

RESEARCH NOTE



# Race and the Representation of Blacks' Interests During Reconstruction

MICHAEL D. COBB, NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

JEFFERY A. JENKINS, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY AND MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

A majority of recent studies finds that black members of Congress are more supportive of blacks' interests than are white members of Congress, even white Democrats. These results are limited, however, exclusively to the contemporary period as scholars have not studied how black members of Congress behaved during Reconstruction, the first era of blacks' descriptive representation. Although black representatives from this era are typically portrayed as having been responsive to blacks' interests, some recent studies suggest that they often supported whites' interests on issues important to their black constituents. Employing a measure of racial ideology as well as a measure of general ideology developed by Poole and Rosenthal (1997), we investigate the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation in the U.S. House immediately after the Civil War, through the use of descriptive statistics, OLS regression, and forecasting techniques. We find that black Republicans during Reconstruction were more ideologically liberal on both general and racial issues than their white Republican colleagues in the South. These results suggest that the linkage between descriptive and substantive representation for blacks is not merely a recent phenomenon, but rather has more general applicability across time.

A majority of recent congressional studies concludes that black members of Congress do a better job of representing the policy interests of black constituents

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than do white members of Congress (for an opposing view, see Swain 1993). One set of studies, for example, finds that black members are more likely to vote for bills that advance blacks' interests, especially if the legislation directly and narrowly benefits black constituents (Hall and Heflin 1994; Hall 1996; Cameron et al. 1996; Lublin 1997; Whitby 1997; Canon 1999a; Whitby and Krause forthcoming). Other studies find that black members are more ideologically liberal than white Democrats (Lublin 1997; McCarty et al. 1997; Whitby and Gilliam 1998), sponsor more legislation directly beneficial to black constituents (Cobb and Jenkins 1996; Canon 1999a), and work harder on the floor and in committee to advance blacks' interests (Hall 1996; DiLorenzo 1997; Canon 1999a).<sup>1</sup>

Each of these studies establishes a link between descriptive representation and the substantive representation of blacks' issues.<sup>2</sup> Our knowledge about the nature of this relationship, however, is limited temporally. That is, systematic evidence exists only for black members of Congress during the past several decades. In this paper, we investigate whether descriptive representation is linked to the substantive representation of blacks' issues during an earlier period in American history, the post-Civil War years of Reconstruction, when blacks were first elected to Congress and when black citizens first voted en masse.

We believe that a systematic study of black members during Reconstruction presents a unique opportunity to examine descriptive-substantive linkages in a more general way, that is, to determine the degree to which such linkages may be contingent or time-bound. Several recent studies, for example, argue that white members of Congress supported blacks' interests at least as well as black members of Congress did during Reconstruction (Haynie 1991; Swain 1993). It is therefore possible that the linkage between descriptive and substantive representation is simply a recent phenomenon—a product of contemporary contextual conditions or group interests.

To assess the quality of black members' substantive representation during Reconstruction, we analyze their congressional roll-call vote choices (as well as the vote choices of white members) in a comprehensive statistical analysis. This is done in two ways. First, we construct a measure of racial ideology by scaling all roll-call votes dealing with racial policy issues. Second, we incorporate a measure of general ideology, the NOMINATE score developed by Poole and Rosenthal (1997). By analyzing members' voting behavior both narrowly, using

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<sup>1</sup> For a more comprehensive review of the literature, see Canon (1999b).

<sup>2</sup> A related set of research has focused on the question of whether the creation of majority-minority districts maximizes substantive black representation in Congress (Grofman et al. 1992; Swain 1993; Bullock 1995; Cameron et al. 1996; Lublin 1997, 1999; Whitby 1997; Canon 1999; Epstein and O'Halloran 1999; Kousser 1999). Inherent in this debate is the assumption that the creation of majority-minority districts will lead to better substantive representation for blacks, because (a) more blacks will be elected to Congress and (b) black members represent blacks' interests better than white members (Whitby and Krause forthcoming).

the race-based measure, and broadly, using NOMINATE scores, we are afforded two different perspectives to examine the dynamics of race of representation.

The article proceeds as follows. In the first section, we describe the theoretical foundations underlying the linkage between descriptive and substantive representation. In the second section, we briefly review the historical literature on descriptive representation in Congress during Reconstruction, as well as the conflicting opinions about black members' substantive representation of blacks' interests during this period. In the third section, we present our research design and describe the data. In the fourth section, we conduct our tests and report our results. In the fifth section, we present our conclusions.

#### DESCRIPTIVE-SUBSTANTIVE REPRESENTATIONAL LINKAGES: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Why are black members of Congress more supportive of blacks' interests than are white members of Congress? Two major theories have been advanced.<sup>3</sup>

The first theory, explicated by Dawson (1994), relies upon the intersection of racial group socialization and general representative-constituency linkages. A number of scholars argue that black members of Congress identify foremost with racial group interests because, like most blacks in American society, they too face discrimination and prejudice (Miller et al. 1981; Shingles 1981; Gurin et al. 1989). As a consequence, Dawson argues, self interests become synonymous with group interests, as black members perceive that their own fates are linked to the fates of the overall group, which inevitably leads them to expend more effort than white members to represent blacks' interests. This is evident in the comments of a black member interviewed by Fenno (1978: 115), who said, "When I vote my conscience as a black man, I necessarily represent the black community."

Another theory, offered by Hall and Heflin (1994; also see Hall 1996), suggests that members of Congress respond to the constituencies that they "see," usually core constituencies that form their reelection coalitions. Based again on racial group socialization and consciousness, Hall and Heflin argue that black and white members often see different core constituencies, even when representing similar districts. Black members, for example, will normally have first-hand experience with economic deprivation, social isolation, and discrimination, and therefore feel a strong connection to black constituents. Also, on a more pragmatic note, Hall and Heflin argue that white members can usually afford to ignore black voters and still have a high likelihood of reelection, while the same cannot be said of black members. It follows then that black members are more likely to recognize the importance of black constituents to their electoral coalition and to be more sensitive to their needs.

