Evaluating the Differential Effects of Descriptive Representation on Minority Voters

A Comparative Study of Latinos and African-Americans

An Honors Thesis for the Department of Political Science

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Abstract

While the central tenet of American political culture hinges on a citizen's right to representation, the most effective and appropriate method of representation remains widely contested. Citizens and politicians alike have long challenged the degree to which the US Congress successfully represents its population, seeing as minorities are notability underrepresented in both the House and Senate. This lack of diversity is especially apparent in the 113th Congress, which only includes 44 African-American congressmen – 8.1% of the total membership – and 37 Latino members who compose 6.9% of congressmen currently in office. The significance of proportional representation is sure to become increasingly relevant as the United States is expected to undergo a dramatic shift in demography in the coming years. Data from the Pew Research Center indicate the US will become a majority-minority nation as early as 2050. As such, the diminishing presence of the white voter has sparked a national debate concerning the unique interests and motivations of minority voters and how they may be best represented in our evolving electoral landscape.

Numerous studies indicate the needs of minority voters may be best addressed through a system of descriptive representation, in which constituents who are represented by a legislator of their own race are more likely to be politically engaged, and often display increased levels of political knowledge, efficacy and trust in government. However, the current scholarship presents conflicting evidence regarding the success of descriptive representation as a mechanism of political empowerment. I will make use of the American National Election Study of 2012 in order to conduct a comparative review of African-American and Latino voters in order to further investigate how descriptive representation, linked fate, and discrimination may influence evaluations of US government institutions and actors.

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Chapter One: Introduction

While the central tenet of American political culture hinges on a citizen's right to representation, the most effective and appropriate method of representation remains widely contested. Citizens and politicians alike have long challenged the degree to which the US Congress successfully represents its population. Minorities are notability underrepresented in both the House and Senate (Tate, 2003). This lack of diversity is especially apparent in the 113th Congress, which only includes 44 African-American congressmen – 8.1% of the total membership – and 37 Latino members who compose 6.9% of congressmen currently in office. A proportionally representative Congress would consist of 64 African-American legislators to account for the 13.1% of the population who identify as Black, and 86 Latino congressmen to reflect the 16.9% of Americans who identify as Hispanic or Latino (United States Census Bureau, 2014).

The significance of proportional representation is sure to become increasingly relevant, as the United States is expected to undergo a dramatic shift in demography in the coming years. Data from the Pew Research Center indicate the US will become a majority-minority nation as early as 2050 (Taylor & Cohn, 2012). The diminishing presence of the white voter has sparked a national debate concerning the unique interests and motivations of minority voters and how they may be best represented in our evolving electoral landscape.

Numerous studies (see Bobo & Gilliam 1990; Tate, 1991; Barreto, Segura & Woods, 2004; Bowen & Clark, 2014) indicate the needs of non-White voters may be best addressed through a system of descriptive representation, in which constituents who are represented by a legislator of their own race are more likely to be politically empowered and engaged (Schildkraut, 2013). Research conducted by Fowler et al. (2014) presents similar results and

finds descriptive representation increases levels of political knowledge, efficacy and trust in government among minority voters, thereby encouraging their involvement in the American political system.

However, the current scholarship presents conflicting evidence regarding the success of descriptive representation as a mechanism of political empowerment. An analysis provided by Matt Barreto (2007) finds Latino candidates serve as a mobilizing force for the Latino electorate, resulting in higher turnout and increased support for co-ethnic candidates. In contrast, Claudine Gay (2001) claims not all minority groups may be equally motivated or responsive to the prospects of descriptive representation, and "only occasionally" is there greater political involvement among African-Africans who are represented by their own race (Gay, 599).

Fowler et al. contribute to the current scholarship by considering whether descriptive representation has a positive impact on minority voters in their evaluations of their own House legislator, and more broadly – the federal government as a whole. They find descriptive representation has a favorable effect on Latino voters, in that their evaluations of congressional representatives and the federal government are favorable on both accounts. However, African-American voters don't conform to this trend, in that their positive assessment is limited only to their House legislator of the same race.

Fowler et al. attribute this differential response to two key variables: the varying effect of discrimination on each racial group, and the presence or absence of linked fate within the given voting bloc. Their findings suggest Blacks more commonly experience discrimination when compared to Latinos, and are therefore likely to exhibit high levels of linked fate and distrust in American government. Though individual Black voters may respond favorably to descriptive

representation on a congressional level, this sentiment does not extend to evaluations of the US government.

Conversely, the authors hypothesize Latinos' positive attitudes toward both individual Latino legislators and government institutions is related to the belief that Latinos are less cognizant of discrimination in comparison to Blacks and are unlikely to partake in a shared identity or exhibit high levels of linked fate given the multicultural nature of a largely immigrant-based community (Fowler et al. 2014).

While some past research investigates the impact of descriptive representation on political attitudes (see Tate 1991; 2001; 2003), most studies have focused almost exclusively on voter turnout and have failed to consider evaluations of both legislators and federal institutions. Though many studies in the current scholarship have focused on Black voting behavior and trends, few have solely examined Latino voters. As Fowler et al. notes, research on the impact of descriptive representation is fairly limited in scope, meaning Latino political attitudes have not been "exhaustively studied" or considered beyond a local or mayoral level (Fowler et al. 2014, 79).

In order to more fully examine the phenomenon of descriptive representation, I will make use of the American National Election Study (ANES) of 2012 to consider two key research questions. First, I will determine whether descriptive representation has a positive effect on Black and Latino evaluations of legislators and government institutions, or whether its impact is varies among racial groups as was observed in the 2008 election. Should these differential evaluations continue into the 2012 elections, I plan to revisit the variables outlined by Fowler (i.e. discrimination, and linked fate), in order to assess their statistical significance (if any), and consider any other factors that might influence the effect of descriptive representation.

As such, the primary contribution of my research lies in the replication and expansion of Fowler's study. Fowler relied on the 2008 ANES, in which levels of linked fate were only measured for Black respondents, while Latinos were not asked any questions related to the prevalence of linked fate in their community. Similarly, neither Black nor Latino respondents were asked about the impact or perception of discrimination in their daily lives. Because the ANES did not include sufficient data on these measures, Fowler could only speculate on the connections between descriptive representation, discrimination and linked fate. However, the 2012 ANES specifically asks respondents about perceptions of both discrimination and linked fate, meaning I will be able to expand, and hopefully solidify Fowler's previous findings. I expect the ANES data from 2012 will provide added insight into the differential effects of descriptive representation, and determine whether the findings on Black and Latino voters are consistent in the 2012 election cycle.

In the following chapters, I will offer a comparative review of the voting behavior of both African-Americans and Latinos, which is later supplemented by my own quantitative analysis. Chapter Two focuses on the history and mechanism of descriptive representation and how its impact has evolved since the Voting Rights Act was amended in the 1980s. Chapter Three examines the interplay between linked fate, trust in government, and discrimination in hopes of further clarifying the political significance of descriptive representation for minority voters. Chapter Four details my methodology: my use of the American National Election Study, as well as a description of the independent and dependent variables I chose to include in my statistical modeling. Chapters Five and Six present my results, using a variety of significance tests to assess the role of descriptive representation in determining evaluations of legislators and government institutions. Overall, I find that descriptive representation maintains its differential effect in

2012. However, the impact of descriptive representation appears to be reduced in evaluations of legislators for both racial groups, while partisanship results in a more consistent effect. Second, descriptive representation only appears to have a marginally positive effect on Latinos in improving their assessments of government institutions, which was not the case in 2008, but appears to boost African-Americans' *Feelings Toward the Federal Government*, which is also inconsistent with Fowler's data. Finally, my conclusion in Chapter Seven will offer a critical review on the study of contemporary race politics in the US, followed by a discussion of the implications of my findings, as well as recommendations for future research and improvements on my current research design.

Chapter Two: Literature Review Part I: Examining the Differential Effects of Descriptive Representation

Introduction

The study of descriptive representation and its role in American politics is an evolving and complex field that has gained increased scrutiny given the rapid shift in US demography. The rise of the minority voter has prompted a scholarly debate – one that questions the efficacy and necessity of descriptive representation. In order to more fully examine the nuances of this debate and the subsequent divide in literature, I offer a brief discussion of both the history and mechanism of descriptive representation, followed by an overview of the key studies that investigate the differential impact of minority candidates on their constituents. While many studies explore the role of women as descriptive representatives in American politics (e.g. Carroll, 1994; Dolan, 2000; Mansbridge, 1999; Reingold, 1992) these findings will not be discussed, as they are not directly relevant given the racial focus of my research. My summary of existing research provides a comparative review of Latinos and African-Americans and seeks to identify and explain the motivations responsible for minority voting behavior. In later chapters, I will present my own critical analysis as to why descriptive representation does not appear to be equally empowering across racial groups.

A Traditional Understanding of Descriptive Representation

The concept of descriptive representation originates from the work of Hanna Pitkin, who formally introduced the phenomenon in *The Concept of Representation,* published in 1967. Pitkin describes the theory as "some" demographic or physical trait shared by a representative and his constituents (Bowen & Clark, 2014). She explains that proponents of descriptive representation believe a legislature can only be truly representative when its composition reflects

or corresponds to the demographic proportions of the population in question (Pitkin, 1967).

However, Pitkin challenges this form of representation and cautions against its likely outcome:

> Think of the legislature as a pictorial representation or a representative sample of the nation, and you will almost inevitably concentrate on its composition rather than on its activities (1967, 226).

According to Pitkin, assuming a representative's characteristics will guide their political actions is a dangerous oversimplification that may interfere with the maintenance of a representative government. Instead, she argues the true significance of representation lies in its substance. She explains the value of representation should not depend on a representative "being something" (i.e. a certain gender, race, ethnicity etc.), but rather on their "doing something" to respond to and advance the policy preferences and interests of his or her constituents (Pitkin, 1967, 61). Though Pitkin's work was published in the late 1960s, her writing remains relevant in a modern-day context. She illustrates a central and unresolved tension in American politics: descriptive representation does not necessarily amount to substantive representation. In fact, more recent scholarship (Swain, 1993; Lublin 1997; Cameron, Epstein & O'Halloran 1996) finds an increase in descriptive representation might actually compromise the substantive representation of minority groups. As such, the form of representation that best serves minority voters remains undetermined and has prompted a deeper study of descriptive representation in efforts to quantify its effect.

The Mechanism of Descriptive Representation

The 1980s saw the racialization of descriptive representation after the amendment of the Voting Rights Act – legislation that explicitly sought to empower African-American voters by facilitating the election of Black representatives (Schildkraut, 2013). The subsequent successful election of Black congressmen was largely due to deliberate congressional redistricting, which

allowed for the creation of majority-minority districts. Majority-minority districts are formed when congressional lines are drawn to concentrate non-White voters, as White constituents are likely to obscure or dilute the specific interests of a minority group (Schildkraut, 2013). These redistricting tactics – though controversial – remain in effect today as a means to provide minority voters the necessary circumstances to elect a non-White candidate (Barreto, Segura & Woods, 2004). More recently, majority-minority districting has expanded to consider other racial groups – most notably the Latino electorate.

Recent data suggest the political influence of majority-minority districts is sure to increase. By 2012, 22% of congressional districts in the US were already majority-minority, with 53% of them represented by a non-White legislator (Schildkraut, 2013). As seen in Figure 2.1, in 1992 only 109 congressional districts (or 25%) had a minority population of more than 30%. Today, 235 districts – more than double the number in 1992 – report 30% or more of its constituents are minorities.

The marked growth in majority-majority districts has provided scholars a unique opportunity to compare the implications of descriptive representation across racial groups. This comparative analysis will likely prove to be a valuable addition to the current scholarship as the majority of past studies concentrate on only one race. However, the expanded study of racial and ethnic voting blocs has also generated a controversy as to whether coethnic representation is equally effective in advancing the political needs of all minority groups.

Figure 2.1 – The Rise of Majority-Minority Districts Since 1992

LESS THAN 20% MINORITY	20-to-30% MINORITY	30% OR MORE MINORITY
1992		
245 districts	81 districts	109 districts
56%	19%	25%
Percent of total (435)		
2008		
145 districts	85 districts	205 districts
33%	20%	47%
2015		
115 districts	85 districts	235 districts
26%	20%	54%
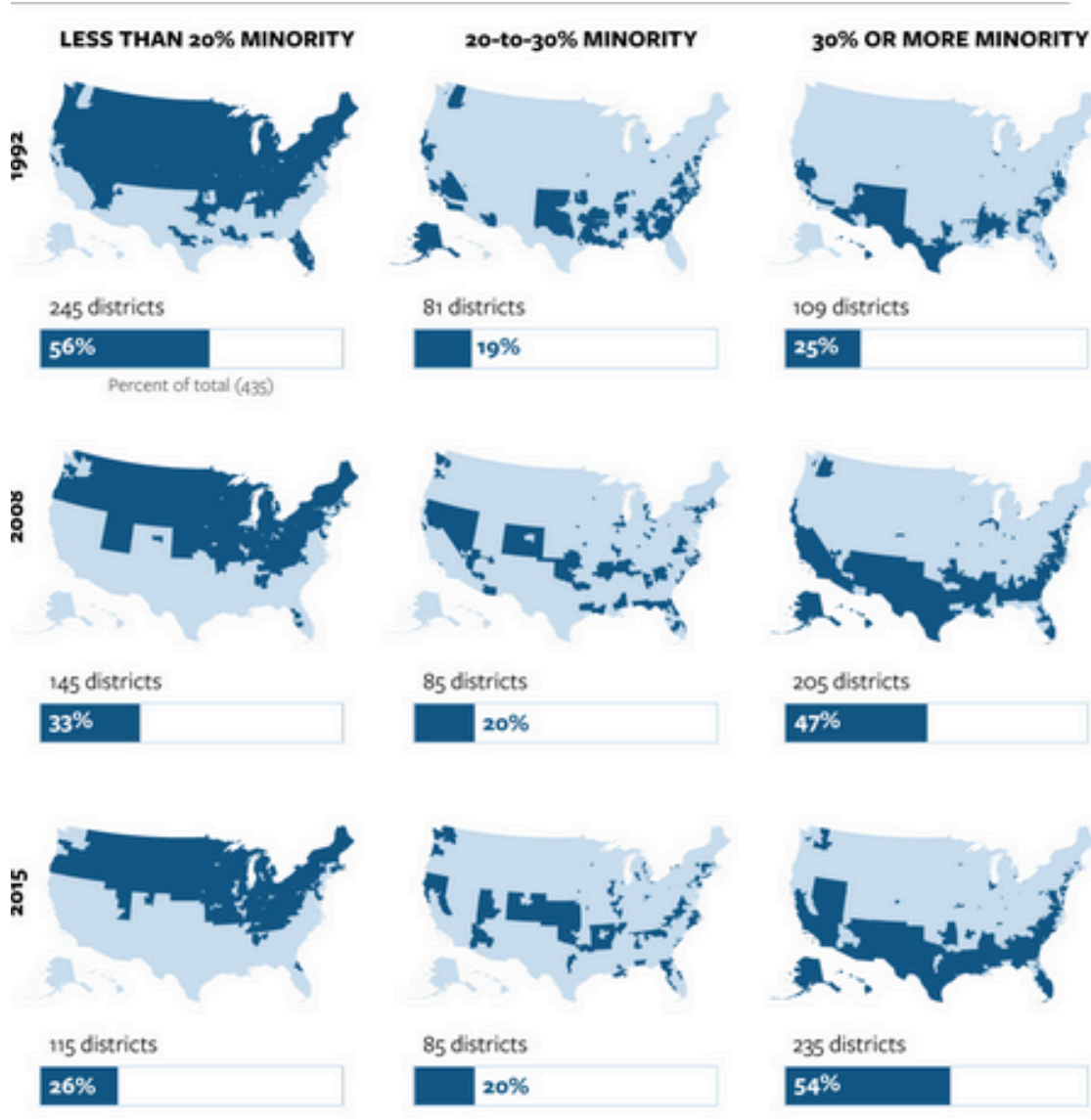
Source: The National Journal, Demographic data from the 1992 maps are from the 1990 decennial Census, data on the composition from the 2008 maps are based on a three-year 2006-2008 average of the Census Bureau's Annual American Community Survey. The maps of 2015 consist of data collected from the Census Bureau's Annual American Community Survey of 2013.http://www.nationaljournal.com/next-america/newsdesk/demography-is-not-destiny-for-democrats-20150114

