Race, Accountability, and Corruption: A Survey Experiment

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Abstract: This paper presents an original survey experiment examining the effects of race on perceptions of mayoral corruption. We find no effect of race on the likelihood of white or Latino respondents supporting a corrupt politician, while black respondents are more likely to support a black politician who is corrupt, all else equal. We also find that education has a negative effect on the likelihood of black respondents supporting a corrupt black politician. This paper adds to the literature on linked fate by highlighting the contextual nature of the effects of linked fate. This paper also bridges the gap between research on electoral accountability and research on the effects of linked fate.

In January 1990, three years into his third year as the mayor of Washington, D.C., Marion Barry was arrested by the FBI and DC police for possession of crack cocaine. He was sentenced to six months in federal prison. Despite his legal issues, however, he won his fourth term as mayor in 1994 and served on the D.C.   City Council from 2002 to 2014, weathering a myriad of other scandals along the way. Barry, quite clearly, was beloved in D.C. and had become nearly bulletproof when it came to winning elections. His obituary in *The Washington Post* succinctly described his impact on politics in the District:

> The most influential and savvy local politician of his generation, Mr. Barry dominated the city's political landscape in the final quarter of the 20th century…There was a time when his critics, in sarcasm but not entirely in jest, called him "Mayor for Life." He came to Washington as a champion of the downtrodden and the dispossessed and rose to the pinnacle of power and prestige.   As mayor of the District, Mr. Barry became a national symbol of self-governance for urban blacks.[1]

On the other hand, Kwame Kilpatrick, Detroit's mayor from 2002-2008, had just as tumultuous (though not as successful) a political career as Barry. Kilpatrick's first term as mayor was wracked by controversy and scandal and he lost the 2005 Democratic primary before narrowly winning a second term in the general election. Kilpatrick's political corruption charges were arguably worse than Barry's, and he was sentenced to 28 years in prison as a result. He was, however, still able to win a second term (if not exactly the hearts and minds of the electorate). Very few kind words were written about Kilpatrick's demise, as scandal after scandal continued to rock the already embattled Detroit community.

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[1] Barnes, Brett.   2014.   "Marion Barry dies at 78; D.C.   mayor was the most powerful local politician of his generation." *The Washington Post,* November 23, 2014.

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These two cases are, of course, not representative of mayors everywhere. They do, however, create interesting questions about the extent to which urban voters will tolerate corruption amongst their elected officials. If mayors are accused of corruption, or are in fact corrupt, that should likely have some sort of effect on the level of support they can expect to garner. Does racial identity determine when voters punish corrupt politicians? It is also the case that mayoral politics can often not be separated from racial politics. Cities are one of the few electoral districts in which minorities are well-represented; as such, one is much more likely to find herself represented by a black mayor than any other executive leader (excluding, for the moment, President Barack Obama). As such, we are particularly interested in how race affects perceptions of mayors who have been accused of corruption. In this paper, we examine this issue through the use of a survey experiment in which the race of the corrupt mayor is varied.

We argue that race should have a measurable impact on how voters perceive mayors accused of corruption. As a result of the well-established concept of linked fate, the notion that individual life chances are tied to the outcomes of a race as a whole, we expect that black voters should be more likely to support mayors of their own race than are whites and Latinos. This is primarily the case because linked fate has been shown to be stronger amongst black voters than other racial groups (Dawson, 1994). Our results support this theory and add to it, showing that linked fate matters significantly when dealing with questions of electoral punishment.

Over the last several years, America has seen both positive advancements in race relations and significant struggles. Despite many claims that the United States was entering a post-racial society after President Obama's election in 2008, it is clear that racial divides still permeate much of American society (Lee 2011). This paper seeks to understand some of the processes that contribute to these divides. Our survey instrument allows us to isolate the impact

of race on evaluations of mayoral corruption and can provide insight into how different racial groups perceive political corruption.

Electoral Competition, Linked Fate and Political Perceptions

Perhaps the best known research on corruption in the United States has focused on Congress: most members of the House of Representatives charged with corruption between 1968 and 1990 were reelected (Peters and Welch 1980, Welch and Hibbing 1997). However, research on punishing corrupt politicians has not taken into account the racial dynamics that often define American politics. Certainly, we should not expect the effect of accusations of corruption to be homogenous across the population (Riera et al 2013). Indeed, Klasnja (2015) reinforces this intuition when he finds that political knowledge has an effect on the likelihood of voting for a member of Congress that has been accused of corruption. However, researchers have not taken into account the effect of race on when voters punish corrupt politicians, despite the importance of race in American politics.

Broadly, corruption (defined as the misuse of public power for private gain) is bad for the common good as it leads to inefficient allocation of resources, waste (Lambsdorff 2005), and a decline in trust in government (Rose-Ackerman 1999). This reduction of trust in government, in turn, makes it more difficult for political leaders to succeed (Hetherington, 1998). We might expect well-functioning institutions to be those that expose corrupt leaders, and allow voters to punish them. Nonetheless, this is often not the case: studies of Congress have shown that corrupt politicians often succeed in reelection.

The case of urban mayors is often quite different from other representatives in government, however. Cities are usually idiosyncratic and have a multitude of ingrained issues

that cannot be alleviated in a short period of time. This is, of course, particularly true in cities with black mayors (like Washington and Detroit). In cities with black mayors, poverty rates, residential segregation by race, and social isolation are much higher than in cities with white mayors (Massey and Denton 1993; Wilson 1996; Kraus and Swanstrom, 2001; Rahn and Rudolph, 2005). Black voters, particularly those who live in poor central cities, have consistently been shown to turn out to vote at lower rates than other ethnic groups (Gay, 2001; Avery and Peffly, 2005). Additionally, black leaders are often faced with an unreliable electoral coalition (Erie 1988). This issue is even worse for Latino voters, who are often important parts of a cross-ethnic electoral coalition (Verba et. al. 1993). The deck, then, is often stacked against black leaders in depressed urban environments.

This does not imply, however, that black voters abandon support of black leaders in difficult situations. Indeed, much work has focused on the ways in which black representation, primarily from mayors, has a positive effect on black voters. In their study of Atlanta, Abney and Hutcheson (1981) find that, once a black mayor was elected, black city residents identified more strongly with city government than they had in the past. Additionally, Bobo and Gilliam (1990) argued that when blacks are represented by other blacks, their level of political efficacy, participation, and activity rises at a greater rate than whites of a similar socioeconomic status. Indeed, in districts with descriptive representation, many studies find that blacks are more likely to turn out to vote (Gay, 2001; Griffin and Keane, 2006).