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<sup>3</sup> For a more extensive review of these theories, see Whitby (1997).

We believe that the notions of minority-group consciousness and electoral linkages that underlie contemporary theories of race and representation also apply to the Reconstruction era. Recently emancipated from slavery, blacks were subject to virulent prejudice, discrimination, and violence, and their labor was systematically exploited, sanctioned by law and the prevailing sociopolitical theory (DuBois 1935; Franklin 1956, 1961; Foner 1988). The same was true for black members of Congress, as most were ex-slaves who faced similar discriminatory treatment throughout their lives, both in and out of office (Clay 1992; Swain 1993; Foner 1996). It is therefore reasonable that these black members identified with racial group interests. Moreover, as in contemporary times, black members during Reconstruction relied almost exclusively on black voters to secure election: only two blacks were elected to Congress from majority-white districts, both from districts greater than 40 percent black (Swain 1993; Valelly 1999). It therefore seems reasonable that black and white members saw different core constituencies; more to the point, black members almost certainly realized that they could not ignore their black constituents and hope to be reelected.

While the conditions underlying contemporary theories of race and representation seem to be applicable to the Reconstruction era, there is disagreement as to how black members of Congress behaved during this earlier period in American history. In particular, some recent accounts suggest that black members did *not* represent blacks' interests any better than did white members. We attempt to sort out this disagreement by conducting a definitive analysis of Reconstruction-era congressional behavior. Before doing so, however, we set the stage by presenting a more detailed review of the literature on descriptive-substantive representation during Reconstruction.

#### BLACK REPRESENTATIVES DURING RECONSTRUCTION

Before the Civil War, blacks could vote in six northern states, but their numbers were quite small (Weeks 1894). Southern blacks, of course, were prohibited from voting.<sup>4</sup> As a condition for readmittance to the Union, however, Congress required southern states to extend suffrage to all males, and by 1868 more than 700,000 blacks were registered to vote in the South (Franklin 1961). In March of 1870, the right to vote was extended to black males across the nation through the Fifteenth Amendment, and black registration continued to grow steadily into the early part of the decade. Although violence, intimidation, and fraud often characterized southern whites' reaction to this turn of events, blacks voted in

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<sup>4</sup> Free blacks were considered citizens and provided with the right of suffrage in two Southern states, Tennessee and North Carolina, after the Revolution. This period of "civil rights" was brief, however, as black suffrage ended in Tennessee (1834) and North Carolina (1835) through constitutional amendments (Weeks 1894).

relatively large numbers until the end of the century (Kousser 1974, 1984; Foner 1988; Valelly 1999).

With black suffrage came the election of blacks to Congress. As Kousser (1999: 20) notes, “[black voters’] first preference, then as now, was to be represented by people of their own race.” In all, 22 different blacks were elected to Congress between 1869 and 1901, 20 in the House and 2 in the Senate (Foner 1996).<sup>5</sup> While a majority of these black members of Congress were former slaves, most were educated (approximately half had attended college) and had previously held an elective office at the state or local level (Seip 1983; Swain 1993).

Historical accounts of black members’ actions during Reconstruction are sparse and largely anecdotal.<sup>6</sup> In addition, most of these studies focus narrowly on individual members, making it difficult to generalize about findings. Nevertheless, the literature suggests that black members’ legislative efforts, and the content of their bills, were intended to promote the interests of their race. According to these accounts, black members were involved primarily with “black issues,” such as racial integration of public schools and relief for depositors of the failed Freedman’s Savings and Trust Company (Clayton 1964; Vaughn 1974; Reid 1979). While black members were infrequent participants in legislative debate generally, they did take an active interest in matters that involved their black constituents directly (Meyer 1972; Reid 1979; Foner 1988).

The historical literature also contends that black members of Congress tended to vote as a bloc, because, according to Williamson (1986), they believed that white Democrats were coordinating to deny blacks full social, political, and economic rights.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Holt (1977: 106-107) argues that despite contemporary reports that black leaders were “mere pawns” of the white ruling establishment, the historical evidence suggests that black legislators were quite successful in producing outcomes that benefited black constituents.

At odds with these traditional historical accounts are some recent studies that suggest that black members of Congress during Reconstruction often acted *against* their black constituents’ interests. Haynie (1991), in a simple statistical study using narrow economic and race-based voting indices, finds that black

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<sup>5</sup> The seating of black legislators was excruciatingly difficult. Five of the first twenty blacks elected to the House were denied their seats, and ten others had their terms interrupted or delayed by white politicians challenging the election outcomes (Clay 1992).

<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the few studies that attempt to assess the behavior of black members are reportedly “untrustworthy,” because there is no middle ground in their assessments. That is, they strive either to glorify black members’ achievements or to deny their accomplishments and portray them as depraved and corrupt (Hosmer and Fineman 1978).

<sup>7</sup> The evidence presented in these studies also suggests that black representatives were ideologically liberal in general. Williamson (1986), for example, writes that black legislators favored public policy goals such as universal public education, increased health care for the sick, and humane treatment for criminals.

members during the 42nd, 43rd, and 44th Congresses did *not* vote as a group and therefore failed to represent their black constituents adequately.<sup>8</sup> Swain (1993) supports Haynie's findings in a largely descriptive fashion, by pointing to black members' personal characteristics. For example, Swain (1993: 26) notes that many black members were of mixed race, "which suggests that some of them may have identified more with whites than blacks." Moreover, Swain claims that black members lacked an incentive to pursue equitable economic policies, because they were relatively wealthy and therefore had economic interests closer to whites than to other blacks. In fact, Swain (*ibid.*) claims that black members actually worked to return lost economic power to white southerners (see also Marable 1988).