A Theoretical Analysis: The Hazards of Descriptive Representation

Building on Pitkin's negative assessment, Lani Guinier provides additional evidence to expose the futility of descriptive representation in advancing minority interests. In her work, *The*

Tyranny of the Majority: Fundamental Fairness in Representative Democracy, Guinier is skeptical of the mechanism behind descriptive representation and claims majority-minority districts can only produce a series of non-competitive elections (Guinier, 1994). While she agrees a non-White candidate may initially result in increased voter turnout, she ultimately concludes almost all majority-minority districts will become "safe," or non-competitive (Barreto, Segura & Woods, 2004). Guinier argues the lack of competition between candidates may ensure incumbency, or worse – reduce voter turnout. "The incentive to participate repeatedly" Guinier writes, "is undermined by the irrelevance of turnout to the outcome" (Guinier, as quoted in Barreto, Segura & Woods, 2004, 67). She also finds minority voters could become doubtful of the efficacy of descriptive representation in that legislators of color may not succeed in advancing the policy needs of a given racial group. Guinier claims a disillusioned electorate will emerge should a minority representative fail to "produce tangible results" (Guinier, as quoted in Barreto, Segura & Woods, 2004, 67). Given the chance for disillusionment, along with a possible decrease in voter turnout, Guinier questions whether descriptive representation yields a positive result for minority constituents.

Additional literature (Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran 1996; Lublin 1997; Swain 1993) finds descriptive representation may not be worthwhile when considering the aggregate number of Democrats elected to Congress. Though majority-minority districts were drawn with the intention of franchising voters, the creation of these districts concentrates minority and likely liberal voters, thereby restricting Democratic influence to certain regions of the state. As such, the overall election of Democratic candidates may decrease, and ultimately weaken the support of minority interests in Congress. Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran conclude that while there is a definite symbolic and emotional value to having a minority elected to office, the rise in

descriptive representation is often counterproductive, and accompanied by an increase in elected Republicans. Because White Democrats have historically represented the substantive interests of minority voters more consistently than White Republicans, the authors expose the risk of further disenfranchising minorities, and challenge the total benefit of descriptive representation.

Finally, Jane Mansbridge (1999) offers one of the more comprehensive reviews of the literature on descriptive representation. After assessing a variety of arguments against the practice (the majority of which are outlined above), she concludes a serious risk of descriptive representation lies in its tendency to promote essentialism, explaining:

> Insisting that women represent women or Blacks represent Blacks, for example, implies an essential quality of womanness or Blackness that all members of that group share. Insisting that others cannot adequately represent members of the descriptive group also implies that members of that group cannot adequately represent others (1999, 637).

Given the "essentializing features" that can result from descriptive representation, Mansbridge claims constituents may form unrealistic expectations of their legislators (1996, 638). She argues that under the terms of descriptive representation, a female representative is expected to represent all women of her district, regardless of differences in race, ethnicity, political ideology and so on. Because minorities remain severely underrepresented in Congress, descriptive representatives may become tokenized members of their larger minority group, and could be forced to act monolithically despite internal differences within their community. By ignoring conflicting identities and priorities, essentialism wrongfully assumes political interests based on gender or race should be nationally accepted. To this end, Mansbridge finds the value of descriptive representation must first be considered in the context of essentialism's damaging effects.

In concluding her analysis, Mansbridge briefly considers the chance that descriptive representation may allow for the reduced accountability of minority congressmen. Drawing from

existing literature (see Swain 1993), Mansbridge describes how the "blind loyalty" of constituents living in historically majority-minority districts almost always guarantees the reelection of minority incumbents while also limiting scrutiny of the representative's performance (1999, 640). In justifying this trend, Mansbridge returns to Pitkin's proposed dichotomy between substantive and descriptive representation and explains that descriptive characteristics are often misleading and may function as a false signal to voters that their substantive needs are being successfully represented on a congressional level. However, Mansbridge suspects an increase in minority candidates will encourage the American electorate to evaluate their representatives more carefully – ultimately fostering a series of more competitive elections, and incentivizing accountability among those already in office.

Descriptive Representation and Black Voters: An Empowering Effect

To date, empirical evidence concerning the link between descriptive representation and political participation within the African-American community remains divided, and therefore largely inconclusive. Early study of Black politics – the most influential of which is Bobo and Gilliam (1990) – indicates descriptive representation has a positive, measurable effect on Black political behavior. In order to isolate the factors responsible for Black sociopolitical engagement, the authors conducted a comparative analysis to assess the impact of Black-mayoral representation. Bobo and Gilliam find Black respondents represented by Black mayors assign intrinsic value to political involvement, and are therefore more likely to exhibit higher levels of political knowledge, trust and efficacy, when compared to Blacks who are represented by a White mayor.

Although these results are only valid in a mayoral setting and based on a limited, and likely incomplete dataset (n = 544), the novelty of Bobo and Gilliam's findings helped revive the

study of race politics. Previous data in the field were mostly unreliable given methodological limitations such as insignificant sample size and indirect measures of central variables, thereby undermining the accuracy of the study. Because their analysis was linked to the most current data (1978) available, and contained a large and fairly rare oversample of Black voters, Bobo and Gilliam were able to contextualize previous findings with their own. The authors' work also revealed the need to expand scholarship involving the political participation of minority voters, as most literature published in the 1970s and 1980s remained heavily dependent on data collected in the 1960s.

The publication of Bobo and Gilliam's research in 1990 prompted further study of descriptive representation, resulting in numerous studies designed to achieve a more thorough understanding of the complexities of political engagement within the African-American population. Further legitimizing Bobo and Gilliam's work, Katherine Tate (1991) establishes her influence in the field of race politics in her analysis of Black voting behavior during the presidential elections of 1984 and 1988. Her earliest research considers the possibly empowering effect of Black candidacy, and suggests the chance to vote for a Black candidate – in this case, Jesse Jackson – leads to increased turnout within the African-American electorate. Tate believes Black candidates competing for elective office are able to foster a sense of "group loyalty, pride and increased interest" within the Black community, which motivates and mobilizes Black voters (Tate, 1991, 1161).

In 2001, Tate reviews data from the 1996 National Black Election Study and finds a racial match between a congressman and his constituents is essential to the successful representation and advancement of minority interests in Congress. Even when controlling for

other characteristics – such as political party – Black voters still report a greater sense of satisfaction with their representative, provided he is of the same race.

Recent scholarship presented by Bowen and Clark (2014) confirms the empowering effects of descriptive representation remain applicable in a more contemporary electoral context. The authors offer an increased understanding of the impact of descriptive representation on the constituent-legislator relationship, and conclude voters who are co-ethnically represented are more likely to recall the name, and other key identifying characteristics of their legislator. Furthermore, the authors find descriptive representation increases communication between legislators and their constituents, and leads to a positive assessment of legislative responsiveness. Most importantly, these findings hold even after controlling for shared partisanship between respondents and their representatives. In other words, the race of a candidate appears to be more significant than his or her party affiliation among samples of Black voters.

Additional research presented by D.J. Fowler et al. (2014) considers the link between descriptive representation and a minority voter's "evaluation of [his or her] legislator and government institutions" (D.J. Fowler et al., 2014, 68). Fowler finds the "common cognitive and behavioral kinship" between a legislator and constituent builds trust, ultimately contributing to a more positive evaluation of the US government on both local and federal levels (Fowler et al., 2014, 68). Fowler also suggests descriptive representation may result in "warmer attitudes towards government officials" among non-White voters (Fowler et al., 2014, 68). He attributes this shift in attitude to the belief that legislators will become more responsive to minority political needs, given the observable influx of non-Whites into "positions of governmental power" (Fowler et al., 2014, 68).

In sum, the authors reviewed above define descriptive representation as an effective tool in encouraging minority voters to become more politically active, as measured through higher levels of voter turnout. Increased political activity may be related to the idea that a legislator of one's own racial background will be more attuned to the specific interests of his or her racial group, and will levy their congressional power or position to respond to such needs.

Revisiting Descriptive Representation: Mixed Evidence Concerning Trends in Turnout Among African-American Voters

The findings of Bobo and Gilliam were central to the study of race politics in the early 1990s, in that they assigned political value to the practice of descriptive representation and fostered an academic interest in understanding minority voting behavior. While many studies were similar to Bobo and Gilliam in confirming descriptive representation's mobilizing effect, the publication of conflicting data suggested otherwise.

The work of Claudine Gay (2001) is the first to provide a conflicting analysis of Black voting behavior. Gay discredits previous studies linking "black congressional office holding and political engagement," and claims such research lacks sufficient analysis (Gay, 2001, 589). Based on precinct data collected from eight states during the midterm elections of 1990 and 1994, Gay argues:

> The optimism of some who champion minority representation (and, by extension, the districting mechanism that ensures it) as a way to increase Black voter participation may be misplaced. Only occasionally is there greater political involvement among African-Americans represented in Congress by an African-American (599).

Though some congressional districts did report a rise in Black turnout of approximately 6-26 percentage points, this upward trend was not consistently observed across all districts included in Gay's study. She admits her results seem at odds with her original hypothesis, as she expected

African-American voters would be "energized" by the prospect of a minority candidate, and "embrace" an increase in Black congressional office-holding (Gay, 2001, 599). Gay believes this inconsistency may be the result of policy congruence between Black and White Democrats. In other words, African-American voters involved in Gay's study did not find a notable substantive difference between the policies of Black and White Democrats. "In the absence of a categorical difference" Gay concludes, "there is no categorical effect" (Gay, 2001, 599).

In 2003, Tate provides unexpected support of Gay's findings, despite earlier research (2001), which found descriptive representation to have an undeniably positive impact on Black voters. Her book, *Black Faces in the Mirror: African-Americans and Their Representatives in the U.S. Congress* offers an alternate conclusion. Relying on data from the 1996 National Black Election Study (NBES), Tate claims Blacks descriptively represented in Congress were not "more interested in political campaigns, efficacious, or more likely to vote" when compared to Blacks represented by Whites or other racial groups (Tate, 2003, 141). Furthermore, she finds descriptive representation does not seem to increase a sense of trust in the federal government among Blacks.

Tate offers two theories to account for the lack of empowerment among descriptively represented Black voters. The first: Black political engagement may exist – but only on a local level, and not in a larger congressional setting. Secondly, Tate suggests the empowering impact of descriptive representation might only act as a temporary phenomenon that "wears off" once a non-White candidate has been successfully elected into office (Tate, 2003, 142). Ultimately, Tate's book offers mixed evidence in support of descriptive representation. On the one hand she writes, "Black members in Congress have been the most consistent spokespersons for and champions of Black interests" (599), but later comments that the "evidence that descriptive

district-based representation empowers Blacks is slight" (Tate, 2003, 160). It seems Tate believes descriptive representation is normatively important for Black constituents, but her data fails to substantiate this claim.

Latino Voters Fit the Model of Descriptive Representation

In order to fully understand the effects of descriptive representation, it is necessary to consider its impact in the context of other racial groups. While the relation between descriptive representation and political participation among Black voters remains undefined, recent evidence suggests Latinos exhibit a positive response to the practice.

Barreto Segura and Woods (2004) have conducted extensive research concerning the contextual effects of living in a majority-minority district, with a special regard to Latino voters. The study monitored the voting behavior of Latinos residing in five counties in Southern California over the course of three election cycles. A definitive pattern emerges, in that living in a majority-Latino district promotes higher levels of turnout among Latino voters, but negatively impacts turnout for all other racial groups residing in the given congressional district. It seems residence in a majority-Latino district increases political participation, which results in a greater chance of electing a descriptive representative. "Having the opportunity to elect a candidate of your choosing" the authors conclude, "is a consistently empowering circumstance" (Barreto, Segura & Woods, 2004, 74). The authors' findings are significant in that they challenge previous empirical research (Brace et al. 1995; Gaddie & Bullock 1994; Gay 2001) that claims the presence of a minority candidate does not stimulate voter turnout.

Building on the belief that residence in a majority-Latino district has a politically empowering effect, Barreto (2007) conducts a more specific analysis using the voting records of five major cities with a heavy Latino presence. In Los Angeles, Houston, New York, San

Francisco and Denver, Barreto analyzed two elections per city – one with a Latino candidate and one without. The authors found ethnicity was a highly salient factor for Latinos. "The presence of a Latino candidate," writes Barreto, "mobilizes the Latino electorate, resulting in elevated voter turnout and strong support for co-ethnic candidates" (Barreto, 2007, 425).

