Abstract

In this paper, I leverage random assignment in a survey of 1,000 Latino adults to test the effects of race/ethnicity, out-group ties, and racial threat on the boundaries of Black-Latino electoral cooperation. Existing research on Black and Latino political relations is notable for its contrasting findings. Some scholars contend that there is a great deal of political cooperation between the two groups, while others suggest that conflict is often likely. Yet, most of the previous literature on Black-Latino cooperation examines elite behavior, while relatively few scholars have explored whether there is an attitudinal basis for elite behavior among the African-American and Latino mass publics. This study provides an important contribution to the literature by specifying under what conditions we are likely to observe political cooperation between Black and Latino Americans. I develop and test a theory that the threat of anti-Latino discrimination broadens Latinos’ conception of the in-group beyond ethnicity to include other racial minorities. In turn this increases Latino support for Black candidates who challenge White incumbents. I find that this effect is contingent on Black candidates signaling their ties to Latino interest groups, and that racial resentment and panethnicity moderate treatment effects.
1 Introduction

Early studies of race in the United States tended to focus on the stark division between Blacks and Whites in politics, economics, and society. Indeed, as W.E.B. Du Bois wrote at the turn of the century, “The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line” (1903, p. 3). Much of our current understanding of racial politics is derived from a time in which there were two major racial groups in America and a single, clear line of racial division. However, political scientists have been confronted with a shifting racial landscape in the United States, with both the White and Black populations declining as the Latino and Asian-American populations grow. Out of this new demographic reality, political scientists are working to understand not only how Whites think about and respond to minorities, but how racial and ethnic minorities view one another, and whether they will forge a shared group interest or align with the (shrinking) White majority.

A great deal of ink has been spilled over the question of whether Blacks and Latinos are likely to compete or cooperate in the political arena. The answer based on existing data seems to be that it depends. However, this response is somewhat theoretically unsatisfying. Why is it that in some political contexts Blacks and Latinos can form cross-racial political coalitions, while in others the communities seem farther apart from one another than they are from Whites?

Understanding the political behavior of Latino Americans is of vital importance as their share of the electorate grows. Moreover, scholars contend that Latinos occupy an uncertain place on the American racial hierarchy. In some contexts Latinos seem to be clearly a racial/ethnic minority, but a majority of Latinos self-identify as White (U.S. Census Briefs, 2011). Given their uncertain racial position, it is unclear whether the Latino mass public is likely to perceive their interests as more aligned with Whites or with Blacks, and we do not yet understand how and when Latino identity affects voter support for Black and White candidates.
This paper uses an innovative experimental design on a large survey of Latino Americans to test whether, and when, Latinos are supportive of Black candidates. Specifically, I test how in an election against a White incumbent Latinos respond to Black candidates who signal their support for Latino group interests and how the threat of discrimination promotes Latino political support for Black candidates.

The rest of the paper proceeds as follows: in section 2, I discuss the divergent findings on Black and Latino group politics; in section 3, I summarize the existing research on Latino attitudes about African-Americans; section 4 presents the theory that guides this paper; section 5 outlines the experimental design and the dependent variables used to test the hypotheses; section 6 describes the survey sample; section 7 discusses the findings; and section 8 concludes.

2 Conflict or Cooperation?

While African-Americans are typically understood to occupy the lowest rung on the American racial hierarchy, Latinos face an array of economic, social, and political disadvantages that can result in worse average outcomes than Blacks face (Hero, 1992, p. 54). Given the disadvantage that both groups encounter, pundits and scholars have variously suggested that Blacks and Latinos are either natural competitors or coalitional partners. A long line of research (much of which has relied on local, urban politics) examines how Blacks and Latinos either compete over scarce resources in a society in which both groups are disadvantaged, or cooperate in an attempt to improve the status of both groups. From employment competition to access to exclusionary political institutions, researchers have provided mixed evidence as to whether Blacks and Latinos find political commonality, or are pitted against one another in a struggle for greater equality.