Consistent with Swain's view, Clay (1992: 20) reports that while black members during Reconstruction "made political decisions that promoted the interests of black people, they also made some decisions that undermined those interests." One such decision involved their support of legislation to strengthen whites' political power by granting amnesty (and thereby extending voting rights) to whites who rebelled against the Union.<sup>9</sup> In one dramatic instance, John Langston, a black member from Virginia, even introduced legislation which, if passed, would likely have disenfranchised a large number of blacks and hastened redemption.

#### DATA, VARIABLES, AND CODING

To sort out these conflicting views of black members' actions during Reconstruction, we analyze roll-call voting in the House of Representatives between the 41st (1869-71) and the 43rd (1873-75) Congresses. We limit our study to these three Houses for several reasons. First, only one black was elected prior to the 41st Congress. Second, beginning with the 44th Congress, the Democrats took control of the House and kept racial issues off the floor, denying us the ability to generate racial ideology scores beyond the 43rd Congress.<sup>10</sup> Finally, only two

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<sup>8</sup> Haynie's analysis is based on Rice's scores of cohesion. The total number of votes that are included in his voting indices range from four to six, and no methodology is provided to explain how votes were selected.

<sup>9</sup> The nature of partisan politics during this period provides another reason to question the linkage between descriptive and substantive representation. State party organizations were responsible for determining party tickets, and they routinely nominated whites instead of blacks to run for Congress in majority or near-majority black districts (Perman 1984). Thus, black politicians might have perceived the need to temper their legislative actions in order to maintain their party leaders' support. Unqualified support for black causes, even within the Republican ranks, likely would have been costly, especially in the South.

<sup>10</sup> National Democratic leaders were content to leave racial politics to local state governments, which, under Democratic control, were rolling back the protections previously afforded to black voters (Kousser 1974).

black Senators were elected during Reconstruction, which prevents us from conducting a similar systematic study of the Senate.

### *Dependent Variables*

We evaluate members' voting behavior in two ways: first, on only those roll-call votes that dealt with racial policy; and second, on all roll-call votes within a given set of Congresses. Our measure of racial ideology is constructed by scaling roll-call votes on race-based issues. Briefly, for each Congress, we reviewed all roll calls that Poole and Rosenthal (1996) classify as belonging to the issue areas of civil rights, voting rights, education, or Reconstruction. From this set of roll calls, we identified only those votes dealing strictly with racial policies and determined black constituents' positions on each. We then coded the vote choices for each member, based on whether he supported or opposed blacks' interests. From these individual codings, we created a racial-issue voting index, termed RACESCORE, for all members in each of the three Congresses. (See Appendix for precise coding rules and a list of votes included.) The values of RACESCORE range from 0 to 100, with lower scores reflecting a more racially conservative ideology and higher scores reflecting a more racially liberal ideology.

Our second dependent variable is a general measure of ideology developed by Poole and Rosenthal (1997). This score, referred to as W-NOMINATE, reflects members' spatial ideology on the primary issue dimension in each of the Congresses we consider.<sup>11</sup> During this period, issues related to Reconstruction define this dimension (Poole and Rosenthal 1997: 41).<sup>12</sup> W-NOMINATE values range from [-1 to 1], with negative scores indicating a conservative ideology and positive scores reflecting a liberal ideology.

### *Methodological Issues*

Before proceeding, we address several methodological concerns about the nature of our dependent variables. First, there is a bias toward null-findings in race-based studies when the dependent variable is comprised of roll-call votes. As Hall and Heflin (1994: 8) write, "there is an unexamined censoring process that preceded the observation of roll call votes, which has the capacity to distort the revelation of individual members' preferences." If black members truly prefer

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<sup>11</sup> The W-NOMINATE procedure uses *all* roll-call votes in a given Congress to generate ideal-point estimates.

<sup>12</sup> A potential endogeneity problem exists, as the W-NOMINATE estimates include votes that comprise RACESCORE. We do not consider this to be a major problem, however, because the W-NOMINATE estimates are based on approximately 500 votes for each Congress, while RACESCORE consists of a maximum of 31 votes for any one Congress. Thus, racial votes comprise a very small percentage of the total number of votes in any given Congress.

legislation that is outside the bounds of white members' acceptability, measures of representation using roll-call votes can artificially create the impression that black and white members support black citizens' interests equally. Therefore, any significant findings relating to race should be taken as *strong* evidence, given the difficulty of rejecting the null hypothesis in this case.

Second, there were relatively few black members of Congress during Reconstruction, and the number of black members serving in any single House was small. Only two blacks were seated in the 41st Congress, five in the 42nd Congress, and seven in the 43rd Congress. Furthermore, all black members were from the former-Confederate South and were Republicans. We attempt to minimize these structural limitations by comparing black members to their equivalent cohort—white members from the former-Confederate South—and pooling the data.<sup>13</sup> Thus, our sample consists of all major-party representatives elected in the former-Confederate South between the 41st and 43rd Congresses, and includes 50 white Democrats, 69 white Republicans, and 10 black Republicans.<sup>14</sup>

Pooling, however, requires a way of combining votes across a series of Houses, since many members served more than once between the 41st and 43rd Congresses. For votes on racial issues, we created a simple weighted-average of RACESCORE, with the number of race-based votes in each Congress serving as the weights. For simplicity, we refer to this weighted score simply as RACESCORE throughout the rest of this analysis.<sup>15</sup> To generate a pooled general ideology score, we utilized an estimation technique developed by Poole (1998), that generates a *single* set of ideal-point (W-NOMINATE) estimates for each member serving between the 41st and 43rd Congresses and places them in a common evaluative space.<sup>16</sup> Again, for simplicity, we refer to these “transformed” or “common-space” ideal-point estimates simply as W-NOMINATE estimates throughout the rest of the analysis.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Region can be coded several different ways, based, for example, on whether the state had representation in the Confederate government or whether the state was a former slave (free) state. Our coding is based on whether the state did or did not secede from the Union, because this definition comes the closest to matching contemporary definitions of the “old” South. Thus, our sample included representatives from eleven states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

<sup>14</sup> Three black members served more than one term between the 41st and the 43rd Congress: Rainey (41st-43rd), Elliot (42nd, 43rd), and Walls (42nd, 43rd). The remaining black members served one term: Long (41st), Tuner (42nd), Delarge (42nd), Rapier (43rd), Lynch (43rd), Ransier (43rd), and Cain (43rd).