This holds true for Latinos as well, though Latinos have not been historically as successful as blacks in achieving electoral success at the mayoral level. When cities do transition to Latino leadership, however, Latino voters feel much more positively about the city's direction than do white voters (Fillandra and Orr, 2012).   Latino demographic and electoral

influence has begun to increase, and as such there has been an increase in the scholarship surrounding Latino group identity (Stokes, 2003; Masuoka, 2006; Wallace, 2014). These studies approach the problem similarly to the literature on African American linked fate although there are clear differences between the two groups.

Group consciousness and descriptive representation, however, are more difficult to study for Latino voters than for African Americans. Most obviously, Latinos are a pan-ethnic group with a wide variety of national backgrounds and as such are not as homogeneous as African Americans. Despite the fact that there are tensions within the black community on a host of issues, as there are in any community, blacks are a politically cohesive group (Dawson, 1994; Masuoka, 2006). While Latinos face many of the same issues that blacks do (discrimination, desire for social services, limited electoral representation) it is also the case that Latinos have not fully developed a pan-ethnic political identity (Sanchez, 2008). Descriptive representation does have a positive effect on Latino political attitudes, but that effect varies based on the extenuating circumstances inherent to Latino group identity, i.e. nation of origin (Sanchez and Morin, 2011).

This is all by way of saying that, when faced with the question of Latino mayoral corruption, it is not necessarily clear that Latino voters would react in the same way as black voters would. Indeed, our expectations are that Latinos and blacks will differ in how they view corrupt mayors that share their race. While these groups do differ in many respects, it is also the case that blacks and Latinos have formed electoral coalitions in the past, but that those coalitions have been unreliable in terms of how their ability to last (Kauffman, 2003). There are, without question, important differences between black and Latino voters, but these differences may also persist amongst legislators as well. Juenke and Preuhs (2012) argue that black and Latino state

legislators often fall into unique "types." Minority legislators "not only respond to minority populations (as do white representatives), but they also express additional ideological variation that is unique to their racial/ethnic background" (p. 713).

For white voters, the calculus is quite different in terms of group consciousness. Without question, whites do not face the same types of representation issues that affect blacks and Latinos. What could matter for white voters, however, is group conflict theory; the notion that white racial animus and prejudice results from a competition over resources (Holbrook and Kauffman). White voters may be threatened by increased political efficacy and participation by blacks and Latinos and as such race may be an important factor in their voting decisions. White voters are not concerned with linked fate *per se*, but rather may be interested in maintaining some semblance of racial control.

For whites, mayoral approval is ostensibly based on performance, and race is unimportant as long as black leaders do a good job (Howell and McLean 2001, Howell and Perry 2004). The problem, of course, is the definition of performance. Despite attempts by black mayors to "de-racialize" their campaigns and administrations, they nonetheless face different standards than do whites. Howell and McLean note that, "white voters may not give the black mayor 'credit' for positive performance" (2001, p. 324). Howell and McLean find that race does have an effect on white approval of black mayors, but that performance matters more. The issue, again, remains as to what a good performance by a black leader might be, as white and black voters have very different notions of what a good performance entails.

Indeed, Kaufmann (2004) makes an important distinction: when whites feel threatened by black efficacy, racial attitudes become significant. "When whites perceive minority demands as a challenge to their own privileged status, the result is group based resentment, enhanced

opposition to progressive racial policy, and an increase in their relative political cohesion" (p. 34). Essentially, redistributive policies help prime white fears about black political leaders, causing a "circle the wagons" mentality in order to preserve the established political order. In this sense, then, it is possible to argue that the linked fate effects for white voters are not necessarily tied to the performance of white mayors, but rather on a collective fear or distrust of minority politicians. Once black or Latino mayors threaten white political power, a sense of racial solidarity amongst whites may be activated.

This is also observed when studying the election of Latino candidates. Kam (2007) found that, in the absence of party cues, white voters exhibit a hesitancy to support Latino candidates. Ethnic cues, then, can replace party cues as an important determinant of the white vote. When ethnicity is the primary identifier for a candidate, white voters are less likely to support that candidate for a variety of reasons (McConnaughy et al, 2010). Again, this is similar to white perceptions of black candidates; white group consciousness can be activated when a threat is perceived.

Overall, this discussion highlights the differences between whites, black, and Latino voters' overall perceptions of minority politicians as well as the effects of political corruption on voter trust. In the next section, we lay out our expectations for how race impacts perceptions of corruption amongst their own racial groups.

Theory

Our study is primarily interested in how ethnicity and race impact perceptions of mayors accused of corruption.[2] We argue that race should play an important part in these perceptions. Since there is an overall lack of linked fate feelings amongst whites, and because the failings of white politicians are not often cast as the failings of whites in general, there is little reason to think that whites would strongly support a white mayor accused of corruption. There is also, however, good reason to suspect that whites will punish non-white politicians accused of corruption at a higher rate. The literature certainly makes the case that whites often have racial animus towards or fears about non-white mayors, and as such may be even less willing to support those mayors when corruption charges are made. Our first hypothesis, then, makes this claim.

H1: Whites should be more likely to punish black and Latino mayor accused of corruption than white mayors accused of corruption.

Based on the literature, we know there is a strong sense of linked fate amongst African American voters, with less evidence for Latino and white voters. While it is true that recent studies have shown that Latinos do exhibit linked fate characteristics, it is also the case that these manifestations of linked fate come from a different heritage and experience than do manifestations of African American linked fate.   We argue, then, that black voters should be

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[2] This is an important point: accusations of corruption are inherently different than, say, criminal conviction on corruption charges. An accusation may or may not have merit, but the finality of a conviction does not exist with an accusation.

As such, we believe creating only an accusation leaves more leeway for respondents to give a nuanced response. The social desirability bias of supporting someone who is clearly corrupt may be high; it should be lower if the mayor is only accused of corruption and it has not been proven.

more likely to support black mayors accused of corruption than Latino and white voters will support Latino and white mayors, respectively. This is borne out of the African American experience of discrimination and legal barring from full political participation throughout American history, which has long been a foundational part of black group consciousness (Dawson, 1994). As a result, we would expect black voters to be more supportive overall of black politicians, and that black politicians should be more responsive to that constituency (Preuhs, 2006). Broockman (2014) found that this is the case: black legislators (in this particular study) are highly motivated to respond to concerns within the black community at a high rate.