Barreto reports his results are likely related to idea that low-information voters rely on heuristic shortcuts to inform vote choice. In this case, he believes the shared ethnicity between Latino voters and candidates overrides other electoral factors, and results in Latinos siding "with other Latinos on matters of political significance, even ones with whom they have only the term "Latino" in common." (Barreto, 2007, 427)

As such, it appears that Latinos fit the model of descriptive representation in a way that African-American voters may not. The chance to elect a minority representative seems to have a politically empowering effect on Latinos, in that it promotes voter mobilization, higher rates of participation and support for coethnic candidates. However, it is important to note that most of the research concerning the effects of descriptive representation on Black voting trends and behavior is based on a congressional or national-level analysis, while national elections studies that include a statistically significant number of Latino respondents did not exist until fairly recently. Because current data on Latinos is largely drawn from mayoral or local-level studies, it is unclear whether these results will persist in a more generalized, national setting.

Is Voter Turnout a Reliable Measure? Reviewing Alternate Research Strategies

Numerous studies have relied on voter turnout as a predictive measure of the impact of descriptive representation on dimensions of political engagement. Barreto and Nuño (2011) find turnout may be a misleading and unreliable marker and has the potential to distort data relating to minority voter participation. While rates of minority voter registration and turnout have

increased substantially over the past several decades, Barreto and Nuño report that they still lag behind those of White voters. However, the authors believe this gap should not be attributed to complacency on the part of minority voters, but rather political parties' lack of initiative to recruit the Black or Latino vote. Interestingly, more recent voter trends reveal that Black turnout exceeded that of white in the 2012 election, which suggests that politicians may be changing their campaign tactics

Barreto and Nuño explain the cost of recruiting new voters is highly prohibitive, meaning recruitment tactics are usually restricted to regions of the US where candidates feel they would have the most beneficial effect. As such, because many Democratic candidates assume minority voters are overwhelmingly liberal, they do not see it necessary to invest funds in a supposedly guaranteed constituency. The same logic can be applied to Republican candidates – they believe most minorities will vote democratically and choose to use their funds elsewhere. Given this observed lack of outreach, the authors suggest a reason for low turnout could simply be that minorities are not being contacted, making them less likely to participate.

While a considerable amount of research has focused on the impact of descriptive representation on dimensions of political engagement (i.e. voter turnout) fewer studies have considered the relation between descriptive representation and minority voters' evaluations of federal government. D.J. Fowler et al. (2014) seek to fill this gap in existing literature by extending their analysis to include Latino voters. Previous studies conducted on governmental evaluations focused solely on African-American constituents. The authors hypothesize non-White voters who are descriptively represented are more trusting of their legislator, and likely to feel politically empowered and efficacious, therefore allowing a more positive evaluation of government institutions to emerge.

Fowler et al. base their findings on data from the 2008 American National Election Study (ANES), which contain oversamples of both Latinos and African-American participants. Of the total sample size for each racial group, 25% of African-Americans and 42.8% of Latinos had a descriptive representative. In order to determine an accurate assessment of the US government, the authors measure responses to three key variables: the participant's approval rating of Congress, feelings toward the federal government, and feelings toward Congress.

As was seen with the differential effect regarding voter turnout, Latino and African-American constituents express conflicting evaluations of the US governmental system. Blacks who were descriptively represented report a more positive evaluation of their own House legislator, though Fowler explains, "these positive effects did not extend to government institutions more generally" (Fowler et al., 2014, 79). In contrast, descriptive representation results in a favorable effect on Latino participants, in that Latino attitudes towards congressional representatives and the federal government were positive on both accounts (Fowler et al., 2014, 79). The authors conclude their findings concerning the null effect of descriptive representation on African-American evaluations of government are consistent with past scholarship, and suggest the discrepancy between these racial groups may be due to historically different experiences with the US political system.

Given that the growing number of Latino and African-American citizens will soon convert the US into a majority-minority nation, investigating how descriptive representation impacts evaluations of government actors and institutions is critical in understanding the needs of a largely-minority electorate. If descriptive representation is shown to have a consistently empowering effect, this finding could inform future legislation, and encourage the number of minorities elected into office. However, additional data are required to create a more accurate

estimation of the effect of descriptive representation, and will help determine whether Fowler's findings extend beyond the 2008 election.

Concluding Thoughts

To date, the empirical study of descriptive representation and its effect on minority voters has largely amounted to conflicting results. Some scholars (Bobo & Gilliam, 1990; Tate 1991; Tate 2001, Barreto Segura & Woods, 2004, Barreto, 2007) believe descriptive representation has a notably positive impact on minorities, as measured by an increase in political knowledge and engagement. However, other studies (Brace et al. 1995; Cameron, Epstein & O'Halloran, 1996; Gay 2001; Tate 2003) challenge the legitimacy of data in support of descriptive representation, and propose alternate mechanisms for enhancing minority influence in the American political system.

Further complicating matters, a wide range of methodologies were involved in the studies listed above. Certain authors examined descriptive representation on a presidential level, while others considered the practice on congressional, or even mayoral level. Given that the function of descriptive representation may vary depending on the electoral context, the accuracy of these findings may be compromised and contribute to discrepancies in the literature. It is also relevant to note that only recently have researchers been able to sample minorities on a national level with large oversamples of both Black *and* Latino voters.

Previous data usually involved the analysis of either the Black *or* Latino vote, and therefore did not allow for comparative study. Furthermore, conclusions regarding Black or Latino voters were dependent on a relatively small sample size, simply because fewer minorities were being descriptively represented at that time. In addition to small sample size, most research only considered the impact of descriptive representation for a single geographical region – say, a

few congressional districts in one state – which is certainly not indicative of the entire nation. It seems likely the effect of descriptive representation could vary by location, further undermining viability of the data in question.

As such, data collected by the ANES are helpful in conducting a national-level analysis, and may help clarify why descriptive representation seems to have a differential impact on minority voters. Furthermore, because the ANES conducts such a comprehensive survey of political attitudes, researchers are able to consider other factors – such as discrimination, linked fate, and political trust – that may help explain why descriptive representation does not have a uniform effect on the American electorate. Therefore, in the following chapter I will provide an overview of the differences between individual and group-level discrimination and their varying effect on minorities, as well as a historical understanding of the linked fate phenomenon, with the ultimate goal of providing the context necessary to interpret my findings from the 2012 ANES.

Chapter Three: Literature Review Part II: Linked Fate, Discrimination, and the Puzzle of Political Engagement

Introduction

My comparative review of the literature concerning Latino and African-American voters suggests descriptive representation creates a divergence in trends among minority voters. While Latinos who are descriptively represented are more likely to turnout on Election Day, African-Americans do not seem to adhere to this pattern. Current research conducted by Fowler et al. finds descriptive representation fosters a positive evaluation of both congressmen and the larger US federal government among Latino voters, whereas Blacks limit their favorable assessment to his or her specific congressman.

Yet, Latinos and African-Americans both share a history of "disproportionate income, educational disparities, and discrimination in jobs and housing" (Fowler et al. 2014, 69). If descriptive representation has the potential to alleviate such disparities, and empower those who are disenfranchised – why then, would marginalized minority groups not be in equal favor of having a descriptive representative?

While many explanations may account for the unexpected discrepancy between Latinos and African-Americans in their response to descriptive representation, I will limit my analysis to two factors. First, I will consider the strong sense of linked fate and group consciousness found among Black voters, and if this sentiment differs from the evolving identity of the Latino electorate. Second, I will examine the differential effects of both perceptions of and experiences with discrimination in order to assess its impact on levels of linked fate and trust in the American political system. Ultimately, I hope to offer an understanding of the interplay between linked fate, trust and discrimination in order to understand better the significance of descriptive representation for minority voters.

It is important to note that the political implications of linked fate and discrimination are not fully understood. As a result it is not uncommon to find studies that contradict one another, or to find authors who have revised, or even rejected their initial conclusions in light of new research. Much of the ambiguity in this field can be attributed to the methodological challenges in defining and quantifying subjective concepts (e.g. trust, feelings of group consciousness) and the varied experiences and perspectives of survey respondents.

Furthermore, only recently have Latinos been incorporated into the scholarship on political behavior. The first formal study of Latinos and their role in American politics occurred in 1980, and even then the conclusions were drawn from a limited number of respondents – possibly compromising the accuracy of the study (Affigne, 2014). Over the past decade, surveyors have made a conscious effort to oversample, or exclusively sample the Latino population in efforts to obtain more representative survey data (see ANES 2008, 2012, LNS, LNPS). Therefore, the scholarship on discrimination, linked fate and discrimination is rapidly expanding, but it is often inconsistent as researchers gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of the Latino population.

A Historical Understanding of Linked Fate: Black Group Consciousness

The mid-1980s saw considerable economic diversification within the African-American community. These changes prompted race scholar Michael Dawson to speculate whether the stratification of social class among Blacks might lead to a decline in racial loyalties along with a divergence in political beliefs and behaviors. His 1994 publication *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics* seeks to determine whether race or social class will prove most influential in shaping African-American partisanship. Relying on data from the 1984-1988 National Black Election Study (NBES) Dawson finds in spite of differences in socio-economic

status, African-Americans were united in their partisan identity and remained a consistently Democratic voting bloc. According to Dawson, these findings are counterintuitive in that most scholars at the time predicted economic polarization would transform wealthy Black voters into Republicans as they would likely benefit from conservative economic polices, while poor African-Americans would retain their liberal ideology.

To explain why middle-class African-Americans would actively vote against their own economic interests Dawson introduces the concept of "linked fate." This theory suggests one's individual fate is tied to that of a larger, usually racial or ethnic group, making individual success dependent on the success of the group as a whole. In other words, despite significant economic heterogeneity, African-Americans recognize that compared to Republicans, Democratic candidates will better serve the needs of their larger racial group and vote accordingly.

Dawson believes the prevalence of linked fate within the Black community is likely derived from a shared history of slavery, social exclusion and racial discrimination. As Masuoka (2006) explains:

> African-American individual life chances have largely been overdetermined by their race. Historically, being African-America has controlled one's placement in life, opportunities and so forth. Given this racial conflict throughout history, African-Americans have come to rely on their own communities to represent their needs (994).

Dawson concludes these common experiences encourage the formation of a collective Black identity, and promote a sense of Black group consciousness, resulting in a heightened sense of linked fate. "As long as race remains dominant in determining the lives of individual Blacks" Dawson writes, it is 'rational' for Blacks to follow group cues in interpreting and acting in the political world." (1994, 57) Put differently, as long as institutional racism continues to disadvantage and oppress minorities, African-Americans will be forced to forgo individualistic political behaviors to ensure the collective needs of the group will be met and addressed.

Limitations of the Linked Fate Model: Latinos, Immigration and Acculturation

Today, the benefits of linked fate remain of political importance. Prior studies (Schildkraut, 2013; Masuoka, 2006, Masuoka, 2008, Barreto, 2010, Dawson, 1994) indicate linked fate increases political cohesion, interest, efficacy and participation, empowers voters, and helps group members form a consistent partisan identity. In an electoral context, linked fate is a reliable indicator of political behavior and ideology, as well as a valuable predictor of voting patterns. Most importantly, linked fate is shown to promote a preference for descriptive representation. However, some scholars (see Sanchez & Masuoka, 2010, Masuoka 2006, Masuoka 2008) believe linked fate may be limited in its application. Because Dawson's theory was originally developed only in regard to African-Americans, the authors question whether the effects of linked fate can extend to minority groups who lack a shared history of slavery and segregation.

Research as to whether linked fate can be meaningful for other minority groups has yielded mixed results. Sanchez and Masuoka (2010) find Latinos often choose to identify along a variety of dimensions such as race, national origin, nativity to the US, generational status and so forth. As a result, multiple identities are created, dividing the Latino population and possibly causing a reduced sense of group consciousness and solidarity within the group. The absence of common experiences further diminishes the chance for a collective Latino identity and contributes to a decrease in linked fate.

Though perceptions of linked fate are not nearly as monolithic as they are among Blacks, Sanchez and Masuoka believe linked fate can exist in certain subsets of the larger Latino population. According to the authors, linked fate among Latinos does not depend on race or common history but rather the degree of "social integration to American society." (2010, 528)

More specifically, their data show recently immigrated Spanish-dominant Latinos who are not acculturated to mainstream American culture exhibit high levels of linked fate. However, more acculturated Latinos (measured via English proficiency, generational status, income, education etc.) report less of a connection with their larger ethnic group resulting in weaker perceptions of linked fate.

In other words, linked fate appears to be an only temporary phenomenon for Latinos. The authors hypothesize the transient nature of linked fate among Latinos is likely the result of varied socioeconomic status. Less acculturated Latinos are likely to experience similar "marginalization derived from economic status and immigration experiences" which fosters a group identity and sense of community (2010, 528). More acculturated Latinos who enjoy financial stability and independence may wish to distance themselves from their previous immigrant identities – thereby creating a divide within the larger racial group. Sanchez and Masuoka conclude the impermanence of linked fate observed among Latinos is related to the process of assimilation and subsequent decline in ethnic attachment.

Discrimination: A Predictor of Political Trust?

While some of the literature suggests the varied sense of group consciousness and linked fate among racial groups may account for the differential effects of descriptive representation, another possible explanation lies in the impact of discrimination on African-Americans and Latinos. While all racial minorities suffer from the damaging consequences of institutional racism in the United States, data (McClain and Stewart, 1999; Uhlaner, 1991) show Blacks both experience and perceive higher levels of discrimination than other racial and ethnic groups.

Existing research on this topic describes discrimination as a highly politicized event that affects the Black voting population in three unique ways. First, perceptions of discrimination

among Blacks are known to activate group consciousness and reinforce a sense of identification with their racial group (Kaufmann, 2003). Second, discrimination against Blacks greatly contributes to their mistrust of American government (Avery, 2007). Finally, discrimination leads to a specialized form of political participation among African-Americans: protest.

While most studies consider the implications of political mistrust on effective governance, Avery believes mistrust is significant in that it varies greatly by race. Whites base their trust on "short-term political factors, such as evaluations of the president and Congress and the policy outputs and outcomes they produce." (Avery 2007, 676) As such, white trust in government is largely determined by partisan control of Congress and the presidency. Conversely, Black political mistrust "is rooted in a fundamental discontent with the position of Blacks in American society" (2007, 676). Avery writes experience or awareness of discrimination instigates Black political mistrust and inspires activity that deviates from routine methods of participation (i.e. voting). Given Black mistrust of the federal government, it follows that African-Americans would be disinclined to engage in mainstream American politics as a means to advance racial equality. Instead, Blacks pursue an alternate route to affect political change through the organization of political protests.

In contrast to African-Americans, Latinos differ significantly in their experience with discrimination. According to Fowler et al. (2014) Latinos are less cognizant of the effects of prejudice and bias, and therefore report lower levels of discrimination when compared to Blacks. Fowler believes this reduced perception is likely due to the immigrant-based nature of the Latino community. He explains an awareness of discrimination is mostly a function of assimilation and time spent in the US. In other words, recently immigrated Latinos may not experience or

recognize discrimination – not for lack of prejudice – but because their exposure is still fairly limited.