<sup>15</sup> RACESCORE consists of a maximum of 66 total votes, 23 in the 41st Congress, 31 in the 42nd Congress, and 12 in the 43rd Congress.

<sup>16</sup> See Poole (1998) for more details.

<sup>17</sup> The NOMINATE estimates are a function of 1626 roll-call votes taken during the three Congresses: 634 in the 41st Congress, 517 in the 42nd Congress, and 475 in the 43rd Congress.



### *Independent Variables*

Our primary independent variable is the race of the representative (0 = white, 1 = black). Constituency interests during Reconstruction cannot be measured directly, but it is standard practice in the literature on race and representation to use demographic proxies (Whitby 1987, 1997; Swain 1993; Bullock 1995; Lublin 1997). Thus, we include a dummy variable for party affiliation (0 = Democrats, 1 = Republicans) and several proxies for district-level constituency interests: the percentage-black population (0 to 100 percent), the degree of urbanization (the population per square mile), and a measure of district wealth (real estate values).<sup>18</sup>

The expected direction of percent-black effects is straightforward in contemporary studies: the higher the percentage of blacks, the greater the support for liberal and black interests (Hutchings 1998). This prediction follows from the assumption that blacks prefer liberal policies, and it remains a viable hypothesis for our study.<sup>19</sup> We include a measure of urbanization because of its theoretical connection to policy outputs. In the contemporary era, most studies find a positive relationship between high levels of urbanization and support for liberal economic policies (Lublin 1997; Whitby 1997; Canon 1999a). This stems in large part from the high proportion of blacks living in urban areas. During Reconstruction, however, blacks depended on agricultural employment and lived predominantly in more rural areas (Wright 1986), thus we expect a *negative* relationship between urbanization and support for blacks' (and liberal) interests. Finally, we include a measure of district wealth because constituents in less wealthy districts are expected to agitate more strongly for liberal economic policies (Lublin 1997; Canon 1999a). Contemporary black members of Congress not only represent districts with more black voters but also districts with poorer constituents, and it seems likely that a similar situation was true for black members during Reconstruction.

## RESULTS

Our analysis includes descriptive statistics, regression results, and performance "forecasts" for each of our two dependent variables. We present our racial ideology (RACESCORE) findings first, before moving on to our general ideology (W-NOMINATE) results.

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<sup>18</sup> Since the data are pooled, we create a weighted average for each of the demographic variables for members elected both before and after redistricting, between the 42nd and 43rd Congresses.

<sup>19</sup> A second plausible hypothesis is that the effects are reversed. Some scholars have argued that whites in the Civil Rights era interpreted larger black populations as a political threat, causing white members to become more conservative as the black population increased (Key 1949; Black 1978; Whitby and Gilliam 1991). While this hypothesis has been refuted in recent years (see Lublin 1997), we investigate white "backlash" in the Reconstruction era by running additional models with alternative specifications of "percent black." See footnote 24.

## RACESCORE

Our analysis begins by examining the descriptive statistics associated with members' racial ideology (RACESCORE). According to means reported in the first row of Table 1, party is a primary determinant of racial ideology, but the race of the representative is also important. On a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is the most conservative and 100 is the most liberal, Democrats and Republicans vary substantially.<sup>20</sup> White Democrats have an average score of less than 10, while white Republicans have an average score of approximately 75. Black Republicans, on the other hand, have the highest average RACESCOREs (the most liberal voting records), at about 92, which is significantly greater ( $p < .005$ ) than their white Republican colleagues. Furthermore, the size of the standard deviations indicate that black Republicans' voting on racial issues was extremely cohesive, while white Republicans' voting behavior was considerably more varied.

We also present summary statistics in rows two and three of Table 1 to show how the size of the black constituency is related to members' racial ideology scores. The data suggest that white Democrats' average scores do not change significantly as the size of the black population varies, and white Republicans' scores change only slightly. Moreover, the differences in RACESCOREs between white and black Republicans from heavily black districts are statistically significant: a 15.49 difference for members from districts at least 40 percent black ( $p < .012$ ) and a 12.17 difference for members from districts greater than 50 percent black ( $p < .033$ ).<sup>21</sup> Thus, while many more whites represented districts with large (and often majority) black populations, these results suggest that they were less responsive to black constituents' concerns than were black members.

To determine more precisely whether the race of representative *independently* affects voting on race-based legislation, we construct an econometric model and regress RACESCORE on the race of the representative, while controlling for party and other potential constituency influences.<sup>22</sup> Given the bimodal structure of the data, we anticipate potential problems of heteroskedasticity and make the appropriate correction, by using White-corrected standard errors in place of least squares errors (White 1980; Maddala 1992).<sup>23</sup> In Table 2, we present the regression results

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<sup>20</sup> Of course, the ideological direction of "liberal" policies was different for the Reconstruction era. The liberal direction was on the right (toward the Republicans), while the "conservative" direction was on the left (toward the Democrats).

<sup>21</sup> These  $p$ -values reflect one-tailed, unpaired  $t$ -tests.