While mayors may often have more diverse constituencies than black legislators, there is little reason to think that they vary wildly from black legislators in terms of responsiveness to the black community. With black politicians providing direct benefits to their constituency, then, there should be a great desire amongst black voters to continue voting for black politicians to represent them. Additionally, corruption allegations could very well be interpreted in terms of racial bias (the Marion Barry example is particularly relevant here) and may be viewed with more suspicion by black voters.

The effects of linked fate for black voters are apparent throughout the literature, and we expect this process to work similarly when confronted with the proposition that a black mayor has been accused of corruption. For white and Latino voters, however, we do not believe there will be a significant linked fate effect. While, as mentioned, Latinos do exhibit evidence of linked fate, in this case we believe the effect should be more strongly pronounced for black voters. As a result, we propose the following hypothesis about black voters:

H2: Black respondents will support a corrupt politician of their own race more often than will whites or Latinos.

It is also the case, however, that linked fate is not felt monolithically amongst African Americans. Education, in particular, may influence how strongly blacks exhibit feelings of linked fate. Higher levels of education promote awareness that racial inequality exists (Masuoka, 2006). As a result, then, education is an important variable in the linked fate story. We argue, however, that higher education levels should lead to black voters being *less* likely to support a black mayor accused of corruption. Educated individuals ought to be less tolerant of corruption (as they often need fewer governmental resources) and may also recognize that supporting corrupt politicians may do more harm than good for the cause of racial equality. Better-educated black respondents are also more likely to be aware of the corrosive effect of corruption generally. Our third hypothesis, then, states:

H3: Black respondents with high levels of education will be less likely to support a corrupt black politician than will black respondents with low levels of education.

In order to test these hypotheses, we created a survey experiment designed to determine the rate at which black, Latino, and white voters would vote for mayors accused of corruption. In the next section, we describe the details of our experiment.

Design

The data for this project were collected using a unique survey experiment. Participants in the survey experiment were presented with a fictitious newspaper article about a fictional corrupt politician in College Park, MD. Damning evidence has come out showing that the mayor took bribes in return for fast tracking building permits for a local developer. The mayor is also presented as being a competent and successful politician. Respondents are asked how likely

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they would be to vote for the mayor if they were to vote in the upcoming election.   Whether the

respondent would vote for the mayor is the main variable of interest.

All respondents are given the same newspaper article, but the race of the corrupt

politician is varied.   The treatments were thus embedded in a fictitious but ostensibly real

newspaper article.   The use of fictitious newspaper articles ostensibly taken from real

publications is common in the literature (Kam and Utych 2011). There are three different

treatments to which the respondents could be exposed.   The first is a newspaper article in which

the mayor is white.   The second is an article in which the mayor is Latino, and the third is an

article in which the mayor is black.   While the article did not explicitly mention the race of the

mayor, the name of the mayor indicated his race.   The white mayor was named Richard

Wildstein, the Latino mayor was names George Hernandez, and the black mayor was named

DeShawn Martin.[3] Because the distribution of race in the sample was as expected, white

respondents were exposed to all three conditions: the white mayor, the Latino mayor, and the

black mayor.[4] Latino respondents were only exposed to the Latino mayor and black respondents

were only exposed to the black mayor.

Data

The survey was fielded in November 2014 on the Mechanical Turk platform.

Mechanical Turk was originally set up by Amazon to provide companies with a platform where

users can carry out human intelligence tasks (HITs).   These tasks can range from finding a

telephone number on a website, to translating short pieces of text.   In the last few years there has

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[3] Names taken from *Freakonomics* chapter on variation of names by race of parents.   According to the authors,
DeShawn is the 'blackest' boys' name (Levitt and Dubner 2009, 188).
[4] The treatments for the white participants were randomly assigned by the Qualtrics software.

been a large increase in the number of social scientists using Mechanical Turk for survey work. Previous work has shown that Mechanical Turk users are younger and slightly better educated than the US population as a whole – but that while the sample cannot replace large expensive survey data such as ANES, it is a much better alternative than the convenience samples traditionally used by social science researchers (Ross et al 2010). There have been several recent studies that advocate the use of Mechanical Turk for social science research (Horton et al 2010, Berinsky et al 2012).

Our sample was of Mechanical Turk users from the United States. The sample size was 1022 respondents. The sample is predominantly white, with 722 white respondents, 52 Latino respondents, and 94 black respondents.[5] This is a feature of research on Mechanical Turk, as most studies skew more white than the population as a whole. As a result, white respondents were randomized between all treatments, while the Latino and black respondents were only shown the treatments for their own respective races. This is to maximize our ability to draw conclusions about black and Latino respondents, as well as to provide points of comparison for white respondents.

The respondents show diversity across income brackets: the lowest income bracket was less than $10,000 with respondents in every bracket up to more than $200,000. The median is in the $25,000 to $50,000 bracket. Median household income in the US is around $50,000. Education also shows variation, with most people falling into the 'some college credit' category, and 13% having an advanced degree. In keeping with other papers that have examined Mechanical Turk, this means the sample is more educated than the general US population, but is

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[5] The remainder of the sample was people who identified as a race other than the three discussed here. These respondents were randomly assigned a treatment. However, for the purposes of clarity they are excluded from analysis here.

much more representative of the population than a university sample.   The sample is also 55%

female, which skews more female than the population as a whole, and the median age is 34

(average is 36).   The youngest respondents in the sample are 18 years old, while the oldest is 87.

This is, once again, much closer to the US population than a university sample and is much more

easily generalizable to the public as a whole.[6]

Results and Discussion

In order to test H1, we begin by looking at the results for the white respondents.   White

respondents were randomized between the three race treatments. Looking at point estimates in

Figure 1 for white respondents, whites claim they would vote for the white mayor 9% of the

time, but also claim they would vote for the black mayor 9% of the time. Indeed, Figure 1

clearly shows the similarity of white voters across the board.

