If multiple measures of legislator distance point to the same conclusions concerning centrism and proximity, we gain more confidence in those conclusions. Moreover, since we are comparing the distance of whites and African Americans from their legislators, so long as we have equal (if imperfect) confidence in our measures of white and African American opinion, we will get a sense of the political inequality between these groups.

For the purpose of assessing legislators' average distance from their state white and African American means, we contrasted legislators' aggregate roll call behavior with these means three ways. First, following Achen (1978), we rescaled the W-NOMINATE and LCCR scores so their range was the same as that of their respective NAES ideology item or factor score.³⁶ Next, following Powell (1982) we rescaled the roll call scores with a somewhat narrower range than for constituent opinion.³⁷ Finally, similar to Wright (1979), we standardized all three measures of roll call votes and their respective NAES ideology items or factor scores.³⁸ In each case, we calculate the absolute distance between Senators' decisions as measured by the three roll call measures and their state's mean white and African American NAES respondent, and perform

³⁵ More precisely, Wright (1978) used the mean and variance of politically active citizens' opinions to transform all citizens' opinions, while standardizing the distribution of legislators to mean zero, standard deviation one.

³⁶ Specifically, $W-NOMINATE = W-NOMINATE*2+3$; $LCCR = (LCCR-8.1)/14$.

³⁷ Specifically, $WNOMINATE = W-NOMINATE*1.25+3$; $LCCR = (LCCR-8.1)/17$.

³⁸ Unlike Wright, however, we are unable to use the distribution of strong partisans to standardize the distribution of all respondents because the data for the centrism analyses have been collapsed into state means.

a difference of means test to assess whether the average absolute distance of white means is smaller than the average absolute distance of African American means.

Considering first citizens' ideological orientations, regardless of the distance measure adopted, Senators' W-NOMINATE scores are closer to mean white ideology than African American ideology (see Table R-1). Our confidence in this conclusion varies somewhat by distance measure, but under a one-tailed test, the p-value is always less than .06. Comparing centrism on issues more salient for African Americans reveals a much different pattern - that African Americans are equally represented on these issues. Two of the measures indicate that the average difference in the distance of the mean African Americans and whites from their Senators is virtually identical, which we interpret as evidence that the two groups are equally represented. One of the measures indicates that the mean African American is significantly closer on average to their Senators, or that they are better represented than whites on these issues.

TABLE R-1
DISTANCE AND POLITICAL INEQUALITY, 107TH SENATE

<i>Distance Measure</i>	<i>Miller/Achen</i>	<i>Wright</i>	<i>Powell</i>
W-NOMINATE			
abs(White Ideology - W-NOMINATE)	1.26	.66	.77
abs(AA Ideology - W-NOMINATE)	1.30	1.00	.81
Difference	-.05	-.33	-.04
p-value	.10	.001	.11
LCCR			
abs(White Opinion - LCCR)	.33	.93	.27
abs(AA Opinion - LCCR)	.32	.77	.29

Difference	.01	.17	-.02
p-value	.42	.03	.62
N	52	52	52

In sum, our results point to the conclusions that African Americans are generally further from their Senators, on average, but that Senators are not only more responsive to variation in African American opinion on salient issues for this group, Senators are also “closer” to African Americans on these issues.

Co-Partisanship

As noted in the text, we estimated a model of W-NOMINATE scores as a function of Senators’ co-partisan constituents’ preferences, broken down by race. That is, for Democratic Senators, we included the self-identified white and African American Democrats from their state. As the results show, white co-partisan preferences were significantly related to Senators’ roll call voting patterns, but African American co-partisan preferences were not.

TABLE R-2: RACE, POLITICAL INFLUENCE, AND CO-PARTISANSHIP

Co-Partisan White Ideology	1.290*
	[0.065]
Co-Partisan African American Ideology	0.121
	[0.108]
Constant	-4.558*
	[0.276]
N	51
R ²	0.93

* denotes $p < .05$

OLS coefficients, standard errors in brackets

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