<sup>22</sup> Percent-black is highly correlated with a legislator's race in contemporary studies, but it is only modestly correlated (0.29) during Reconstruction. Low correlations between our remaining independent variables also suggest that we do not have a problem with multicollinearity.

<sup>23</sup> If the errors in the regression equation do not have constant variance, i.e., they are heteroskedastic, then the least squares estimator will be inefficient, and the standard errors will be biased (Maddala 1992; Greene 2000).

≡ TABLE 1  
SOUTHERN REPRESENTATIVES' MEAN RACIAL IDEOLOGY (RACESCORE),  
41ST - 43RD CONGRESSES, BY PARTY, RACE, AND PERCENT BLACK

	White Democrats	White Republicans	Black Republicans
All members	9.93 (9.19) 50	74.37 (21.39) 69	92.34 (4.80) 10
Members from districts with 40% black or greater	9.07 (11.11) 22	76.85 (20.33) 45	92.34 (4.80) 10
Members from districts with greater than 50% black	5.36 (5.78) 10	80.53 (17.66) 25	92.70 (5.37) 8

Note: First row entries are means (scores range from 0 to 100; 0 = maximum conservative score, 100 = maximum liberal score); second row entries are standard deviations; third row entries are the number of observations.

Source: RACESCORE was constructed by the authors using the VOTEVIEW program developed by Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal. Racial demographic data were obtained from Parsons, Beach, and Dubin (1986).

for two separate models: the first model incorporates members of both major parties, while the second model is party-specific, including only Republicans.

In the two-party model (Model 1), party is the primary determinant of members' racial ideology, but the race of the representative also has a significant independent effect. In general, Republicans were more supportive of black interests than Democrats ( $p < .001$ ), and black Republicans were more racially liberal than white Republicans ( $p < .001$ ). This latter result holds true when we move to a Republican-only model (Model 2), as black Republicans were significantly more supportive of black interests than their partisan colleagues ( $p < .001$ ). Breaking down the Republican sample into heavily black (Model 3) and majority black (Model 4) districts yields no change: black members were more racially liberal than white members across the board.

Black constituents also had a significant, positive influence on members' racial ideology scores in all four models. Moreover, this influence *increased* as the sample was reduced, suggesting that an "electoral connection" existed. That is, the greater the black population, the more liberal were members' racial ideologies.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Additional tests not reported here show that the voting behavior of white Democrats does not vary by the percentage of blacks in their districts. The electoral connection exists only within the

≡ TABLE 2:  
DETERMINANTS OF SOUTHERN REPRESENTATIVES' RACIAL IDEOLOGY (RACESCORE),  
41ST-43RD CONGRESSES

	Model 1 Democrats and Republicans	Model 2 Republicans Only	Model 3 Republicans from 40% or Greater Black Districts	Model 4 Republicans from Greater than 50% Black Districts
Party	63.0*** (3.23)	—	—	—
Race	15.0*** (3.35)	12.6*** (3.83)	11.2*** (3.69)	7.96* (4.0)
Percent Black	0.23* (0.12)	0.39** (0.17)	0.77** (0.24)	1.25* (0.69)
District Wealth	0.15 (0.10)	0.14 (0.15)	0.06 (0.16)	-0.20* (0.12)
Urbanization	-0.52*** (0.16)	-0.58** (0.20)	-0.53** (0.24)	-0.44 (0.33)
Constant	8.97* (4.41)	66.34*** (8.21)	48.32*** (13.87)	29.65 (34.60)
N	125	78	55	33
F-statistic	327.57***	8.37***	6.71***	3.09*
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.82	0.25	0.26	0.36

Note: Entries represent unstandardized OLS coefficients (White-corrected standard errors).

Source: RACESCORE was constructed by the authors using the VOTEVIEW program developed by Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal. Demographic data were obtained from Parsons, Beach, and Dubin (1986).

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$  (one-tailed tests).

We further examine the effects of race on members' racial ideologies by exploring a counterfactual, that is, how would white Republicans have voted had they been elected from districts actually represented by black Republicans, all else equal? Using a simple forecasting procedure detailed by Greene (2000: 307-10), we generate racial ideology *predictions* for white Republicans, based on

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Republican ranks. In addition, we tested for a nonlinear relationship between percent black and member ideology to investigate potential white "backlash" effects. Following Lublin (1997: 142, fn 19), we ran two additional regressions, one parabolic (squaring percent black) and one cubic (cubing percent black), and uncovered no significant results.

parameter estimates from a white-only regression model and data from the black members' districts, and compare them to *actual* racial ideology scores for the ten black Republicans.<sup>25</sup> Results are presented in Table 3. We find that in nine of ten cases black Republican RACESCOREs were significantly greater ( $p < .05$ ) than the predicted white Republican RACESCOREs. The difference between actual and predicted scores range from a minimum of six to a maximum of nearly 30 points. These results strongly support our prior findings that a member's race affected his voting behavior on racial issues.

#### W-NOMINATE

In addition to looking at racial issues, we investigate whether a relationship exists between members' race and their voting behavior, using our general measure of ideology (W-NOMINATE scores).<sup>26</sup> Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 4, by party, race, and percent black. Looking at general results, in row one, Democrats and Republicans separate along the liberal-conservative dimension, although they are not quite as polarized as they were on racial issues. White Democrats have an average W-NOMINATE score of around 22, while white Republicans average just under 69, clearly indicating the importance of party. Black Republicans are even more liberal than white Republicans, averaging just over 73. Although significant ( $p < .02$ ), the magnitude of this difference is smaller than for the racial-policy scores.

In rows two and three of Table 4, we also examine whether the size of the black constituency is related to general member voting. The results are mixed. Looking first at members from districts at least 40 percent black, we observe a large difference between Republicans and Democrats generally, with a small (4.52) but significant ( $p < .02$ ) difference between white and black Republicans. A similar difference exists between Republicans and Democrats who represent districts greater than 50 percent black, but no significant race-based difference ( $p < .19$ ) exists *within* the Republican ranks.