(Figure 1 here)

We also estimated a two-sample test of proportions to determine the differences amongst

white voters regarding perceptions of corrupt mayors. The results are shown in Table 1. There

is no statistical difference between the two results (p= .78, two-tailed). Whites vote for the

Latino mayor at a slightly higher rate than for the white mayor.   Whites would vote for the

Latino mayor 12% of the time, compared to 9% for the white mayor.   However, the difference is

not statistically significant at conventional levels (p=.16, two-tailed).[7] This is a particularly

surprising result, as it means that white respondents punish a corrupt politician at the same rate

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[6] See Appendix for descriptive statistics.
[7] These results are from a two-sample test of proportions as the variables are binary and so are not normally distributed. In keeping with previous literature (eg, Weitz and Shapiro 2014) the dependent variable is a binary scored as 1 if the respondent would likely vote for the politician, and 0 otherwise.

regardless of race.   Indeed, this contradicts the overall assumption of our first hypothesis that white voters are likely to punish minority mayors at a higher rate than white mayors.

While we might expect race to protect a politician from the negative electoral effects of a corruption scandal, that does not seem to be the case amongst white respondents. We might also expect there to be a multiplier effect for white voters when it comes to corrupt politicians of other races: any racism that white respondents might have against black or Latino politicians might be expected to show itself in a decreased likelihood of voting for a black or Latino corrupt politician. Our results, however, show no evidence of this. This, then, is strong evidence against H1. It appears that whites *are not* more likely to support a corrupt politician who is also white and in actuality punish corrupt mayors of all races equally.

(Table 1 here)

This result does, however, cast more doubt on any notion of white linked fate. As mentioned, whites do not have the same racial concerns for their own race that affect blacks and Latinos. If a white mayor is accused of corruption, the result is not likely to be that voters will be less likely to trust white politicians *overall.* One of the main concerns brought up in the literature on linked fate is that minorities feel as though their entire race may be judged on the basis of individuals making destructive choices. In the case of mayors, the argument would be that a black mayor who is convicted on corruption charges would make African Americans in general look bad. For whites, this problem is not particularly salient. A Bill Clinton or John Edwards sex scandal, for example, does not create an existential crisis for white voters. Indeed, in scandals in which white politicians are involved, race is almost never a specific issue. For African American or Latino politicians, however, race is inextricably linked to their performance.

This is the other important aspect of hypothesis 1. Since whites often view minority politicians through a racial lens (Kaufmann 2003), we would expect that black or Latino mayors would be punished more harshly than white mayors. That this is not the case suggests two possibilities. First, it may be that white voters are simply more intolerant of corruption than blacks or Latinos. Second, and probably more likely, there is simply less risk to white political power when white mayors are accused of corruption. White voters do not have to stick with a white mayor accused of corruption any more than they would a black or Latino mayor, whereas minorities may feel a stronger sense of linked fate and feel more pressure to support a mayor of their own race.

This argument forms the basis of hypothesis 2. To test this hypothesis, we examine the results of all groups exposed to a newspaper article about a corrupt politician of their own race. Therefore, for H2 we compare the group of white respondents who were shown an article about a white mayor to the black and Latino groups. Latino respondents have a 10% probability of supporting a corrupt mayor of their own race. White respondents, again, have a 9% probability of supporting a corrupt mayor of their own race. There is no statistical difference between the two. Thus, both groups vote for a corrupt mayor of their own race at the same rate. This supports our initial conclusion that whites and Latinos should not vary widely in their support for corrupt politicians of their own race. While there is more evidence for linked fate effects amongst Latinos than whites, we believe that these effects should not be as strong as they are for African American voters. Latinos deal with a lack of pan-ethnic identity, less electoral success, and an overall weaker sense of group consciousness for as a whole, which suggests that their results should not be significantly different from white voters.

(Figure 2 here)

Figure 2 bears this expectation out for Latinos and whites but also shows a much

different result for black respondents.   African Americans exhibit a 23% probability of

supporting a corrupt mayor of their own race.   This is more than twice the probability for the

white group, and a statistically significant difference of 14 percentage points (p=.00, two-tailed).

This is also more than twice the probability for the Latino group. As we can see in Table 2, the

difference in likelihood between the black group and the Latino group is a statistically significant

13 percentage points (p=.06, two-tailed). Therefore, we find strong support for H2: blacks do

support corrupt politicians of their own race at a higher rate than do whites or Latinos. This is in

keeping with the literature on linked fate and shows that this process has an effect on voting. It

also demonstrates that the mechanism of linked fate means that corrupt politicians are less likely

to be punished electorally, even if it would likely be in the best interests of the politician's

constituency to do so.

(Table 2 here)

Finally, we test our third hypothesis that black respondents with high levels of education

are less likely to support a corrupt black politician than are black respondents with low levels of

education.   To test this hypothesis we estimate a logit model that tests the effect of education on

the likelihood of supporting the black politician, for black respondents only. The results of this

model appear in Table 3.

(Table 3 here)

The effect of education for the black respondents is substantively strong and statistically

significant at 95% confidence. A black respondent with the lowest level of education in the

sample (some high school, but no diploma) has a 47% probability of supporting the corrupt

politician, holding all other variables at their means. At the median point in the sample (some college credit, but no degree) a respondent has a 30% probability of supporting the corrupt politician. For respondents with a bachelor's degree, the probability is 11%, and for those with a postgraduate degree the probability is 8%.[8]

Education does not have a statistically significant effect when we estimate similar models for whites and Latinos (full results in the appendix), but this is likely to be expected given what we know about linked fate. African Americans exhibit higher levels of linked fate than either whites and Latinos to begin with, so we would expect to see the effect of education have a greater impact on black respondents. We, therefore, find strong support in favor of our third hypothesis: black respondents with higher levels of education are less likely to support a corrupt black politician than are black respondents with lower levels of education. Figure 3 shows this to be a nearly linear relationship.

(Figure 3 here)

This is important as it highlights the complexity of race politics and linked fate. Although linked fate has been shown to be stronger amongst more educated black people in America, in this case education reduces the likelihood of supporting a black politician. In effect, linked fate can be a boon or a curse for black politicians accused of corruption. While linked fate means that less well-educated black voters may throw their weight behind such a politician, well-educated black voters will do the opposite.

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[8] What is the highest level of education you have completed? (1) 1st to 8th grade; (2) Some high school, but no diploma; (3) High school diploma, or equivalent (eg, GED); (4) Some college credit, but no degree; (5) Trade/technical/vocational training; (6) Associate's degree; (7) Bachelor's degree; (8) Postgraduate degree

This result shows that we should not expect linked fate to operate exactly the same way in all circumstances. While African Americans overall exhibit high levels of group consciousness when it comes to descriptive representation, education has an important effect on how linked fate may be perceived. Those at the lower end of the education scale likely rely more heavily on public goods that can be distributed by black mayors and thus may be loathe to abandon politicians that could have a positive material effect on their lives. Better-educated individuals, however, may have less need for governmental assistance at a basic level and can take a longer view of how corrupt politicians could negatively affect African Americans as a whole. This lack of reliance on redistributive policies, then, may be the driving factor behind better-educated black voters rejecting corrupt black mayors. For these voters, keeping the status quo may be undesirable if the status quo means creating negative perceptions of black policymakers as a whole.