Research that considers the interplay between trust, and discrimination against Latinos remains largely inconclusive. Wong (2006) finds discrimination may have a motivating effect, in that Latinos who feel rejected or unwelcome in the US have shown an increased tendency to become naturalized American citizens and vote. In this sense, discrimination may encourage Latinos to become more engaged in the American political system, while discrimination has the opposite effect on African-Americans.

Conflicting studies (Michelson, 2001; Garcia, 1973) suggest discrimination has a "corrosive" effect on political trust. In other words, acculturated Latinos may be more likely to have encountered "harsh reality" (i.e. discrimination) and are therefore distrusting of the US political system (Monforti & Michelson, 2014, 94). Building on these results, Michelson (2003) and Pedraza (2009) conclude Latinos who "have experienced discrimination, or feel that [they] are targets of discrimination are more likely to be cynical" which can result in the delayed political integration of Latino voters (As quoted in Barreto and Nuño, 2011, 449).

Interestingly, Michelson's most recently published work contradicts her previous research. In collaboration with Monforti, the authors' 2014 study confirms Latinos who have experienced discrimination in the workplace or during interactions with police are shown to be significantly less trusting of the American government. However, Monforti and Michelson qualify this finding, and write:

> Low and generally declining levels of trust in government among the U.S. population belie a simplistic assumption that those who are more acculturated will also be less trusting, as acculturation has been found in previous research to be corrosive of trust in government. In fact, these results speak to the inadequacies of such an explanation, as nativity is not consistently linked to feelings of political trust (106).

Put differently, while discrimination can certainly affect Latino trust in government, the link between discrimination and acculturation is not nearly as linear as many imagine. Instead, Monforti and Michelson maintain Latino trust in government is not dictated by experiences with discrimination, but by the degree to which one identifies as an American. "If individuals feel that they belong to the mainstream culture, as evidenced by support for an American identity and U.S. culture," the authors write, then "[Latinos] tend to be more trusting" (Monforti & Michelson, 2014, 106).

The Consequences of Discrimination In the Context of Descriptive Representation

The current scholarship on discrimination reports a diverse range of effects. In certain circumstances, discrimination can serve as motivation to overcome prejudice. In others, discrimination furthers disenchantment for historically marginalized groups, decreasing political trust and altering evaluations of US government institutions. Still other studies conclude discrimination may not even be the factor responsible for instigating political mistrust. However, the purpose of my research is not to account for these inconsistencies but rather to consider how discrimination might interfere with support for descriptive representation.

In examining the political behavior of African-Americans, it is likely that Black distrust of government could reduce incentive to engage in the US political system, ultimately depressing turnout among African-American voters. It seems contemporary discrimination reminds Black voters of their past social exclusion via slavery, and later Jim Crow laws – ultimately amounting to a heightened sense of disenchantment with the federal government and its legacy of minority marginalization. As such, the sentiment of distrust may override the purported benefits of descriptive representation.

On the other hand, the decreased sense of awareness of discrimination among Latinos may promote a more positive assessment of government and an increase in political engagement, especially when encouraged by the chance to vote for a coethnic candidate. Even later generations of Latinos who are likely to possess a heightened awareness of discrimination are still likely to maintain their positive attitude towards US government. Fowler et al. suggests the resilience of this positivity is due to the fact that discrimination is not necessarily perceived as a group-wide experience because Latinos lack the collective political identity shared by African-Americans.

Revisiting Fowler's Study: Making Sense of Differential Evaluations of Government Institutions

Though the literature on linked fate, discrimination and political trust yields mostly mixed results, the data are essential in investigating the differential effect of descriptive representation as outlined in Fowler's study. While Fowler et al. maintains African-Americans may react favorably to a coethnic candidate; Blacks don't extend their view to the larger federal system. The authors believe this is likely because high perceptions of discrimination among Blacks trigger a sense of identification with the larger racial group. More specifically, "The historical legacy of slavery and Jim Crow laws, combined with an awareness of contemporary discrimination, may make African-Americans less inclined to project more favorable views onto government, even when they have a descriptive representative." (Fowler et al. 2014, 80)

Surprisingly, Fowler's analysis reveals linked fate is not statistically significant. While the authors do not provide any indication as to why linked fate is never significant, Fowler does find that living in a majority-minority district is significant. Therefore, he suggests the racial context of one's district may play a more powerful role than linked fate in evaluations of government actors and institutions.

As for Latinos, Fowler speculates the immigration and assimilations process allows for a delayed exposure to prejudice and discrimination in the US. As a result, Latinos form a largely positive evaluation of the US political system based on their initial experience in the country, which, according to the authors, is only strengthened by having a descriptive representative.

Fowler's original study was based on data from the 2008 ANES. By substituting data from the 2012 ANES, I hope to replicate and expand Fowler's 2014 publication to see if the authors' observations also prove to be relevant in the 2012 election, and to better understand which factors may be responsible for the differential effect of descriptive representation. In the following chapter I discuss my variables and methodology, as well as an explanation of which significance tests I used and why I chose them.

Chapter Four: Methodology

Introduction to the ANES

This study uses the 2012 American National Election Study (ANES) to assess whether descriptive representation has a similarly empowering effect on both Black and Latino voters. More specifically, I plan to investigate whether having a coethnic candidate has a differential effect on African-Americans and Latinos in their evaluations of legislators and US government institutions. By updating Fowler's original research based on data from the 2008 ANES, I hope to expand the current understanding of the connections between descriptive representation, discrimination and linked fate in the context of today's electoral landscape.

The ANES has been conducted during Presidential elections dating back to 1948. Respondents are selected via address-based sampling and random digit dialing sampling methodologies, and are interviewed two months before and after the election in question. The 2012 ANES boasts its largest-ever sample size, with 5,916 respondents, which includes those who were interviewed in person and online. For the purpose of my own analysis, I only use data from face-to-face interviews.

However, the magnitude of this sample is of special importance in that it allows for the oversampling of the minority population, which ensures that Blacks and Latinos are fairly represented in the study. Whereas the 2008 ANES relied on only one nationally representative sample in which selection probabilities were manipulated to ensure oversamples, the 2012 ANES has two samples made up of exclusively Black and Latino respondents, in addition to the larger main sample. Because I am primarily interested in how descriptive representation impacts minority voters, I will limit my analysis to these two groups.

Minority Representation in Survey Data

Public opinion research is a powerful tool that, when used correctly, can generate a representative snapshot of the American population and their preferences. The publication of this data has certainly informed and influenced the direction of electoral politics and reform in the US and continues to do so today. However, a major pitfall in pubic opinion data emerges when we consider if a given sample is truly representative of the larger population and accurately reflects the preferences of the American electorate. All too often, minority respondents are under-sampled and underrepresented in survey data, leading to a distortion of the collected data (Affigne, 2014).

While African-Americans were slowly incorporated into social science research in the late 1960s, (mostly via the National Black Politics Study and the National Black Election Study) Latinos were notably missing from the literature (Affigne, 2014). The ANES was one of the first publicly accessible and large-N studies that began to actively oversample minority respondents in an attempt to better capture the political behaviors and opinions of African-American voters. According to Affigne, only in 2008 did the ANES begin to "deliberately oversample" Latinos in order to piece together a more representative sample of the population. The fact that ANES investigators are actively seeking to correct their methodological errors is a significant step in expanding the field of race politics and strengthening its salience in political science research.

Beginning with the ANES of 1970, Table 4.1 shows the gradual incorporation of minority groups into survey data, and contrasts the percentage of a given racial group in the US population with the group's representation in the ANES. Although white respondents still constitute a majority of respondents in the ANES, the percentage of Blacks and Latinos has

steadily increased. Hopefully with time, the percentage of minorities groups included in the ANES will begin to resemble the actual demography of the United States.

Table 4.1 – Racial Undersampling in the ANES (1970-2008)

Racial group	Respondent pool composition, by ANES survey year				
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008
White, non-Hispanic					
Percentage in ANES sample	89.0%	83.0%	75.0%	74.0%	74.0%
Percentage in U.S. population	83.5%	79.6%	75.6%	69.1%	65.4%
White, non-Hispanic					
Oversample	5.5%	3.4%	−0.6%	4.9%	8.6%
Hispanic					
Hispanic population	9,600,000	14,000,000	22,300,000	35,300,000	46,800,000
Percentage in ANES sample	0%	3.0%	7.0%	7.0%	9.0%
Percentage in U.S. population	4.7%	6.4%	9.0%	12.5%	15.4%
Hispanic, all races					
Undersample	N/A	−3.4%	−2.0%	−5.5%	−6.4%
Black, non-Hispanic (U.S.)	11.1%	11.7%	12.1%	12.3%	12.8%
Percentage in ANES sample	10.0%	12.0%	13.0%	13.0%	12.0%
Asian, non-Hispanic (U.S.)	0.8%	1.5%	2.9%	4.2%	4.6%
Percentage in ANES sample	0%	1.0%	2.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Native, non-Hispanic (U.S.)	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%	1.5%	1.0%
Percentage in ANES sample	0%	2.0%	3.0%	3.0%	1.0%
N	1,507	1,612	1,979	1,767	2,313

Source: The American National Election Studies, "Table 1A3. Race of the Respondent," *The ANES Guide to Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Political Studies 2010). Published in Latino Politics En Ciencia Política.

Variables and Methodology

The 2012 ANES features a dual-mode design, which combines face-to-face interviewing with a separate sample of respondents who were interviewed online. For the purposes of my own research I only made use of data collected from respondents who participated in face-to-face interviews, and my samples were weighted accordingly.

In replicating Fowler's study, I selected a certain subset of independent variables used in his own data analysis, and chose to omit others. More specifically, I kept the following variables: *Race Match* (which Fowler had originally coded as *Descriptive Representative*) and *Party Match*

– which are both dummy variables – as well as *Age, Gender* and *Education*. In order to assess whether a given respondent was of the same race and party of his or her representative, I compiled a list of all representatives relevant to the 2012 ANES that included their name, party affiliation, race and congressional district. As this information is accessible online, I was able to complete this list via Internet searches.

Party Match is comprised of two factors. First I record the respondent's own partisan affiliation, which the ANES codes on a seven-point scale ranging from strong Democrat, to strong Republican. To simplify my analysis, respondents who identify as either "strong", "weak" or "leaning" Democrats are combined into one category, while those who identify as "strong", "weak" or "leaning" Republicans are combined into another. Those who identify as Independent remain in a separate group. After assigning the respondent to one of the three groups, I then compare the respondent's partisanship to that of his or her representative in order to determine whether it is a *Party Match*.

Age is simply the respondent's age in years; *Gender* is a dichotomous variable depending on whether the respondent is male or female, and *Education* is coded such that higher values indicate a higher degree of schooling. I also make us of Fowler's race-specific variables, which include *Black Linked Fate* as measured among African-Americans, and variables for both *Structural Assimilation* and *Cultural Assimilation,* which are designed for Latino respondents.

Structural Assimilation is assessed by considering the dominant language spoken at home (i.e. English vs. Spanish), the native status of the respondent's parents, and how many of his or her grandparents were born outside of the US. *Cultural Assimilation* is determined by the degree to which the Latino respondent believes it necessary to blend in with American society, and the strength in which he or she believes it is important to maintain Latino-specific cultural values

and norms. Both variables are coded such that higher values indicate less assimilation. The details for the exact question wording of these control-level variables are listed in the appendix.

Additionally, I created another dummy variable coded as *Majority-Minority District*, which reports whether the respondent resides in a primarily non-White district based on data from the US Census Bureau. However, unlike Fowler I did not specify whether the district was majority-Black or majority-Latino,

Finally, the 2012 ANES includes three additional variables not found in the 2008 ANES, which I hope will offer an updated insight into Fowler's overall conclusions. These include, *Latino Linked Fate*, perceptions of *Group-Level Discrimination*, and perceptions of *Individual Discrimination.* All three variables are coded such that higher values indicate either stronger perceptions of discrimination, or a deeper sense of linked fate.

I also thought it might be worthwhile to control for the presence of a descriptive representative among Latino and African-American respondents. I chose to create these models to more fully estimate the effect of descriptive representation, as I am interested to see whether certain variables gain significance in exclusively race-matched or non-race-matched sub-samples, but later lose their meaning when measured in a larger, mixed sample that includes those with and without a descriptive representative. Therefore, I include Models 3 and 4 in every analysis, in which respondents are either race-matched or not, as opposed to Models 1 and 2 where respondents are mixed regardless of the race of their representative.

In order to assess evaluations of legislators, I run ordered-probit analyses as approval ratings and assessments of representative job performance are organized on a four-point scale. For the remaining dependent variables concerning feelings toward the federal government and

Congress, I rely on regression analysis as responses were recorded by feeling thermometers ranked on a scale of 0-100.

The following two chapters offer a comprehensive overview of my data. Chapter Five consists of a comparative analysis of Latinos and African-Americans in their assessment of their respective congressmen, as measured by *Approval Ratings of the Representative* and *Representative Job Performance.* Chapter Six explores the differences in evaluations of government institutions among Black and Latino respondents, and includes responses to *Approval Ratings of Congress*, *Feelings Toward the Federal Government*, and *Feelings Toward Congress.*

Chapter Five: The Effects of Descriptive Representation on Evaluations of One's Legislators Among African-Americans and Latinos

Introduction

To further examine the myriad effects of descriptive representation, my initial analysis considers whether having a descriptive representative contributes to positive evaluations of one's legislator. The ANES includes several questions that help to assess the degree to which Black and Latino citizens favor their respective legislator. The exact question wording is listed in the Appendix. First, respondents were asked if they approved or disapproved of the way their current representative was handling his or her job. Responses to *Approval Rating of the Representative* are coded on a five-point scale, which ranges from disapprove strongly, to strongly approve, with higher values indicating greater approval.

In addition, respondents were asked to evaluate his or her representative's job performance based on how well representatives stayed in touch with their constituency. In determining *Representative Job Performance,* respondents were asked to rank legislators' outreach from very poor to very good. Unfortunately, while Fowler's study included a measure on *Feelings Toward the Representative* this question was only included in the 2008 ANES and not repeated in 2012.

Since both dependent variables are organized on a four-point scale, I rely on ordered probit analysis in order to assess which factors are most significant for respondents in evaluating their legislators. The results for both African-Americans and Latinos are shown in Tables 5.1 – 5.5. It is important to note that in my analysis of African-American respondents, Model 1 eliminates Black linked fate as a variable, while Model 2 includes it. Similarly, for Latinos,

Model 1 does not contain measures of structural and cultural assimilation while Model 2 does. The measure for Latino linked fate is introduced in Table 5.4.