Mimicking our RACESCORE analysis, we construct four econometric models—a two-party model (Democrats and Republicans), an all-Republican model, a sub-sample of Republicans from districts at least 40 percent black, and

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<sup>25</sup> More specifically, we first separate white members from black members and run the same OLS regression as before, using all independent variables (party and demographic proxies) *except* race, on the all-white sample. From this regression, we generate white-only parameter estimates for each independent variable. We then "fit" the partisan and demographic data for each of the black members into the estimated white model to generate racial-index predictions, which forecast how a white Republican would have behaved had he represented those black Republicans' districts.

<sup>26</sup> While W-NOMINATE scores are constrained to the [-1, 1] interval, for purposes of presentation and comparison to RACESCORE, we have normalized the measure so that it falls within the [0, 100] interval.

≡ TABLE 3  
 COMPARING BLACK REPRESENTATIVES' RACESCORES TO PREDICTED RACESCORES  
 FOR WHITE REPUBLICANS

Black Representative	Actual RACESCORE	Predicted RACESCORE for a White Republican	95% Confidence Interval
Long—GA (41st)	100.0	74.0	67.9–80.1
Rainey—SC (41st, 42nd, 43rd)	90.5	80.3	74.7–85.9
Turner—AL (42nd)	89.3	83.4	78.7–88.0
Delarge—SC (42nd)	84.6	63.9	49.5–78.4
Elliott—SC (42nd, 43rd)	95.4	75.4	69.0–81.7
Walls—FL (42nd, 43rd)	90.9	84.2	76.8–91.6
Rapier—AL (43rd)	90.9	72.1	65.5–78.7
Lynch—MS (43rd)	90.9	81.5	74.8–88.2
Ransier—SC (43rd)	100.0	80.6	73.6–87.7
Cain—SC (43rd)	90.9	78.2	72.2–84.2

Note: Predicted RACESCOREs represent forecasts of how a white Republican would have behaved, had he served in the same district, under the same contextual conditions, instead of the given black representative.

Source: For a discussion of the forecasting procedure, see Greene (2000: 307-10).

a sub-sample of Republicans from districts greater than 50 percent black—to examine the question further, while also controlling for potential constituency effects. White-corrected standard errors are also utilized to alleviate problems with heteroskedasticity. Regression results are presented in Table 5. We find significant, positive effects for the race of the representative variable in the first three models, but do not uncover a significant difference between black and white members from districts greater than 50 percent black. Also, unlike our previous RACESCORE results, we find no evidence of a race-based electoral connection. That is, the proportion of black constituents did not appear to affect members' voting behavior generally, as the percentage-black in a district was not a significant predictor of members' W-NOMINATE scores.

Finally, we again explore a counterfactual, that is, how would white Republicans have voted *generally* had they been elected from those districts actually represented by black Republicans, all else equal? We generate W-NOMINATE *predictions* for white Republicans, based again on parameter estimates from a white-only regression model and data from black members' districts, and compare them to the *actual* W-NOMINATE scores for the ten black Republicans. As presented in Table 6, we find that in 7 of 10 cases black Republicans' W-NOMINATE scores were significantly greater ( $p < .05$ ) than the predicted white Republican scores. This evidence supports our previous findings: race matters in

≡ TABLE 4  
 SOUTHERN REPRESENTATIVES' MEAN GENERAL IDEOLOGY (W-NOMINATE),  
 41ST - 43RD CONGRESSES, BY PARTY, RACE AND PERCENT BLACK

	White Democrats	White Republicans	Black Republicans
All members	22.33 (7.06) 50	68.82 (6.41) 69	73.19 (4.44) 10
Members from districts with 40% black or greater	23.84 (7.90) 22	68.67 (6.39) 45	73.19 (4.44) 10
Members from districts with greater than 50% black	23.44 (9.45) 10	70.65 (4.30) 25	72.47 (4.53) 8

Note: For purposes of presentation, we have transformed the W-NOMINATE estimates, which ordinarily fall within a [-1, 1] interval, into an index ranging from 0 to 100, where 0 = maximum conservative score and 100 = maximum liberal score. Second row entries are standard deviations, and third row entries are the number of observations.

Source: The W-NOMINATE estimates used in this analysis were created by Keith Poole. See Poole (1998) for more details on the estimation procedure. Racial demographic data were obtained from Parsons, Beach, and Dubin (1986).

explaining members' general ideologies, as black Republican members of Congress were significantly more liberal than their white Republican colleagues.

### CONCLUSION

Our study uncovers evidence from the Reconstruction era to indicate that the linkage between descriptive and substantive representation for blacks is not merely a recent phenomenon, but rather has more general applicability across time. Black members of Congress during Reconstruction were significantly more representative of blacks' interests than were white members of Congress, even those white Republicans who represented similar constituencies. After controlling for constituency effects, we also find that, in general, black members were more ideologically liberal than white Republicans. Finally, we find evidence of an electoral connection between black constituents and their members of Congress on distinctly racial issues.