Conclusions

Overall, we see strong support for two of our three hypotheses, both relating to linked fate amongst black voters. Our study, in part, confirms what has long been known about African Americans and their relationship to black politicians: linked fate is a powerful force in the black community that has important electoral consequences. Black voters support mayors of their own race accused of corruption at a significantly higher rate than do whites or Latinos. While this result may not be particularly surprising, our study's addition of a corruption variable sheds new light on this overall phenomenon.

Our study adds to research that shows that voters cannot necessarily be relied upon to punish voters electorally. In keeping with research that shows that institutional and information factors effect electoral accountability, race also determines when voters hold corrupt politicians accountable for their misdeeds.

Our study also highlights the effects of education on linked fate. The fact that higher levels of education correlate with less tolerance for black mayors accused of corruption lends credence to the notion that linked fate may not be a monolithic force among African American voters. This could relate both to better-educated blacks not relying as heavily on redistributive policies and focusing on the good of the race as a whole, or it may be that better-educated blacks are simply less tolerant of corruption charges. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that while blacks as a whole are more likely than either Latinos or whites to support a corrupt mayor of their own race, education is a mitigating factor.

For white respondents, our findings were at odds with our initial expectations. Whites support corrupt mayors of any race at similarly low levels, despite our prediction that whites would be likely to support Latino or black mayors at a lower rate. While this may be evidence that white voters are simply intolerant of corruption regardless of who is in office, it also seems likely that there is no racial incentive to support white mayors accused of corruption. White voters are unlikely to be concerned that a white mayor accused of corruption is a referendum on *all* white policymakers.

Latino voters are more of a puzzle. While there is evidence to support the notion that linked fate and group consciousness exist for Latinos, it is not as strong as for blacks. This may have something to do with Latinos (until recently) being understudied in the linked fate literature. Our study, however, supports the idea that while linked fate may exist for Latinos, it

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may manifest differently than for blacks. The fact that Latino voters were very similar to whites in their likelihood of voting for a corrupt mayor suggests that more work needs to be done to determine the reasons behind this phenomenon.

Overall, our study makes an important contribution to the literature on linked fate and the effects of political corruption on voters. Our unique experimental design allowed us to clearly see racial differences in perceptions of corrupt mayors and to compare these perceptions across race, and to determine the effects of race on electoral accountability for corrupt politicians.

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Appendix 1: Figures
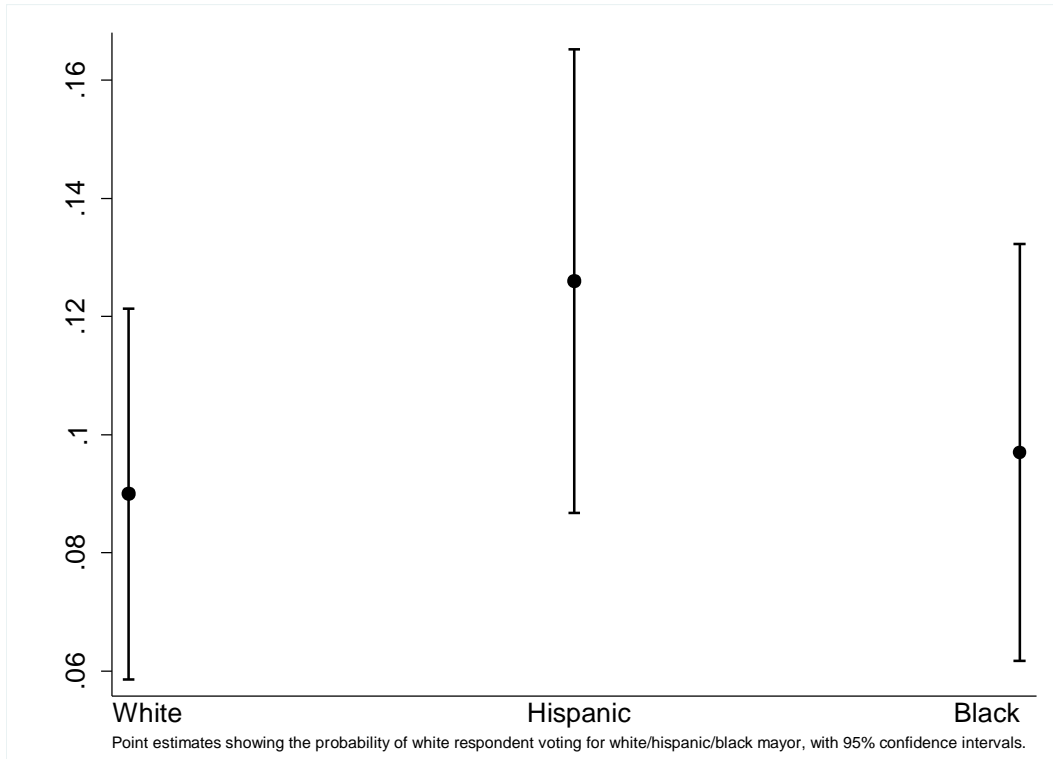
Figure 1.   White Respondents and all Groups.

Point estimates showing the probability of white respondent voting for white/hispanic/black mayor, with 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 2.   The probability of respondents supporting corrupt incumbents of their own race.