Regardless of race Models 3 and 4 always control for the presence of a descriptive representative. I chose to create these models in order to more fully estimate the effect of descriptive representation, as I am interested to see whether certain variables gain significance in exclusively race-matched or non-race-matched sub-samples, but later lose their meaning when measured in a larger, mixed sample that includes those with and without a descriptive representative. As such, Model 3 is generated from either Black or Latino respondents who have a descriptive representative (labeled as "Race Match"), while Model 4 is created from those who do not.

Most importantly, my analyses conducted with data from 2012 will update Fowler's findings from the 2008 ANES. To review, in his study he concludes, "We find very strong evidence that having a descriptive representative boosts evaluations of one's legislator among *both* African-Americans and Latinos." (2014, 74) Additionally he finds that while descriptive representation has "meaningful effects" for both groups, shared partisanship seems to have a stronger impact on boosting evaluations of legislators for both Blacks and Latinos (2014, 74). In this chapter, I aim to determine whether my own data will corroborate the trends described in Fowler's research. I find that while descriptive representation retains its significance among Latino voters in their *Approval Rating of the Representative*, it has no effect on either racial group in assessments of *Representative Job Performance*, leading me to conclude that descriptive representation's effect is more moderate in 2012 than it appears to be in 2008.

However, it is important to note that Fowler's data include an additional model, *Feelings Toward the Representative* that is found only in the 2008 ANES. The fact that descriptive

representation improves both *Feelings Toward the Representative* and evaluations of *Representative Job Performance* among Black respondents in 2008, leads Fowler to conclude that descriptive representation has a positive effect on African-Americans' evaluations of legislators. Since *Feelings Toward the Representative* is a measure not included in the 2012 ANES, it is possible that my data show descriptive representation has a null effect on Blacks' evaluations of legislators simply because my analysis involves fewer dependent variables than Fowler's.

Approval Rating of the Representative

Turning to Table 5.1, it is evident that descriptive representation has a markedly different effect on Latinos and African-Americans. For Black citizens, having a race match with his or her representative was never statistically significant, even when controlling for whether the respondent was represented descriptively or not. In contrast, having a descriptive representative appears to be influential for Latino voters (p = 0.019). Mean approval of one's legislator is 2.33 among African-Americans, and 2.38 among Latinos. For African-Americans who are descriptively represented, mean approval of one's legislator is 2.57, and 2.72 among race-matched Latinos, which indicates that descriptive representation works to boost approval ratings among African-American respondents, even though Table 5.1 indicates race is not a statistically significant factor.

As is seen below in Table 5.2, my findings for this particular dependent variable are in line with Fowler's: descriptive representation does not have a significant effect on African-American respondents, but is significant in raising approval ratings for Latinos. As for the other independent variables, *Party Match* has a consistently positive effect across all four models for both African-American and Latino respondents in both 2008 and 2012, suggesting that while

race may be a relevant factor in respondents' evaluations, partisanship is a considerably more reliable predictor of voter approval. Partisanship's consistent effect is expected and confirmed by the seminal work, *The American Voter* (1960), which establishes the influence of partisanship as a primary factor in shaping US public opinion.

Table 5.2: Comparing the Significance of Race and Party on Approval Ratings of the Representative for Black and Latino Respondents in 2008 and 2012, American National Election Study

	Race-Match	Party-Match
Latinos in 2008	Positive, significant	Positive, significant
Blacks in 2008	Null effect	Positive, significant
Latinos in 2012	Positive, significant	Positive, significant
Blacks in 2012	Null effect	Positive, significant

However, because nearly all Black representatives in 112th Congress are Democrats, and African-Americans have proven to be a historically Democratic voting bloc, I was surprised to see that partisanship remains markedly significant, even among respondents who were descriptively represented in Model 3. In re-examining my data I discovered that out of the 511 total Blacks surveyed in the 2012 ANES, 60 of those respondents were represented by the only two Black Republican congressmen in office at the time: Allen West and Tim Scott. Of those 60, 95% identified as Democrats, one respondent reported he or she was Republican, and the remaining two failed to answer the question concerning partisan identification. In other words, in the 2012 ANES, 57 Black Democrats were represented by a congressman who was of the same race, but not of the same party. As a result, partisanship was a meaningful factor among race-matched Black respondents when ranking representatives.

Finally, adding the Black linked fate measure in Model 2 had no observable effect on the approval rating of the representative for African-Americans. Similarly, reintroducing the

structural and cultural assimilation measures did not alter the evaluations of Latino respondents. Both of these findings are consistent with Fowler's data.

Representative Job Performance

The second set of analyses in Table 5.1 considers how African-Americans and Latinos differ in assessing representative job performance, where performance is measured by how well respondents believe their congressman keeps in touch with members of the district. Mean evaluations of *Representative Job Performance* are on the low end for both racial groups: 1.51 for African-Americans, and 1.49 for Latinos. Among descriptively represented respondents, the mean is 1.80 among African-Americans, and 1.84 among Latinos.

As displayed in Table 5.3, *Race Match* is not significant for African-Americans, but surprisingly, also not statistically significant for Latino respondents. This null effect is a major departure from Fowler's findings. Based on the 2008 ANES, Fowler's data show descriptive representation is significant for both African-American and Latino voters, leading respondents of both races to form more positive evaluations of job performance. However, data from the 2012 ANES indicate representative job performance is determined independent of race.

Table 5.3: Comparing the Significance of Race and Party on Representative Job Performance for Black and Latino Respondents in 2008 and 2012, American National Election Study

	Race-Match	Party-Match
Latinos in 2008	Positive, significant	Null effect
Blacks in 2008	Positive, significant	Positive, significant
Latinos in 2012	Null effect	Positive, significant in Models 1, 2, and 4
Blacks in 2012	Null effect	Positive, significant

I believe Obama's candidacy in the 2008 election might account for the discrepancy observed between the two datasets. Leading up to any presidential election, the voting population

becomes increasingly segmented as politicians appeal to a variety of sub-constituencies in hopes of gaining the votes of women, the working-class, youth and so forth. Of course, winning the favor of certain racial voting blocs is also critical in securing votes to win the presidency successfully. As such, it is likely that Black legislators were directly targeting their Black constituents in order to mobilize votes for Obama. Similarly, Latinos were being mobilized to vote for either Obama (i.e. the *¡Si se puede!* Campaign tactics) or McCain – who sought the Latino vote by emphasizing immigration reform – depending on the partisanship of their legislator.

Either way, race mattered and was widely used as a tool to connect with both Black and Latino constituencies in order to guarantee their vote. Consequently, respondents in the 2008 ANES identified descriptive representation as a significant factor in motivating constituent contact, ultimately boosting assessments of representative job performance. Because Blacks and Latinos who voted for Obama almost certainly did so again in 2012, I imagine the need for explicitly race-based campaigning was reduced, which could explain why race was insignificant among both Black and Latino respondents when rating legislative job performance. However, the impact of Obama's campaigning tactics on *Representative Job Performance* is purely speculative and would merit further research.

Future study might include surveys designed to measure if 1) respondents were, in fact, contacted by either presidential campaign in 2008 and 2) whether this form of contact was targeted towards a specific racial audience, or cited race as a motivating factor to turnout on Election Day. Additionally, if race-based campaigning did occur, it might be worthwhile to see if congressional races employed the same tactics, and whether the 2012 elections featured more incumbents than in 2008.

Party Match remains significant for both African-Americans and Latinos in assessing job performance, although shared partisanship is shown to be insignificant among Latinos who are descriptively represented. This effect is unique and warrants further investigation in that it is the only model in which shared partisanship does not maintain its significance when compared to both racial groups' assessments of *Approval Rating of the Representative* and *Representative Job Performance*.

For both Latino and African-American respondents, *age* significantly improves evaluations of representative job performance, though the effect is shown to be stronger among Latino respondents. This finding is consistent with the work of Verba and Nie (1972), which concludes political participation increases with age and levels off around age 65.

I imagine the positive impact of age could be linked to the fact that respondents become increasingly dependent on public programs as they age, which might encourage respondents to contact their representatives to inquire about Medicare, or other issues pertaining to Social Security. Respondents who initiate contact with their representative will almost certainly hear back from a congressman or his staff, ultimately boosting perceptions of congressional-constituent outreach. However, age plays no role in assessing job performance among Blacks who are descriptively represented, leaving *Party Match* as the only significant factor.

Black Linked Fate has a consistent negative effect on job performance assessment. In other words, strong feelings of group consciousness among Black respondents lead to poorer evaluations of their congressman's performance. Table 5.1 also indicates that people with a descriptive representative are insulated from the negative impact of Black linked fate, likely because Black voters feel empowered when represented by someone of their own race, which subsequently neutralizes the usually negative effect of linked fate.

While *Black Linked Fate* impacts assessments of *Representative Job Performance*, it has no effect on African-Americans' *Approval Rating of the Representative*. This trend also appears in data from the 2008 ANES. I find this observation puzzling as it seems likely that respondents would rely on similar criteria when evaluating the job performance and approval rating of their representative. However, given that linked fate is significant in only one of my analyses, I imagine there is something specific about the way in which *Representative Job Performance* is measured that activates the significance of linked fate among Black respondents.

As job performance is determined by how well respondents believe their congressman keeps in contact with his constituents, it seems plausible that some African-Americans feel their congressman does a better and more consistent job of responding to white constituents when compared to Black ones, particularly if the representative is white. Therefore, I speculate that should this perception exist, perhaps Black respondents feel they are unfairly discriminated against, which leads to a sense of group solidarity that may account for the significance of *Black Linked Fate* in assessments of *Representative Job Performance.* In fact, according to Butler and Broockman (2011), state legislators are more likely to respond to requests and questions from constituents who share their own race. To test my hypothesis, I could build on the authors' existing research, and collect more current data showing that white congressmen are, in fact, less likely to respond to their Black constituents. Then, I would run additional tests to see whether *Black Linked Fate* has a significantly negative effect on evaluations of *Representative Job Performance* among Black citizens who are represented by a white congressman.

Assessing the Role of Latino Linked Fate in Evaluations of Legislators

While the 2008 ANES only asked Black respondents about linked fate, the 2012 ANES measures levels of Latino linked fate as well. As such, I thought it necessary to update Fowler's

study further by investigating the effect of Latino linked fate, if any. Latino respondents were asked if they thought what happens "generally" to Latinos living in the US would have a relevant impact on their own life, and were then invited to respond either "yes" or "no".

For the most part, including the measure of Latino linked fate in Table 5.4 did not alter either *Approval Rating of the Representative* or *Representative Job Performance* among Latinos polled in the 2012 ANES. The variables, *Race Match, Party Match* and *Age* maintained their significance across all four models as is the case in Table 5.1, even after controlling for Latino linked fate. The fact that Latino linked fate was never significant in any of the four models shown in Table 5.2 confirms existing research (see Sanchez & Masuoka, 2010, Masuoka 2006, Masuoka 2008), which indicates the variety of pan-ethnic identities among Latinos inhibits the formation of group consciousness and solidarity within the larger population. Here, I find that the impact of linked fate is inhibited as well.

Might Discrimination Impact Voters' Evaluations of Legislators?

As the 2012 ANES includes questions that address the topic of racial discrimination, I thought it would be worthwhile to examine how perceptions of both group and individual discrimination impact respondents' evaluations of legislators. On a scale from none at all, to a great deal, respondents were asked to rank how much discrimination they believed was directed towards specific racial groups (i.e. Whites, Blacks and Latinos). In a subsequent question using the same scale, respondents were asked how much discrimination they personally faced as a result of their ethnicity or race.

As my previous literature reviews reveal, perceptions of discrimination play a significant role in shaping Black political beliefs and needs. To this end, I was particularly interested to see whether perceptions Black group-level discrimination might be statistically significant in

changing evaluations of legislators among Black respondents. In running these models I hope to examine two hypotheses. First, whether discrimination is even significant in shaping job performance assessments and approval ratings among Blacks, and secondly – whether discrimination loses its significance in Model 3. That is, does having a Black congressman have an empowering effect on Black citizens such that it nullifies the presumably negative effect of discrimination on evaluations of legislators? To further investigate this hypothesis, I controlled for levels of individual discrimination and the presence of a descriptive representative among African-American respondents as shown in Models 3 and 4 in Table 5.5.

As seen in Table 5.5, neither group-level nor individual discrimination are significant for either Blacks or Latinos in their assessment of *Approval Ratings of the Representative*. No additional independent variables gain meaning after incorporating measures of discrimination for either racial group. The fact that discrimination has no significant effect, regardless of whether a respondent is descriptively represented is important in that it challenges many of Fowler's prior speculations regarding the relationship between discrimination and descriptive representation.

With respect to the other independent variables, *Party Match* retains its significance across all four models for Blacks as it does in Table 5.1, while *Race Match, Party Match* and *Age* all remain significant for Latino respondents, as is the case in both Table 5.1 and Table 5.4.

In terms of *Representative Job Performance*, *Party Match* is significant across all four models, and *Age* is significant unless the respondent is descriptively represented – an almost identical trend to that observed in Table 5.1. Neither group nor individual-level discrimination are significant. Interestingly, whereas Black linked fate had a significantly negative effect in two out of four models in Table 5.1, after adding measures of discrimination, Black linked fate only

retains its negative significance in one model – respondents without a descriptive representative – in Table 5.5.

I imagine this trend might exist because *Black Linked Fate, Individual Discrimination* and *Group Discrimination* are interrelated, and even redundant variables. In other words, including measures of discrimination seems to wash out the significance of *Black Linked Fate*. This logic could also help explain why *Latino Linked Fate*, *Individual Discrimination* and *Group Discrimination* are rarely significant in Table 5.5.

To test my theory, I ran a series of correlations and found that *Group Discrimination* and *Individual Discrimination* have a moderate, positive correlation (r = 0.45), but both measures of discrimination are only weakly correlated with *Black Linked Fate.* I observe a similar trend in correlation among Latino-specific variables. Future research could involve collapsing measures of discrimination and linked fate into one variable, or isolating each variable and measuring its significance in three separate models.

As for Latinos, *Party Match* and *Age* maintain their significance evaluations of *Representative Job Performance* as is shown in Table 5.1. Interestingly, individual-level discrimination has a positive – albeit marginally significant – effect on improving job performance assessments among Latinos who are descriptively represented (Model 3). Although individual discrimination is not highly significant (p = 0.06) and the sample size is fairly small (n = 52) compared to the other three models, it still suggests that Latinos who feel they are discriminated against based on their race or ethnicity feel empowered by having a descriptive representative, and therefore report more positive evaluations of job performance.