Although some of these results seem intuitive, they do not reflect a consensus opinion in the literature. Several scholars imply that black members of Congress did not strive to represent blacks' interests during Reconstruction and point to particular historical cases or a small set of roll-call votes as evidence. Accord-

≡ TABLE 5.  
DETERMINANTS OF SOUTHERN REPRESENTATIVES' GENERAL IDEOLOGY  
(W-NOMINATE), 41ST-43RD CONGRESSES

	Model 1 Democrats and Republicans	Model 2 Republicans Only	Model 3 Republicans from 40% or Greater Black Districts	Model 4 Republicans from Greater than 50% Black Districts
Party	46.0*** (1.43)	—	—	—
Race	4.03*** (1.75)	4.73** (1.83)	3.94* (2.06)	1.30 (1.89)
Percent Black	0.04 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.05)	0.17 (0.12)	0.19 (0.22)
District Wealth	0.04 (0.04)	0.07 (0.05)	0.06 (0.16)	-0.09* (0.04)
Urbanization	-0.11** (0.05)	-0.09* (0.05)	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.10 (0.09)
Constant	22.36*** (1.77)	68.87*** (2.32)	60.37*** (5.99)	65.99*** (11.07)
N	125	78	55	33
F-statistic	358.05***	2.54*	2.48*	2.01
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.93	0.11	0.18	0.23

Note: Entries represent unstandardized OLS coefficients (White-corrected standard errors).

Source: RACESCORE was constructed by the authors using the VOTEVIEW program developed by Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal. Demographic data were obtained from Parsons, Beach, and Dubin (1986).

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$  (one-tailed tests).

ing to these scholars, black members consciously sided with whites' interests because of descriptive characteristics, such as their mixed racial heritage and their relatively privileged societal positions. Our results, however, suggest that this perspective is based on isolated, unrepresentative, or possibly misinterpreted events, and that objectively shared characteristics did not prevent subjectively defined interests from guiding black members' behavior.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> From an institutional perspective, we might have expected to find that black and white representatives from the same party behaved similarly during Reconstruction. The ability of party leaders



≡ TABLE 6  
 COMPARING BLACK REPRESENTATIVES' W-NOMINATE SCORES TO  
 PREDICTED W-NOMINATE SCORES FOR WHITE REPUBLICANS

Black Representative	Actual RACESCORE	Predicted RACESCORE for a White Republican	95% Confidence Interval
Long—GA (41st)	78.7	68.5	66.5–70.6
Rainey—SC (41st, 42nd, 43rd)	72.9	69.8	67.4–72.1
Turner—AL (42nd)	68.1	70.7	68.8–72.7
Delarge—SC (42nd)	65.9	66.7	62.4–71.1
Elliott—SC (42nd, 43rd)	75.4	68.9	66.7–71.1
Walls—FL (42nd, 43rd)	73.5	70.3	67.6–73.1
Rapier—AL (43rd)	78.6	68.0	65.9–70.1
Lynch—MS (43rd)	76.4	69.8	67.1–72.5
Ransier—SC (43rd)	74.1	69.9	70.0–72.8
Cain—SC (43rd)	68.5	69.3	66.9–71.7

Note: Predicted W-NOMINATE scores represent forecasts of how a white Republican would have behaved, had he served in the same district, under the same contextual conditions, instead of the given black representative.

Source: For a discussion of the forecasting procedure, see Greene (2000: 307-10).

We also believe that our conclusions differ from other accounts because of the systematic nature of our inquiry. Instead of relying on anecdotal and descriptive evidence, we analyzed members' voting behavior on *all* relevant legislation over the course of three Congresses. To be sure, black members did not always vote in favor of blacks' interests, but they supported blacks' interests significantly more often than their white counterparts. This is evident even after we controlled for party and constituency factors. Our results are especially impressive given the conservative bias inherent in the dependent variables.

Finally, we acknowledge that our data are limited in several important ways. First, we examine Congress, while many historians have paid greater attention to state legislatures, where more blacks held office and did so for a longer period of time. Lack of available roll-call data from state legislatures during this period

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to determine candidates for office implies that black representatives, so long as they were career minded, would recognize the constraints on their behavior. Available evidence indicates that most of the black members in our sample were politically ambitious and recognized that Republican party leaders could impose sanctions if they supported blacks' interests without party approval. Regardless, we find that black members were undeterred by potential sanctions and disproportionately supported black constituents' interests.

prevents us from conducting a systematic analysis at the *state level*.<sup>28</sup> Second, our evidence is limited to a study of roll-call votes, which serve as only one potential measure of legislative responsiveness. In fact, substantive representation is a complex phenomenon involving multiple components (Eulau and Karps 1977), and voting behavior is only part of the whole. Nevertheless, voting behavior is an important element of substantive representation, and our results indicate that race is *crucial* to understanding interest representation through voting dynamics.

## APPENDIX

### *Defining Blacks' Interests*

As a legacy of slavery, most blacks faced similar social and economic conditions during Reconstruction, such as racism, segregation, illiteracy, and poverty. These conditions ensured that blacks formed a cohesive minority group with distinct interests (DuBois 1935). Although direct measures of blacks' interests, such as those obtained through survey data, are unavailable for this era, the broad literature on race and Reconstruction establishes that blacks sought equal rights and a reduction in economic inequality with whites (Franklin 1956; Williamson 1986). Blacks also supported general liberal policies, such as funding for compulsory education. No group is perfectly homogeneous in its interests, but blacks during Reconstruction shared distinct goals that are best described as being ideologically and racially liberal (Foner 1988). The position that blacks have historically held distinct policy preferences is evident in the motto of the Congressional Black Caucus: "Black people have no permanent friends, no permanent enemies . . . just permanent interests" (quoted in Clay 1992: xvii).

### *Coding RACESCORE*

We construct a measure of racial ideology (RACESCORE) for members of Congress using Poole and Rosenthal's VOTEVIEW program to identify and code all roll-call votes on racial issues. VOTEVIEW contains a classification system that identifies the key issue involved for each bill. Although we reviewed legislation in almost every issue category, racial policies fell into four particular categories: civil rights, voting rights, education, and Reconstruction. We thoroughly examined this sample of legislation, and both authors individually coded each vote according to whether members acted in support of black constituents' preferred outcome. Disagreements were settled by referring to the text of the legislation and the floor proceedings reported in the *Congressional Globe*.