Point estimates showing the probability of respondent voting for the mayor of her own race, with 95% confidence intervals.
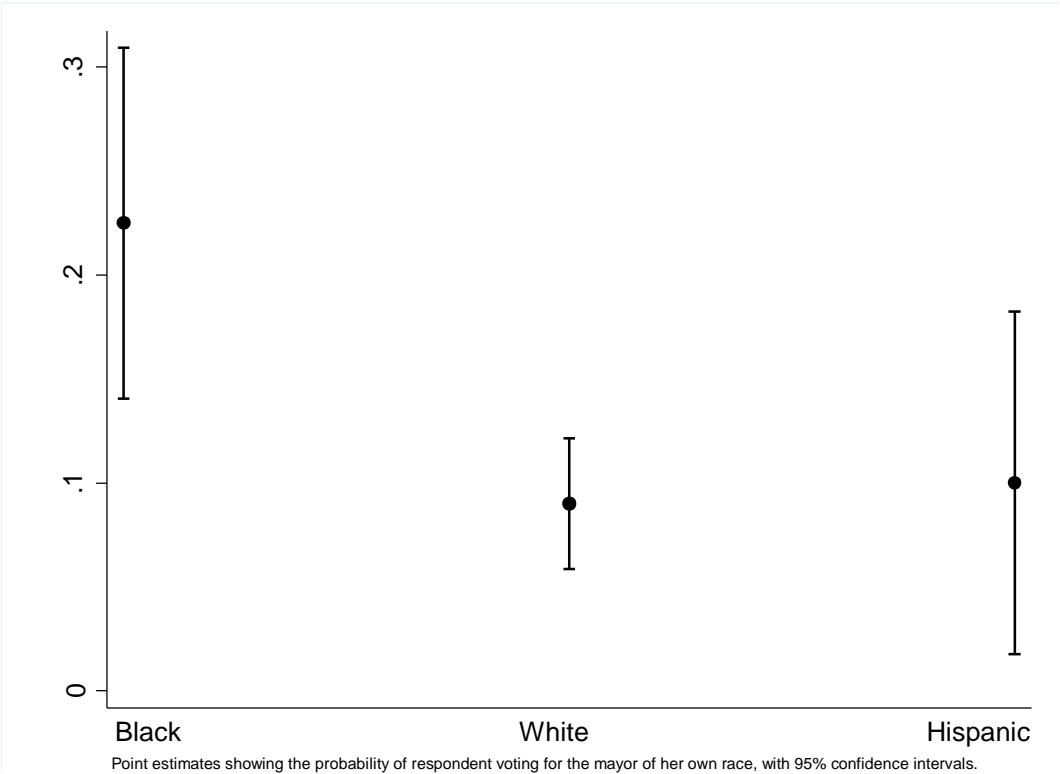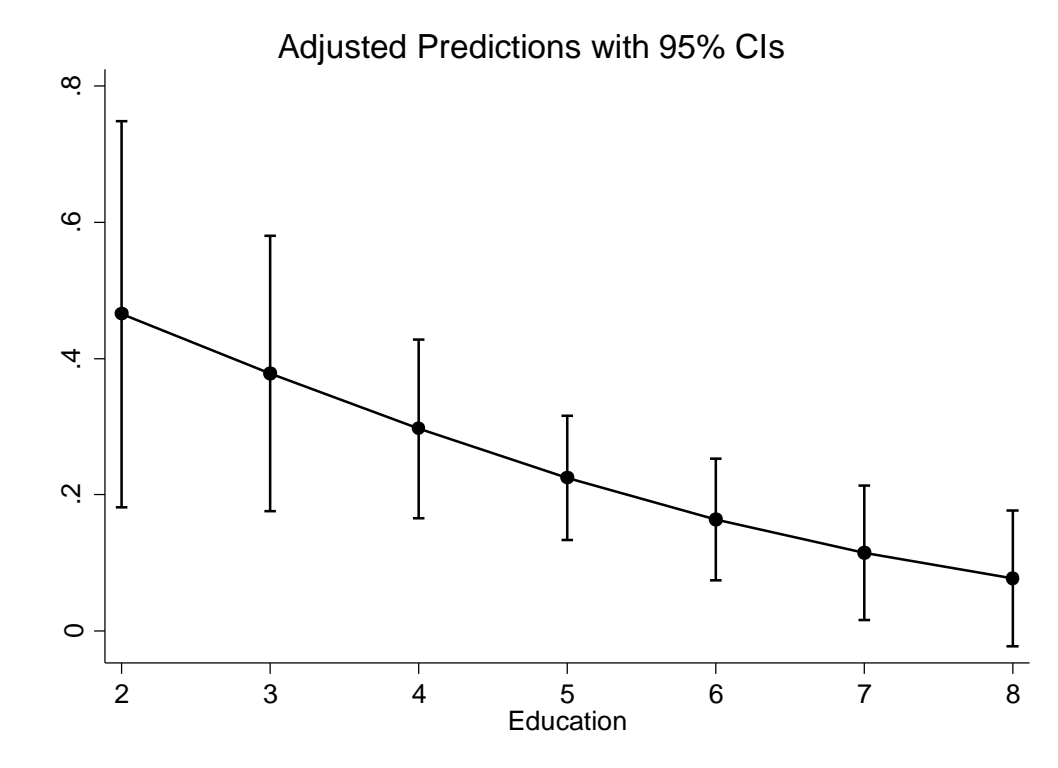
Figure 3. The effect of education on the likelihood of supporting a corrupt politician of the respondent's own race (black respondents only).