Furthermore, the fact that group-level discrimination is not significant among Latinos in either *Approval Rating of the Representative* or *Representative Job Performance* possibly

confirms the idea that because Latinos don't report high levels of linked fate or group consciousness, they may be less likely to consider themselves as part of a larger racial group, thereby reducing the sense that they are collectively targeted and discriminated against. However, the fact that Black group-level discrimination is never significant, despite Blacks experiencing higher levels of discrimination than any other racial group (Fowler et al. 2014) indicates my measure of discrimination is either faulty, or group-level discrimination is simply not a factor in assessing legislators and may only have an effect on evaluations of government institutions.

Conclusion

In sum, I find that race does have a differential effect on Blacks and Latinos in their *Approval Ratings of the Representative*. My data indicate that having a descriptive representative is significant for Latinos in boosting approval ratings, but this is not the case for African-American respondents. However, race has no meaningful effect on either racial group in assessments of *Representative Job Performance*. This observation is an unexpected departure from Fowler's previous work, as he finds race has a strong positive effect across both racial groups in 2008. However, as I mention previously, Fowler's analysis includes an addition model that measures *Feelings Toward the Representative*, where descriptive representation is shown to have a positive effect on both African-Americans and Latinos. This may have informed his overall conclusion that descriptive representation is a salient factor for Blacks in their evaluations of state legislators, while I find that it has no impact on African-Americans' assessments in 2012.

Finally, as was the case in 2008, shared partisanship has a consistently strong effect in boosting evaluations of legislators among African-American and Latino respondents.

With respect to my other independent variables, *Black Linked Fate* appears to be significant and results in more negative assessments of job performance, but has no impact on approval ratings of the legislator among Black respondents. These data are consistent with those of 2008. After incorporating measures of discrimination the significance of linked fate is reduced among African-Americans. Because the literature suggests a sense of linked fate is usually related to perceptions of discrimination against oneself, or one's racial group, I did not expect linked fate to lose its meaning, and instead thought if linked fate was significant in lowering evaluations of legislators, discrimination would be as well.

My expanded analysis, which includes measures for *Latino Linked Fate* and perceptions of both individual and group-level discrimination, yields mostly null effects. *Latino Linked Fate* is never significant, although this finding was expected given that Latinos do not usually identify with their larger racial group, but choose to identify by national origin instead. Both measures of discrimination are barely significant for Latinos, and are never significant for African-Americans, which is unexpected given that Blacks report higher perceptions of discrimination than any other racial group (see McClain & Steward 1999; Uhlaner 1991). I speculate that the interrelated nature of these variables may be obscuring their true significance. However, additional surveys and a reconfiguration of variables would be required to determine if this hypothesis is accurate.

In my next chapter, I analyze the effects of descriptive representation on evaluations of government institutions, followed by a comparative review of data collected from the 2008 and 2012 ANES.

Chapter Six: The Effects of Descriptive Representation on Evaluations of Government Institutions Among African-Americans and Latinos

Introduction

In order to assess the role of descriptive representation in evaluations of government institutions, I rely on three measures provided by the 2012 ANES. First, respondents were asked to rank their approval or disapproval of the way Congress was handling its job. Responses to *Approval Rating of Congress* are coded on a four-point scale, ranging from disapprove strongly, to strongly approve. In addition, respondents were asked to describe their *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* and *Feelings Toward Congress* with feeling thermometers ranging from 0-100 where higher values indicate warmer feelings.

Since the measure of congressional approval is based on a four-point scale, I use ordered probit analyses. I use OLS regression to evaluate the feeling thermometer questions as they are recorded on a 101-point scale. The results for both African-Americans and Latinos are shown in Table 6.1. As is the case in Chapter Five, in conducting my analysis of African-American respondents, Model 1 eliminates Black linked fate as a variable, while Model 2 includes it. Similarly, for Latinos, Model 1 does not contain measures of structural and cultural assimilation while Model 2 does. Regardless of race Model 3 only includes respondents who are represented descriptively while Model 4 includes those who are not.

By updating and expanding Fowler's research, this chapter determines whether the role of descriptive representation in evaluations of government institutions has significantly evolved since 2008. Fowler's data reveal that while "having a descriptive representative has positive effects on evaluations of government for Latinos" this trend does not extend to African-

American respondents and descriptive representation is instead shown to have a largely null effect (Fowler et al. 2014, 77).

In contrast, I find that descriptive representation has a fairly limited effect on Latinos' evaluations of government and is only significant in boosting *Approval Rating of Congress*. As for African-Americans, I conclude that descriptive representation has strong, positive effect on improving *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* – a finding that is inconsistent with data from 2008 – but retains its null effect on *Approval Ratings of Congress* and *Feelings Toward Congress.*

Approval Rating of Congress

Turning first to Table 6.1, it seems having a race match with one's representative has no effect on Black voters' approval rating of Congress, even when controlling for whether the respondent was or was not descriptively represented. In contrast, having a descriptive representative appears to be marginally influential (p = 0.059) for Latino voters in raising their congressional approval ratings. The mean approval of Congress is 1.54 among African-Americans, and 1.68 among Latinos, values which are notably lower than approval ratings of one's legislator for both Black and Latino respondents as described in Chapter Five. For race-matched African-Americans and Latinos, mean congressional approval is 1.46 and 1.77, respectively, which suggests descriptive representation boosts approval ratings among Latinos, but not among African-American respondents, thereby confirming the data shown in Table 6.1.

As is seen below in Table 6.2, my data on Latinos are consistent with Fowler's in that descriptive representation is significant in improving congressional approval in both 2008 and 2012. However, while Fowler finds descriptive representation has a significant effect on lowering congressional approval ratings among Blacks in 2008, my data indicate its meaning is

lost in 2012. Another discrepancy between Fowler's work and my own arises in the significance of partisanship. Whereas, Fowler's models indicate a party-match has no meaningful effect on Blacks or Latinos in determining their *Approval Rating of Congress,* my analysis shows *Party Match* is significant in lowering congressional approval ratings for African-American and Latino respondents, though this effect does not extend to Models 3 or 4.

Table 6.2: Comparing the Significance of Race and Party on Approval Ratings of Congress for Black and Latino Respondents in 2008 and 2012, American National Election Study

	Race-Match	Party-Match
Latinos in 2008	Significant, positive	Null effect
Blacks in 2008	Significant, negative	Null effect
Latinos in 2012	Significant, positive	Significant, negative
Blacks in 2012	Null effect	Significant, negative

In examining my data, I found it counterintuitive that party-matched respondents would be less supportive of Congress. Why, after all, would respondents be more disenchanted with Congress knowing their representative was of the same party? Wouldn't those represented by a congressman of their own partisanship be more likely to approve of Congress, knowing their political views and needs were being communicated and addressed?

After a more thorough investigation of my findings, I believe the influence of partisanship seen in the data collected for the 2012 ANES is likely related to the shift in partisan control of Congress that occurred between 2008 and 2012. During the 110th Congress, which was in session from January 2007 until January of 2009, Democrats enjoyed control of both the House and the Senate. However, during the 112th Congress (2011-2013) Democrats lost their majority in the House of Representatives, while narrowly maintaining control in the Senate.

Out of the 439 Black respondents who were asked to rank their approval of Congress in the 2012 ANES, 22 identified as Independent, 20 as Republican, and six declined to answer the

question. As such, the negative effect of *Party Match* is likely stems from the substantial number of Black Democrats included in the study who are dissatisfied with a Republican-controlled Congress. Admittedly, there is considerably more partisan variation among Latino respondents: out of the 393 Latinos who were polled, 73 identified as Independent, 83 as Republican, and three failed to answer the question. Still, the point remains – the impact of *Party Match* among Latinos in reducing congressional approval is likely because the majority of those included in the sample do not identify as Republican.

Research conducted by Luke Keele (2005) is consistent with my findings. He writes that partisans are likely to "trust government more when their party controls Congress, the presidency of both." (2005, 873) Following this logic, it seems reasonable that respondents who are more trusting of government, (and by association, Congress) are also more approving of Congress and other government institutions.

The null and negative effects of descriptive representation among Blacks are consistent with past literature that presents mixed evidence on the effect of race in shaping evaluations of legislators and government institutions among African-Americans. Interestingly, my data indicate that while a Black congressman may not have meaningful influence in congressional evaluations, living in a Black majority district appears to boost approval ratings among those who are descriptively represented. Fowler's data from 2008 also follow this trend. According to Brunell, Anderson and Cremona (2008) living in a *Black Majority-Minority District* promotes "higher perceptions of overall descriptive representation in Congress, which also leads to more positive evaluations of Congress" (As quoted in Fowler, 2014, 77). In other words, those who live in predominately Black districts are more likely to possess an inflated, or misinformed

perception regarding the number of African-Americans currently in office, which results in higher – though not necessarily warranted – congressional approval.

Feelings Toward the Federal Government

The second set of analyses in Table 6.1 rely on OLS regression to identify which factors are responsible in shaping feelings toward the federal government among African-Americans and Latinos. The mean response for African-Americans is 64.29, and 56.84 for Latinos – a slight change from Fowler's findings, in which mean responses were 61.9 for Blacks, and 60.9 for Latinos. Among Blacks and Latinos who are descriptively represented, the mean responses are 67.81, and 59.73, respectively. I am surprised to find that on average, African-Americans report warmer feelings than Latinos, considering the US federal government's historic record of disenfranchising Black voters.

Among Black respondents, having a descriptive representative boosts *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* by 12.25 points but has no effect on Latino voters. This finding is inconsistent with data from the 2008 ANES, as Fowler reports descriptive representation is meaningful ($p \leq 0.01$) in improving *Feelings Toward the Federal Government*, but only among Latino respondents as is shown in Table 6.3 below. Because the positive effect of descriptive representation on improving *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* does not extend to *Feelings Toward Congress* or *Approval Rating of Congress*, I hypothesize that African-American respondents see the federal government as distinct from Congress and are therefore basing their evaluations on alternate criteria. Seeing that African-Americans on average feel more positive towards the federal government than Latinos, it seems plausible that Blacks' warmer feelings could be linked to having a Black president in office. If Blacks are using race as a means of evaluating the federal government, this could explain why descriptive representation

becomes significant on a congressional level. In 2008, perhaps Obama had not been in office long enough for my hypothesis to take effect.

Table 6.3: Comparing the Significance of Race and Party on Feelings Toward the Federal Government for Black and Latino Respondents in 2008 and 2012, American National Election Study

	Race Match	Party Match
Latinos in 2008	Significant, positive	Significant, positive
Blacks in 2008	Null effect	Null effect
Latinos in 2012	Null effect	Null effect
Blacks in 2012	Significant, positive	Significant, negative

With respect to the other control variables, *Party Match* is responsible for cooler *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* in three out of four models for African-Americans, but is never significant for Latinos. Why both *Race Match* and *Party Match* both significantly improved *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* in 2008, only for both variables to lose their effect in 2012 remains unclear to me, although this discrepancy certainly challenges Fowler's notion that descriptive representation has a positive effect on Latinos' evaluations of government institutions. Finally, *Black Linked Fate* is not statistically significant in any models, which is also the case in data collected from the 2008 ANES.

As for Latino-specific factors, Table 6.1 indicates that *Structural Assimilation* has a strong, positive effect in two out of four models on *Feelings Toward the Federal Government,* which is consistent with Fowler's work. A refresher of my methodology helps put this finding into context. *Structural Assimilation* is a variable constructed from a variety of measures including: "the dominant language spoken at home, the native status of one's parents, and whether one's grandparents were born outside of the US" (Fowler, 2014, 72). In this case, higher values indicate less structural assimilation, meaning the respondent is Spanish dominant, neither of his or her parents were born in the US, and all of his or her grandparents were born outside of

the US. As referenced in my literature review, many scholars (see Michelson, 2001; Garcia, 1973; Fowler 2014) believe less structural assimilation results in a decreased exposure to discrimination and prejudice, which artificially inflates evaluations of government institutions.

My data in Table 6.1 are consistent with this scholarship, as Latino respondents who are less assimilated increase their *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* by 3.72 points. It appears descriptive representation further reinforces positive evaluations, as evidenced by race-matched respondents who report warmer feelings toward the federal government by 8.30 points. However, the sample size in Model 3 is smaller than conventional standards, which undermines the reliability of this finding.

Feelings Toward Congress

The final measure in assessing evaluations of government institutions considers respondents' *Feelings Toward Congress*. The mean response is 57.88 among African-Americans, and 55.24 among Latinos – slightly lower than Fowler's data, which report an average response of 59.1 for African-Americans, and 58.8 for Latinos. Among those who are descriptively represented, the mean responses are 61.14 and 59.54, respectively.

Table 6.4: Comparing the Significance of Race and Party on Feelings Toward Congress for Black and Latino Respondents in 2008 and 2012, American National Election Study

	Race-Match	Party-Match
Latinos in 2008	Significance washes out in expanded model	Null effect
Blacks in 2008	Null effect	Null effect
Latinos in 2012	Significance washes out in expanded model	Null effect
Blacks in 2012	Null effect	Negative, significant in Models 1 and 4

As was the case in 2008, having a descriptive representative has no effect on Blacks' *Feelings Toward Congress*. Race is marginally significant for Latinos and raises *Feelings Toward Congress* by 6.59 points, though this effect is lost after incorporating measures of structural and cultural assimilation – a trend consistent with Fowler's findings. Interestingly, one of Fowler's key conclusions is that "Latinos represented by a descriptive representative have higher evaluations of their own member of Congress" and "also have more positive evaluations of Congress and the government more generally" (Fowler et al. 2014, 79). However, my analysis indicates that descriptive representation consistently improves Latinos' *Approval Rating of the Representative*, but does not result in warmer *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* or *Feelings Toward Congress*.

While *Party Match* has no effect on Latinos' *Feelings Toward Congress* in either 2008 or 2012, the impact of partisanship yields mixed results among African-American respondents. Blacks who report a *Party Match* with their representative will have cooler *Feelings Toward Congress*. This negative effect applies to all three dependent variables, and is likely because the majority of Black respondents polled in the 2012 ANES are Democrats, and are therefore dissatisfied with the Republican-controlled Congress.

Although *Black Linked Fate* was never shown to be significant in Fowler's research, my data indicate that linked fate has a strong, negative effect on Blacks' *Feelings Toward Congress*. Individuals with high levels of linked fate strongly identify with their larger racial group, and may be more aware of the existence of racial inequality and how its consequences can threaten the collective success of the group.