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<sup>28</sup> We do, however, plan to collect state-level roll-call voting data from the Reconstruction era as part of a larger research agenda.

To code the proper direction of a vote, we must first assume that distinct black interests exist and that we reliably know what these interests are. This assumption, however, is not controversial, as scholars investigating the contemporary connection between race and representation usually rely upon survey results and demographic data to identify blacks' interests (Whitby 1987; Sigelman and Welch 1991; Smith and Selzter 1992; Swain 1993). As similar survey data do not exist for the Reconstruction era, we instead rely upon the historical record. Based on our review of the literature, we argue that black constituents during Reconstruction preferred liberal legislation and wanted their representatives to vote in favor of bills guaranteeing equal rights, access to education, and racial integration (or at least an end to segregation of public facilities). Often, however, white Democrats offered forms of civil-rights legislation to protect their *own* interests rather than blacks' interests (Seip 1983; Simpson 1998), which we acknowledge and attempt to identify and code through a careful reading of the *Globe* and various historical accounts.

Although some ostensibly procedural votes were actually Democrats' attempts to kill legislation, we did not code numerous bills because we could not determine blacks' preferred voting direction. These votes were eliminated from the sample. In all, RACESCORE is comprised of 66 votes (23 in the 41st Congress, 31 in the 42nd Congress, and 12 in the 43rd Congress), which are listed individually below.

**House #41, 1869-1870**

<i>Code</i>	<i>HR</i>	<i>Yea-Nay</i>	<i>Bill Subject</i>
Yea	20	111-46	Equal Rights in D.C.
Yea	50	87-44	Various Freeman's Hospitals
Yea	126	93-62	Help Poor and Destitute in D.C.
Yea	132	112-56	Help Poor and Destitute in D.C.
Yea	183	111-45	Relief of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy
Yea	191	64-92	Discontinue Freedmen's Bureau and Establish Office of Education
Nay	196	104-55	Discontinue Freedmen's Bureau and Establish Office of Education
Yea	197	45-119	Discontinue Freedmen's Bureau and Establish Office of Education
Yea	201	111-56	Let Colored People Use House Hall to Celebrate 15th Amendment
Yea	202	107-44	Let Colored People Use House Hall to Celebrate 15th Amendment
Nay	271	46-120	Equal Voting Rights for Negroes
Yea	272	131-43	Equal Voting Rights for Negroes
Yea	276	133-54	Equal Voting Rights for Negroes

Yea	297	134-41	Equal Voting Rights for Negroes
Yea	298	30-144	Equal Voting Rights for Negroes (Adjourn)
Yea	300	133-58	Equal Voting Rights for Negroes
Nay	518	119-62	\$23,500 for Maintenance of Department of Education
Yea	563	141-52	Voting Rights in States
Yea	565	144-64	Voting Rights in States
Nay	569	56-116	Uniform System of Education in D.C.
Nay	570	88-71	Uniform System of Education in D.C.
Nay	594	73-105	\$187,000 for Negro Soldiers
Yea	621	134-52	Acquit Major General Oliver C. Howard of Freedmen's Bureau

**House #42, 1871-1872**

<i>Code</i>	<i>Hr</i>	<i>Yea-Nay</i>	<i>Bill Subject</i>
Nay	22	83-102	Congress Has Power to Impose Ratification of 15th Amendment (Adjourn)
Yea	23	109-76	Congress Has Power to Impose Ratification of 15th Amendment
Nay	56	116-86	No Additional Militia
Yea	60	118-91	Enforce the 14th Amendment
Yea	76	97-76	Enforce the 14th Amendment
Nay	77	86-93	Enforce Part of Act Only After Congressional Session
Yea	78	45-132	Citizens Can Sue Cities for Mob Violence Destruction
Yea	84	74-106	Enforce the 14th Amendment
Yea	86	93-74	Enforce the 14th Amendment
Yea	132	125-83	Distribute Education Money According to Illiteracy Rate
Nay	133	110-88	Distribute Education Money According to Illiteracy Rate
Nay	134	115-81	No Education Money for Segregated Schools
Nay	135	76-118	Distribute Education Money According to Population
Yea	148	107-65	Laws Enforcing 13th, 14th, 15th, Amendments Are Valid
Nay	153	89-116	Protect Everyone's Civil Rights
Yea	156	130-67	Klu Klux Klan Is an Outrage
Nay	183	12-156	Civil Rights
Nay	185	60-87	Unconstitutional to Force Integration
Yea	207	98-80	Civil Rights (Delay)
Nay	230	73-99	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	238	100-78	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	283	112-75	Civil Rights Bill

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Yea	322	94-108	Enforce the 14th Amendment
Yea	324	114-83	Enforce Civil Rights
Yea	325	115-87	Enforce Civil Rights
Yea	332	101-95	Enforce Civil Rights
Yea	338	86-73	\$100 Not \$5000 Penalty for Violating Civil Rights
Yea	339	83-73	\$100 Not \$5000 Penalty for Violating Civil Rights
Yea	340	56-89	Enforce the 14th Amendment
Nay	370	74-113	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	377	90-76	William and Mary College Must Not Discriminate by Race

**House #43, 1873-1874**

Code	Hr	Yea-Nay	Bill Subject
Nay	149	100-95	No Loyalty Oath for Postal Contractors
Yea	167	154-85	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	168	140-67	Relief of Colored Residents of Choctaw Nation
Yea	194	137-87	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	229	140-91	Civil Rights Bill
Nay	280	81-153	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	281	147-93	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	373	148-91	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	374	151-93	Civil Rights Bill
Yea	378	113-148	Equal Use of Public Facilities by All Races
Yea	380	162-100	Civil Rights Bill
Nay	398	126-100	Charter of Freeman's Savings and Trust Co.

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mcobb1@uluc.edu

jenki107@pilot.msu.edu