Adjusted Predictions with 95% CIs

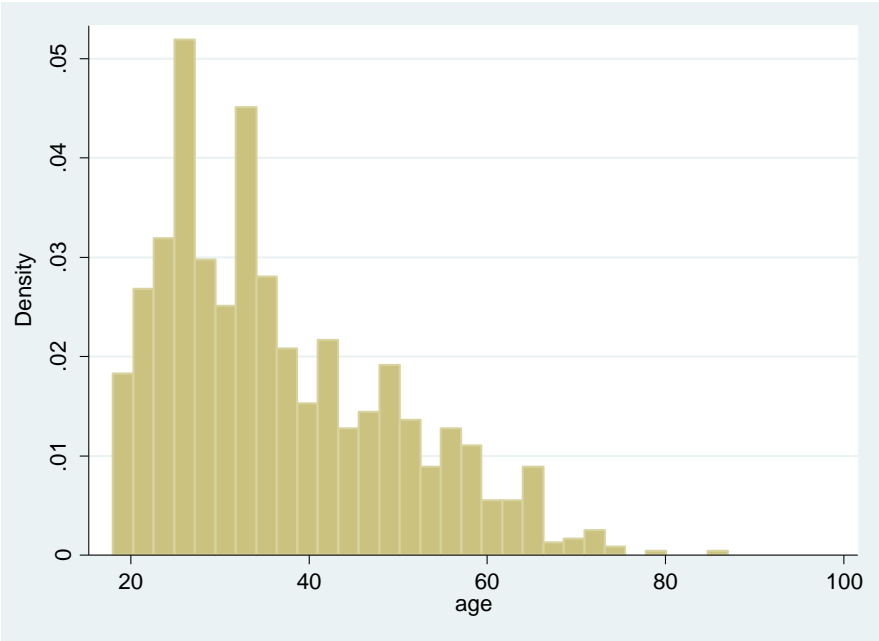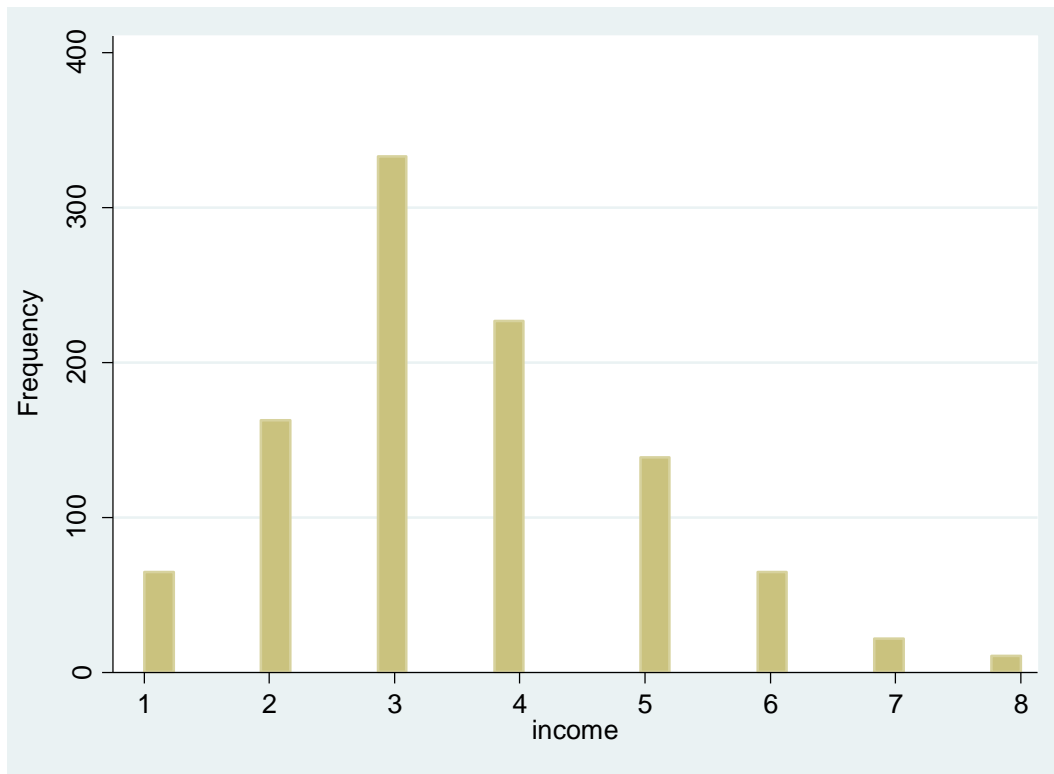**Appendix 2: Descriptive Statistics**

Figure 1.   Age of respondents.

Figure 2. Distribution of income

1= less than $10,000

2= $10,000 - $24,999

3= $25,000 - $49,999

4= $50,000 - $74,999

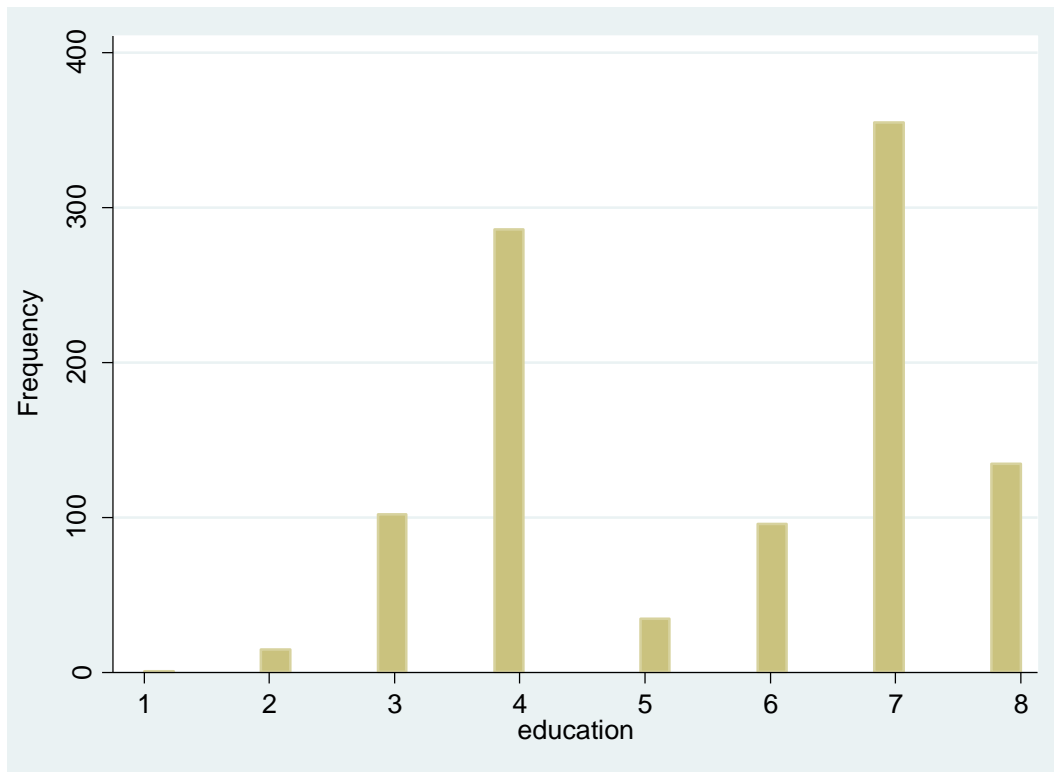5 = $75,000 - $99,999

6 = $100,000 - $149,999

7 = $150,000 - $199,999

8 = more than $200,000

Figure 3: Education of all respondents

1 = first to eighth grade

2 = Some high school, but no diploma

3 = High school diploma or equivalent (eg, GED)

4 = Some college credit, but no diploma

5 = Trade/technical/vocational training

6 = Associate's degree

7 = Bachelor's degree

8 = Postgraduate degree

Appendix 3: Newspaper Articles

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College Park Mayor Exposed for Corruption

By Philip Blake and John Rucker, The Baltimore Sun
1:15 p.m. EST, January 8, 2014

Comments 13

A series of newly disclosed e-mails and text messages suggests that College Park mayor George Hernandez received benefits from property developers in return for fast tracking zoning permits in the city of College Park. The allegations come months before Hernandez is to stand for reelection and cast doubt over his political future.