I imagine that African-Americans who display a high degree of linked fate are also less trusting of the national government, as they may be more conscious of how US government

institutions have historically disenfranchised the Black community, and continue to perpetuate systemic injustice today. Ultimately, this political mistrust may contribute to negative *Feelings Toward Congress*. By running an additional model, I find that mistrust of the government is statistically significant in shaping Blacks' *Feelings Toward Congress* and leads to cooler feelings by 9.78 points. Surprisingly, when incorporating the measure for trust in government, *Black Linked Fate* loses its significance, which challenges its purported link to political trust.

Assessing the Role of Latino Linked Fate in Evaluations of Government Institutions

For the most part, including the measure of Latino linked fate only slightly altered *Approval Ratings of Congress, Feelings Toward the Federal Government* and *Feelings Toward Congress* as is displayed in Table 6.5. *Party Match* loses its influence on *Approval Ratings of Congress* after accounting for linked fate. However, *Age, Education* and *Structural Assimilation* maintain similar levels of significance to those found in Table 6.1.

Perceptions of Discrimination and Their Effect on Evaluations of Government Institutions

Turning to Table 6.6, it appears that incorporating measures of discrimination does little to disrupt the significance of control variables that are already shown to be meaningful in Table 6.1. For African-Americans, group-level discrimination (coded as *Black Discrimination)* is rarely significant, but does appear to play a moderately positive role in influencing *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* among those who are not descriptively represented.

While individual-level discrimination seems to shape Blacks' *Feelings Toward Congress,* its effect is lost when controlling for the presence of a descriptive representative. I suspect there is some interplay between *Black Linked Fate* and *Individual Discrimination* seeing as linked fate impacts Black respondents' *Feelings Toward Congress* along all three models in Table 6.1, but is then no longer significant for those who are descriptively represented in Table 6.6.

Discrimination's inconsistent effect on Blacks' evaluations may be the result of multicollinearity seeing that *Individual Discrimination* and *Black Discrimination* have a moderately positive (r = 0.45) correlation. In other words, the similar nature of these variables may be creating redundancy in the model that is washing away the significance of discrimination among Black respondents.

As for Latinos, neither group-level discrimination nor individual discrimination is significant in any of the three dependent variables responsible in determining evaluations of government institutions. However, *Structural Assimilation* retains its strong, positive effect in shaping both *Feelings Toward the Federal Government,* and *Feelings Toward Congress.*

Conclusion

Overall, I conclude that role of descriptive representation in evaluations of government institutions has changed considerably since 2008 – especially among the Latino population. First, I find that descriptive representation has no effect on *Approval Ratings of Congress* among Black respondents, which is not consistent with Fowler's data from 2008. However, descriptive representation marginally improves congressional approval ratings among Latinos in both 2008 and 2012.

Perhaps most surprisingly, while descriptive representation played no role in shaping Blacks' *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* in 2008, it has a consistently strong and positive effect ($p \leq .001$) in 2012. Though this observation remains puzzling, I speculate that it may be linked to respondents' perceptions of Obama as representative of the federal government, which activates the salience of race – and by association, descriptive representation – on a congressional level. Descriptive representation continues to have a limited effect on Latinos in their *Feelings Toward the Federal Government*, despite its significance in 2008.

With respect to my last dependent variable, descriptive representation is not significant for Blacks or Latinos in shaping their *Feelings Toward Congress*, which is also the case in 2008. I do find however, that *Black Linked Fate* has a strong negative effect among Black respondents while linked fate was never significant in any of Fowler's models.

Most broadly, my data challenge Fowler's main conclusions. Although Fowler writes that descriptive representation has no positive effect on evaluations of government institutions among African-Americans, I find that Black race-matched respondents report significantly warmer *Feelings Toward the Federal Government.* Furthermore, it is important to note the impact of partisanship on evaluations of government institutions, especially on respondents' *Approval Rating of Congress*, where *Party Match* was shown to have a consistently negative effect on both racial groups. The fact that partisanship is more salient factor in 2012 than in 2008, suggests that perhaps the Republican-controlled Congress is damaging Democrats' evaluations of government institutions.

Finally, while Fowler finds descriptive representation has a positive effect on Latino respondents in that it boosts their evaluations of government institutions, his conclusion is not consistent with my analysis. Furthermore, while Fowler writes that process of assimilation, perceptions of discrimination and the lack of Latino linked fate offer are responsible for Latino attitudes toward government institutions, the fact that my more recent data reveal neither linked fate, nor discrimination are significant in shaping evaluations of the federal government or Congress suggests that additional factors that neither I, nor Fowler have considered, may be at play.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

Throughout the course of my research I set out to answer two key questions. First, does descriptive representation seem to affect how African-Americans and Latinos evaluate government institutions and actors? And second, if descriptive representation does appear to be significant, is it a uniform effect or does it vary by racial group? In answering these questions, I was able to update Fowler's conclusions based on data from the 2008 ANES in which he finds descriptive representation does have a differential effect.

Fowler concludes that African-Americans who are represented descriptively are more approving of their own House legislator, though this positive effect does not extend to government institutions more generally. In contrast, he finds Latinos with a descriptive representative report more positive assessments of their individual congressman, and are also more favorable of Congress and the US federal government. By analyzing data from the 2012 ANES, I hoped to either corroborate his previous work, or present my own set of alternate findings.

Furthermore, I wanted to solidify some of Fowler's speculations as to why descriptive representation results in such a diverse effect. He suggests Latinos may be more supportive of government institutions because they are less cognizant of discrimination due to varying levels of assimilation and acculturation within the larger racial group. Additionally, he hypothesizes that descriptive representation has a unique effect on Blacks due to heightened sense of group consciousness and linked fate, as well as the fact that African-Americans seem to be more aware of the existence and effects of contemporary discrimination in the US, when compared to Latinos. As the 2012 ANES includes questions that specifically measure perceptions of

discrimination and linked fate among both Blacks and Latinos while the 2008 ANES does not, I wanted to see whether this new data might substantiate Fowler's claim.

After reviewing data from the 2012 ANES I agree with Fowler in that descriptive representation continues to have a differential effect on Blacks and Latinos, both in their evaluations of federal institutions and state legislators. However, the role of descriptive representation has evolved significantly since 2008. While Fowler concludes that descriptive representation has a positive effect on evaluations of state legislators for both racial groups, I find it has no effect on African-Americans, and is only significant in one measure – *Representative Job Performance* – for Latinos.

As for assessments of government institutions, Fowler finds that descriptive representation is not salient for Black respondents, but is for Latinos, whereas I find descriptive representation has a decidedly inconsistent effect in 2012. Descriptive representation marginally improves congressional approval ratings among Latinos in both 2008 and 2012, but does not impact any of the remaining models concerning Latinos' evaluations of federal institutions. Surprisingly, while descriptive representation played no role in shaping Blacks' *Feelings Toward the Federal Government* in 2008, it has a consistently strong and positive effect in 2012 – but is not significant for any of my other dependent variables.

Most broadly, my data challenges Fowler's main conclusions regarding the effects of descriptive representation on both legislators and institutions. I believe a potential explanation for the discrepancy between Fowler's findings and my own relates to the impact of partisanship. In comparing my data from 2012 with 2008 there are certain models (see *Feelings Toward the Federal Government; Approval Rating of Congress*) where *Race-Match* either loses its significance among either racial groups, or *Party-Match* gains it. Given the major shift in

partisan control of Congress between 2008 and 2012, I hypothesize that the effect of descriptive representation in improving evaluations of government institutions may be contingent on the partisan makeup of Congress. In other words, the would-be positive effects of descriptive representation on respondents in the 2012 ANES are being overpowered by Democrats who are reacting unfavorably to the newly Republican-controlled Congress.

However, after including partisan identification as an independent variable in my analyses, this hypothesis appears to be invalid. Compared to Democrats, Republicans were not more favorable of Congress, nor did they report warmer feelings toward Congress in 2012. While I find it counterintuitive that Republicans would not be more supportive of a Republican-controlled Congress, perhaps this trend could be attributed to the idea that more conservative Republicans dislike "big" government, or government involvement, making them more likely to disapprove of Congress simply because they disapprove of government institutions more generally.

Finally, I believe the second contribution of my research lies in my statistical analysis of linked fate and perceptions of discrimination among both Blacks and Latinos, and whether these variables are significant in altering evaluations of either state legislators or government institutions. While linked fate is never shown to be significant for Latinos, *Black Linked Fate* does have a strong negative effect on *Representative Job Performance* and *Feelings Toward Congress.* Surprisingly, discrimination was rarely significant for either racial group.

Seeing as linked fate is occasionally significant for Blacks, and the fact that perceptions of discrimination may be linked to a deeper sense of identification with one's racial group, I imagined measures of group-level discrimination would also amount to a negative effect on evaluations of legislators and institutions among Black respondents. While perceptions of

individual discrimination are significant in two models in Blacks' *Feelings Toward Congress*, this effect falls away in Models 3 and 4. Overall, discrimination has a largely inconsistent effect on Black respondents. Additionally, Fowler attributes Latinos' positive assessments of government institutions to their decreased awareness of discrimination, yet my analysis suggests discrimination isn't a particularly salient factor for Latinos.

Given that neither perceptions discrimination nor measures of linked fate have a consistent effect on either racial group, I conclude that Fowler's speculations regarding the source of descriptive representation's differential effect may not be valid. Nevertheless, it seems plausible that the reason these variables do not appear to be significant may be related to the experimental design of the ANES.

The ANES is a comprehensive, almost exhaustive study that aims to capture and document the political attitudes of a diverse slice of the American population. However, my and Fowler's analysis relies on a small sample of the ANES and only considers certain questions asked of respondents. For example, when Black respondents are asked about their perceptions of linked fate, they are not being appropriately primed to respond. The previous question asks respondents whether they have contributed to church or charity in past twelve months – a topic completely unrelated to racial group consciousness. If instead, respondents were first asked about their individual and group-level perceptions of discrimination, and then asked how they would describe their personal sense of linked fate, it seems possible a Black or Latino respondent would be more likely to consider the interplay between these variables. In other words, the ANES is designed such that respondents are being asked certain questions out of context. Future, and possibly more effective studies could be re-designed such that questions regarding race are asked in a specific order.

Overall, I believe my research offers a unique and necessary insight into the political attitudes of both African-Americans and Latinos as many previous studies only analyze one racial group, therefore limiting their explanatory power. This comparative analysis is especially important in understanding whether descriptive representation is a salient factor in minority assessments of government actors and institutions is becoming increasingly relevant as the United States transitions into a majority-minority nation. Future study might address the interplay between partisanship and descriptive representation in an effort to further investigate whether the partisan identification of a legislator is more significant than his racial heritage, and if an increase in minority congressmen might amount to improved substantive representation for Black and Latino citizens.

Table 5.1: The effects of descriptive representation on evaluations of one's legislator among African-Americans and Latinos, American National Election Study 2012

Approval Rating of the Representative (African-Americans, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.262	0.229	--	--
Party Match	0.828***	0.882***	1.171***	0.768***
Age	-0.001	-0.0001	-0.009	0.006
Gender	0.023	0.028	0.006	0.029
Education	-0.064	-0.038	0.029	-0.052
Maj-Min District	-0.73	-0.055	0.055	-0.215
Black Linked Fate	--	-0.079	-0.174	0.003
N	460	437	151	286

Approval Rating of the Representative (Latinos, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.461**	0.473**	--	--
Party Match	0.698***	0.71***	1.00**	0.693***
Age	0.011**	0.011**	0.004	0.012*
Gender	0.069	0.076	0.691*	-0.08
Education	0	-0.001	-0.058	0
Maj-Min District	-0.118	-0.104	0.049	-0.158
Structural Assim.	--	0.001	0.076	-0.123
Cultural Assim.	--	0.019	-0.07	0.044
N	406	394	72	322

Representative Job Performance (African-Americans, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.228	0.221	--	--
Party Match	0.498**	0.501**	0.756**	0.424*
Age	0.112**	0.013**	0.013	0.012*
Gender	0.095	0.099	-0.091	0.176
Education	-0.053	-0.012	0.205	-0.122
Maj-Min District	0.106	0.132	0.211	0.181
Black Linked Fate	--	-0.133*	-0.054	-0.176**
N	369	355	123	232

Representative Job Performance (Latinos, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.278	0.269	--	--
Party Match	0.512**	0.516**	0.508	0.549**
Age	0.031***	0.029***	0.031**	0.029***
Gender	0.173	0.234	0.793	-0.014
Education	0.013	-0.001	0.383	-0.123
Maj-Min District	-0.076	-0.036	0.819	-0.231
Structural Assim.	--	-0.006	0.095	0.009
Cultural Assim.	--	-0.113	-0.314	-0.073
N	288	282	56	226

*$p \leq .1$; **$p \leq .05$; ***$p \leq .001$

DR = Descriptive Representative

Table 5.4: The effects of Latino linked fate and assimilation on evaluations of one's legislator among Latinos, American National Election Study 2012

	Approval Rating of the Representative (Latinos, ordered probit)					Representative Job Performance (Latinos, ordered probit)			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.447**	0.464**	--	--		0.287	0.254	--	--
Party Match	0.744***	0.758***	1.22**	0.718***		0.54***	0.532***	0.545	0.573**
Age	0.012**	0.012**	0.004	0.014**		0.031***	0.028***	0.031*	0.027***
Gender	0.09	0.078	0.602	-0.056		0.19	0.238	0.728	-0.024
Education	0.039	0.04	0.022	0.037		0.002	-0.013	0.411	-0.144
Maj-Min District	-0.156	-0.156	-0.031	-0.191		-0.088	-0.061	0.761	-0.245
Structural Assim.	--	-0.007	0.039	-0.018		--	0.017	0.118	0.035
Cultural Assim.	--	0.043	-0.182	0.063		--	-0.116	-0.329	-0.086
Latino Linked Fate	0.009	0.006	0.177	-0.034		-0.015	-0.016	0.018	-0.007
N	380	371	67	304		277	273	53	220

*$p \leq .1$; **$p \leq .05$; ***$p \leq .001$

DR = Descriptive Representative

Table 5.5: The effects of discrimination on evaluations of one's legislator among African-Americans and Latinos, American National Election Study 2012

Approval Rating of the Representative (African-Americans, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.246	0.221	--	--
Party Match	0.837***	0.875***	1.15***	0.762***
Age	0	0.001	-0.008	0.007
Gender	0.014	0.079	0.075	0.067
Education	-0.043	-0.028	0.05	-0.051
Maj-Min District	-0.089	-0.057	0.061	-0.204
Black Linked Fate	--	-0.034	-0.124	0.045
Black Discrimination	-0.075	-0.102	-0.13	-0.102
Individual Discrim.	-0.047	-0.002	--	--
N	452	429	150	281