E-mails leaked to the public show Hernandez soliciting payment in return for building permits. Some of these favors included a position for his son at one of the construction companies and a discount on a condominium built by another of the companies.

These allegations come a year after a member of the College Park City Council was accused of similar misconduct.

Prior to this incident Hernandez was generally regarded as an effective politician. As well as successfully applying for state and federal funds for the development of the city, he was seen as a reliable representative of his constituents and someone to whom residents could turn to with problems.

Local resident Maria Rossi commented, "This has been going on for years. I'm not surprised. Overall he does a good job. I'll continue to support him."

Another local resident, Patrick Robinson, commented, "You hear stories of this kind of thing, but I didn't think it actually happened. I definitely won't be voting for Hernandez in the next election."

Mr. Hernandez did not respond to requests for an interview.

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College Park Mayor Exposed for Corruption

By Philip Blake and John Rucker, The Baltimore Sun
1:15 p.m. EST, January 8, 2014

Comments   13

A series of newly disclosed e-mails and text messages suggests that College Park mayor DeShawn Martin received benefits from property developers in return for fast tracking zoning permits in the city of College Park. The allegations come months before Martin is to stand for reelection and cast doubt over his political future.

E-mails leaked to the public show Martin soliciting payment in return for building permits. Some of these favors included a position for his son at one of the construction companies and a discount on a condominium built by another of the companies.

These allegations come a year after a member of the College Park City Council was accused of similar misconduct.

Prior to this incident Martin was generally regarded as an effective politician. As well as successfully applying for state and federal funds for the development of the city, he was seen as a reliable representative of his constituents and someone to whom residents could turn with problems.

Local resident Maria Rossi commented, "This has been going on for years. I'm not surprised. Overall he does a good job. I'll continue to support him."

Another local resident, Patrick Robinson, commented, "You hear stories of this kind of thing, but I didn't think it actually happened. I definitely won't be voting for Martin in the next election."

Mr. Martin did not respond to requests for an interview.

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College Park Mayor Exposed for Corruption

By Philip Blake and John Rucker, The Baltimore Sun
1:15 p.m. EST, January 8, 2014

Comments   13

A series of newly disclosed e-mails and text messages suggests that College Park mayor Richard Wildstein received benefits from property developers in return for fast tracking zoning permits in the city of College Park. The allegations come months before Wildstein is to stand for reelection and cast doubt over his political future.

E-mails leaked to the public show Wildstein soliciting payment in return for building permits. Some of these favors included a position for his son at one of the construction companies and a discount on a condominium built by another of the companies.

These allegations come a year after a member of the College Park City Council was accused of similar misconduct.

Prior to this incident Wildstein was generally regarded as an effective politician. As well as successfully applying for state and federal funds for the development of the city, he was seen as a reliable representative of his constituents and someone to whom residents could turn with problems.

Local resident Maria Rossi commented, "This has been going on for years. I'm not surprised. Overall he does a good job. I'll continue to support him."

Another local resident, Patrick Robinson, commented, "You hear stories of this kind of thing, but I didn't think it actually happened. I definitely won't be voting for Wildstein in the next election."

Mr. Wildstein did not respond to requests for an interview.

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Appendix 4: Logit Models

Appendix Table1: White Respondents

	White Mayor	Latino Mayor	Black Mayor
Age	-0.0085	-.0314*	-.034
	(.0185)	(.0181)	(.0216)
Gender (female)	.0508	-.3283	1.225**
	(.4406)	(.3928)	(.5212)
Education	-.0721	-.2167*	.1556
	(.1208)	(.1213)	(.1360)
Married	.1506	-.2281	.1687
	(.2504)	(.2336)	(.2348)
Income	-.0816	-.2526	-.2815
	(.1515)	(.1541)	(.1587)
Interest in Politics	.0029	-.0273	.0659
	(.2339)	(.2068)	(.2449)
Constant	-1.649	1.863	-2.210
	(1.046)	(.9938)	(1.220)
Observations	286	260	254
Log Likelihood	-84.267	-90.368	-73.410

p<.1= *; p<.05=**; p<.01 = ***

The model for white mayor contains only the white respondents who were shown the article about the white mayor. The model for Latino mayor contains only the white respondents who were shown the article about the Latino mayor. The model for black mayor contains only the white respondents who were shown the article about the black mayor.

Appendix Table 2: The Effect of Race on the Likelihood of Voting for a Mayor of One's Own Race

	Own Race
White	-.0915
	(0.6537)
Black	1.060
	(.6639)
Latino	-.0324
	(.7773)
Age	-.0145
	(.0147)
Gender (female)	-.4484
	(.3193)
Education	-.1357
	(.0911)
Married	.2046
	(.1915)
Income	.0288
	(.1147)
Interest in Politics	-.0665
	(.1653)
Constant	-1.064
	(.9599)
Observations	427
Log Likelihood	-145.671

Results are similar to the point estimates discussed in the paper. Looking at the marginal effect of the black variable, a respondent who is not black has an 8% probability of voting for a corrupt politician of her own race, while a respondent who is black has a 21% probability (holding all other variables at the means).

Appendix Table 3: The effect of education on the likelihood of voting for a corrupt politician of one's own race.

	Black Respondents	White Respondents	Latino Respondents
Education	-.382**	-.0721	.0588
	(.0190)	(.1208)	(.3088)
Age	-.0202	-.0085	-.2236
	(025)	(.0185)	(.1346)
Gender (female)	-.6893	0508	-
	(.554)	(.4406)	
Income	.3100	-.0816	.1678
	(.229)	(.1515)	(.4745)
Married	.4204	.1506	-.7812
	(.3365)	(.2504)	(1.116)
Interest in Politics	..0397	.0029	-.0948
	(.2687)	(.2339)	(.6872)
Constant	-.0231	-1.649	4.302
	(1.419)	(1.046)	(3.745)
Observations	91	286	50
Log Likelihood	-43.904	-84.267	-11.863

$p<.1$= *; $p<.05$=**; $p<.01$ = ***

Gender is omitted from the Latino model as including it would reduce the sample size to 23. Nonetheless, the education variable performs similarly when it is included.