Approval Rating of the Representative (Latinos, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.506**	0.505**	--	--
Party Match	0.744***	0.794***	1.20**	0.760***
Age	0.012**	0.013**	0.004	0.015**
Gender	0.08	0.078	0.396	-0.029
Education	0.027	0.073	0.042	0.074
Maj-Min District	-0.083	-0.135	-0.037	-0.176
Structural Assim.	0.021	0.009	0.011	0.003
Cultural Assim.	0.023	0.047	-0.143	0.077
Latino Linked Fate	--	0.012	0.196	-0.017
Lat. Discrim	0.034	0.046	0.136	0.016
Ind. Discrim	0.012	0.02	0.129	0.01
N	389	366	66	300

Representative Job Performance (African-Americans, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.211	0.212	--	--
Party Match	0.54***	0.535**	0.739**	0.437*
Age	0.013***	0.014***	0.013	0.012**
Gender	-0.001	0.041	-0.046	0.137
Education	-0.02	0.013	0.24	-0.089
Maj-Min District	0.089	0.127	0.246	0.197
Black Linked Fate	--	-0.104	-0.006	-0.180**
Black Discrimination	-0.006	-0.015	-0.206	0.014
Individual Discrim.	-0.12	-0.057	--	--
N	362	348	122	228

Representative Job Performance (Latinos, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.287	0.263	--	--
Party Match	0.486**	0.500**	0.473	0.569*
Age	0.029***	0.028***	0.033*	0.027**
Gender	0.231	0.235	0.624	0.006
Education	0.035	0.026	0.267*	-0.127
Maj-Min District	-0.018	-0.044	0.609	-0.228
Structural Assim.	-0.002	0.024	-0.03	0.06
Cultural Assim.	-0.157	-0.163	-0.295	-0.084
Latino Linked Fate	--	-0.028	0.044	-0.004
Lat. Discrim	0.111	0.07	0.275	-0.023
Ind. Discrim	0.101	0.105	0.474*	0.033
N	277	268	52	216

*p ≤ .1; **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .001
DR = Descriptive Representative

Table 6.1: The effects of descriptive representation on evaluations of government institutions among African-Americans and Latinos, American National Election Study 2012

Approval Rating of Congress (African-Americans, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.199	0.209	--	--
Party Match	-0.339**	-0.348*	-0.501	-0.338
Age	-0.009*	-0.009*	-0.017**	-0.004
Gender	0.078	0.013	0.333	-0.154
Education	-0.308***	-0.294***	-0.054	-0.377***
Maj-Min District	0.042	-0.01	0.736**	-0.443*
Black Linked Fate	--	0.064	-0.144	0.019
N	487	439	153	286

Approval Rating of Congress (Latinos, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.323*	0.361**	--	--
Party Match	-0.325**	-0.271*	-0.095	-0.25
Age	-0.012**	-0.011**	-0.018	-0.01
Gender	0.022	0.132	-0.122	0.156
Education	-0.159**	-0.135*	-0.191	-0.121
Maj-Min District	0.045	0.045	-0.492	0.157
Structural Assim.	--	0.074	0.19	0.043
Cultural Assim.	--	0.069	-0.189	0.093
N	437	393	72	321

Feelings Toward the Federal Government (African-Americans, OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	12.25***	11.93***	--	--
Party Match	-8.91**	-7.81**	0.803	-11.34**
Age	0.301***	0.323***	0.366**	0.326**
Gender	4.33	3.53	-7.78	8.19**
Education	-3.97***	-3.60**	1.14	-4.64**
Maj-Min District	-0.166	-0.363	4.02	-3.29
Black Linked Fate	--	-1.86	-2.87	-1.16
N	222	210	76	133

Feelings Toward the Federal Government (Latinos, OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	1.94	-0.595	--	--
Party Match	-3.77	-4.54	-4.84	-3.64
Age	0.108	0.109	0.405	0.014
Gender	0.539	-0.537	-5.33	-1.63
Education	0.416	0.346	3.6	0.35
Maj-Min District	5.15	3.39	4.1	3.74
Structural Assim.	--	3.72**	8.30**	2.78
Cultural Assim.	--	1.73	0.041	2.14
N	180	175	38	136

Feelings Toward Congress (African-Americans, OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	5.68	5.03	--	--
Party Match	-6.97**	-5.69	1.64	-7.70*
Age	0.15*	0.180**	-0.171	0.348***
Gender	3.18	1.38	7.08	-0.505
Education	-5.92***	-4.93***	-5.64*	-4.87***
Maj-Min District	5.73	4.24	-0.848	5.04
Black Linked Fate	--	-4.538***	-3.89*	-4.19***
N	223	211	77	134

Feelings Toward Congress (Latinos, OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	6.59*	4.49	--	--
Party Match	-3.72	-4.55	-2.95	-4.11
Age	0.069	0.021	0.353	-0.01
Gender	1.53	1.15	-4.08	-0.219
Education	1.04	0.643	3.88	0.619
Maj-Min District	6.01*	4.484	3.72	5.66
Structural Assim.	--	3.53**	8.18***	2.44
Cultural Assim.	--	0.031	-2.48	0.444
N	183	177	39	138

*p ≤ .1; **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .001

DR = Descriptive Representative

Table 6.5: The effects of Latino linked fate and assimilation on evaluations of government institutions among Latinos, American National Election Study 2012

	Approval Rating of Congress (Latinos, ordered probit)					Feelings Toward the Federal Government (Latinos, OLS)			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.440**	0.426**	--	--	Race Match	2.31	0.704	--	--
Party Match	-0.236	-0.246	0.119	-0.215	Party Match	-3.74	-3.78	-1.93	-3.03
Age	-0.009*	-0.008	-0.014	-0.008	Age	0.146	0.179	0.491*	0.099
Gender	0.113	0.074	-0.317	0.123	Gender	-0.23	-0.92	-9.1	-1.69
Education	0.136*	-0.127*	-0.137	-0.111	Education	0.451	0.846	4.66	1.04
Maj-Min District	0.102	0.07	-0.679	0.221	Maj-Min District	4.82	3.65	4.57	4.67
Structural Assim.	--	0.06	-0.101	0.117	Structural Assim.	--	3.13*	6.86	2.2
Cultural Assim.	--	0.096	0.21	0.015	Cultural Assim.	--	2.17	-0.666	2.46
Latino Linked Fate	-0.061	-0.06	-0.045	-0.082	Latino Linked Fate	-1.35	-1.5	3.07	-2.68
N	380	371	67	304	N	167	164	35	129

	Feelings Toward Congress (Latinos, OLS)			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	6.64*	5.32	--	--
Party Match	-4.1	-4.19	0.024	-4.26
Age	0.092	0.067	0.413*	-0.047
Gender	1.07	1.38	-0.716	0.617
Education	0.852	1.01	4.44	1.13
Maj-Min District	5.28	4.89	3.51	5.82
Structural Assim.	--	3.23**	6.59*	2.38
Cultural Assim.	--	0.097	-3.19	0.367
Latino Linked Fate	-0.115	-0.421	2.17	-1.02
N	170	167	36	131

*p ≤ .1; **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .001
DR = Descriptive Representative

Table 6.6: The effects of discrimination on evaluations of government institutions among African-Americans and Latinos, American National Election Study 2012

Approval Rating of Congress (African-Americans, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.273	0.25	--	--
Party Match	-0.397**	-0.371**	-0.446	-0.375
Age	-0.008*	-0.010**	-0.017**	-0.004
Gender	0.015	-0.01	0.163	-0.161
Education	-0.303***	-0.276***	-0.044	-0.347***
Maj-Min District	0.074	0.015	0.780**	-0.444
Black Linked Fate	--	-0.079	-0.163	0.013
Black Discrimination	0.036	0.008	0.115	0.016
Individual Discrim.	-0.039	0.005	-0.132	-0.015
N	454	431	152	279

Approval Rating of Congress (Latinos, ordered probit)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	0.343*	0.412**	--	--
Party Match	-0.246	-0.227	0.085	-0.185
Age	-0.010*	-0.008	-0.014	-0.007
Gender	0.193	0.136	-0.124	0.184
Education	-0.131*	-0.124	-0.148	-0.11
Maj-Min District	0.052	0.079	-0.668	0.241
Structural Assim.	0.105	0.086	0.215	0.044
Cultural Assim.	0.083	0.111	-0.138	0.128
Latino Linked Fate	--	-0.038	-0.04	-0.061
Lat. Discrim	-0.034	-0.014	-0.153	0.034
Ind. Discrim	-0.05	-0.059	-0.045	-0.076
N	388	366	66	300

Feelings Toward the Federal Government (African-Americans, OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	11.87***	11.60***	--	--
Party Match	-8.90**	-7.91**	-0.02	-11.10**
Age	0.308***	0.331***	0.374**	0.328***
Gender	4.21	3.84	-5.37	6.59
Education	-3.71**	-3.48**	1.06	-4.90**
Maj-Min District	-0.192	-0.038	3.71	-2.96
Black Linked Fate	--	-1.83	-2.38	-0.951
Black Discrimination	1.41	2.02	-1.49	3.96*
Individual Discrim.	-0.844	-0.075	1.3	-1.7
N	217	204	75	129

Feelings Toward the Federal Government (Latinos, OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	4.25	5.2	--	--
Party Match	-4.07	-3.74	-1.18	-3.67
Age	0.028	0.076	0.424*	-0.027
Gender	1.79	1.94	-6.97	1.56
Education	0.325	0.712	4.45	0.535
Maj-Min District	4.84	4.94	3.28	5.76
Structural Assim.	3.83**	3.41**	6.08	2.69
Cultural Assim.	0.217	0.252	-3.14	0.659
Latino Linked Fate	--	-0.122	2.26	-0.522
Lat. Discrim	0.57	0.97	-0.041	1.05
Ind. Discrim	-2.01	-2.1	2.22	-2.85
N	175	165	35	129

Feelings Toward Congress (African-Americans, OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	5.32	4.95	--	--
Party Match	-7.49**	-6.65*	1.23	-8.68**
Age	0.167*	0.191**	-0.14	0.345***
Gender	2.24	1.59	8.02	-0.835
Education	-4.99***	-4.49***	-4.39	-4.59***
Maj-Min District	4.84	3.94	0.489	4.44
Black Linked Fate	--	-2.87**	-0.647	-3.11*
Black Discrimination	-1.74	-1.11	-1.811	-0.552
Individual Discrim.	-3.69***	-3.01**	-4.37	-2.62
N	217	205	75	129

Feelings Toward Congress (Latinos, OLS)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3 (DR)	Model 4 (w/o DR)
Race Match	4.25	5.11	--	--
Party Match	-4.07	-3.74	-1.18	-3.67
Age	0.028	0.076	0.424*	-0.027
Gender	1.79	1.94	-6.97	1.56
Education	0.325	0.711	4.45	0.535
Maj-Min District	4.84	4.94	3.28	5.76
Structural Assim.	3.83***	3.41**	6.08	2.69
Cultural Assim.	0.217	0.252	-3.14	0.659
Latino Linked Fate	--	-0.122	2.26	-0.522
Lat. Discrim	0.57	0.97	-0.414	1.05
Ind. Discrim	-2.01	-2.1	2.22	-2.85
N	175	165	35	129

*p ≤ .1; **p ≤ .05; ***p ≤ .001
DR = Descriptive Representative

Appendix B: Question Wording from the 2012 ANES

Dependent Variables: Evaluations of Legislators & Evaluations of Government Institutions

Approval Rating of the Representative: In general, do you APPROVE or DISAPPROVE of the way [respondent's incumbent congressman/congresswoman] has been handling [his/her] job?

> 0 = Disapprove strongly
> 1 = Disapprove, not strongly
> 2 = Don't know
> 3 = Approve, not strongly
> 4 = Approve strongly

Representative Job Performance: How good a job would you say U.S. Representative [respondent's incumbent congressman/congresswoman] does in keeping in touch with the people of your district?

> 0 = Very poor
> 1 = Fairly poor
> 2 = Fairly good
> 3 = Very good

Approval Rating of Congress: Do you APPROVE or DISAPROVE of the way the U.S. Congress has been handling its job?

> 0 = Disapprove strongly
> 1 = Disapprove, not strongly
> 2 = Don't know
> 3 = Approve, not strongly

Feelings Toward the Federal Government: How would you rate the federal government in Washington?

> Feeling thermometer on a scale from 0 – 100 where higher values indicate higher ratings

Feelings Toward Congress: How would you rate Congress?

> Feeling thermometer on a scale from 0 – 100 where higher values indicate higher ratings

Independent Variables in Baseline Models

Race Match: Is the respondent of the same race as his or her member of Congress?

> 0 = No
> 1 = Yes

Party ID: I created a partisan dummy variable as seen in *Party Match* based on the data collected from this partisan identification scale.

    1 = Strong Democrat
    2 = Weak Democrat
    3 = Leans Democrat
    4 = Independent
    5 = Leans Republican
    6 = Weak Republican
    7 = Strong Republican

Party Match: Is the respondent of the same party as his or her incumbent member of Congress? **Note that "leaners" are coded as partisans**

    0 = No
    1 = Yes

Age: Respondent's age in years **Note "90" indicates 90 or older**

    Runs from 17-90

Gender:

    1 = Male
    2 = Female

Education: What is the highest degree the respondent has earned?

    1 = Less than HS
    2 = HS diploma
    3 = Some college, no BA
    4 = BA
    5 = Graduate degree

Majority-Minority District: Does the respondent live in a majority-minority district?

    0 = No
    1 = Yes

Independent Variables in Extended Models

Structural Assimilation is composed from the following three measures:

1. What language do you primarily speak at home with your family?

    0 = Only English

1 = Mostly English
2 = Both languages equally
3 = Mostly Spanish
4 = Only Spanish

2. Where were your parents born?

0 = Both parents born in the US
1 = One parent born in the US
2 = Neither parent born in the US

3. How many of your grandparents, if any, were born outside of the U.S.A?

0 = None
1 = One
2 = Two
3 = Three
4 = All

Cultural Assimilation is composed from the following two measures:

1. How important is it for Hispanics to: Change so that they blend into the larger American society?

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

2. How important is it for Hispanics to: Maintain their distinct cultures?

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

Black and Latino Linked Fate: Do you think what happens generally to BLACK PEOPLE/HISPANIC PEOPLE in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life?

0 = No
1 = Not very much
2 = Some
3 = A lot

Individual Discrimination: How much discrimination have YOU personally faced as a result of your ethnicity of race?

0 = None at all
1 = A little
2= A moderate amount
3 = A lot
4 = A great deal

Discrimination against Blacks and Latinos: How much discrimination is there in the US today against BLACKS/HISPANICS?

0 = None at all
1 = A little
2= A moderate amount
3 = A lot
4 = A great deal

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