Political gains for one group often come at the expense of another, and scholars repeatedly find that when politics exist as a zero-sum game between Blacks and Latinos,
competition and conflict tend to follow (McClain and Karnig, 1990; Sonenshein, 2003). Representation in legislative bodies, whether local, state, or federal, is one such zero-sum game, as the number of representatives is fixed as population demographics change. Research shows that increasing Black and Latino populations in local contexts tend to foment greater competition over political representation (McClain and Karnig, 1990). Studies of voter behavior in metropolitan elections provide some evidence for this assertion. In cities across the United States there are limited instances of Black voters supporting Latino candidates, and vice versa (Kaufmann, 2007). Despite a shared disadvantaged position relative to the White majority, low socioeconomic status—particularly if uneven between the two groups—may be a catalyst for competition and political conflict (Gay, 2006; McClain et al., 2006). Moreover, it may be strategic for both Blacks and Latinos to attempt to build partnerships with Whites in order to accrue greater power and access to the political structures dominated by Whites (Hero, 1992, p. 16). Indeed, in many cities, White-Latino political coalitions have formed and proven to be relatively durable (Kaufmann, 2003).

Despite instances of electoral conflict and differing political concerns for the two groups, many suggest that there are natural reasons for Blacks and Latinos to cooperate. As disadvantaged groups relative to Whites, Blacks and Latinos might coalesce to seek greater socioeconomic and political power. This has occurred in a number of elections in the United States. Most notably, after many media outlets questioned whether Barack Obama could win over the Latino voters who supported Hillary Clinton in the primary, he courted Latino voters by referring to Blacks and Latinos as “brothers in the struggle for equality.” His appeals to Latinos were successful and Obama’s political coalition relied on the strong support he garnered from Latino voters, despite many Latinos holding racial attitudes associated with White opposition to Black candidates

1 Though Gay (2006) finds that Blacks who are disadvantaged relative to Latinos are more likely to view their interests as incompatible with Latinos and to endorse anti-Latino stereotypes, the data lacks sufficient variation in the key independent variable to fully support the theory. This study may overemphasize the role of economic competition on creating political competition.
(or racially liberal White candidates) (Segura and Valenzuela, 2010). Similarly, in the 2005 Los Angeles mayoral election, Antonio Villaraigosa faced a White incumbent with deep ties to the Black community, and was able to attract African-American voters and win the election by reaching out to prominent Black leaders and building a cross-racial coalition (Hero and Preuhs, 2013).

Researchers have also analyzed public opinion data to argue that African-Americans and Latinos are likely to conflict or coalesce. Despite majorities of African-Americans and Latinos positively perceiving relations between the two groups, recent Pew data finds that Latinos perceive significantly less harmony in Black-Latino relations than do African-Americans (Pew, 2008). On specific racially significant issues like immigration and anti-Black discrimination, Blacks and Latinos have quite different outlooks with each group being understandably more concerned with the issues that primarily affect their community. However, Bowler and Segura (2012) provide a wealth of opinion data on issues such as public education, the environment, crime, assistance to the poor, and employment to suggest that minority political interests are much more similar than they are divergent. If political coalitions are constructed over shared political interests and policy preferences, the relative closeness of Black and Latino opinions relative to Whites may foster cross-racial political cooperation and alliances.

Some observational research supports this contention. In the 2003 California recall election, Blacks and Latinos voted similarly in both the gubernatorial recall and on a racially charged ballot proposition, while Whites and Asians voted differently (Segura and Fraga, 2008). However, other researchers find more mixed results with little discernable pattern across electoral venues, and in several local elections African-Americans (Latinos) have defected from the Democratic Party when faced with a Democratic Latino (African-American) candidate (Kaufmann, 2003; Barreto, 2004).

In sum, there is evidence for both cooperation and conflict between Latinos and

2Asian Americans also have generally more liberal policy preferences than Whites, but are not as consistently left-leaning as Latinos and African-Americans (Bowler and Segura, 2012).
African-Americans and no clearly identified pattern for which is more likely to occur and under what conditions (Jones-Correa, 2011). Hero and Preuhs (2013) argue that at the national level there is much greater intergroup cooperation as there is little direct competition between Blacks and Latinos. Moreover, they find that Black and Latino elites often work together politically and that when it comes to governance there is evidence for co-minority representation. It seems that an overemphasis on Black and Latino politics at the local level has overstated the conflict between the two groups, when in fact African-Americans and Latinos are likely to come into competition or coalesce depending on the political context and circumstances, just like any other group (Segura and Rodrigues, 2006).

3 Latino Attitudes About African-Americans

Historically, social scientific research on racial attitudes has focused on how non-Hispanic Whites feel about African-Americans. With the massive demographic shift over the past few decades and the resulting decline of the White majority, researchers have begun to broaden the racial attitudes literature to include studies of how minority groups perceive one another and how these attitudes affect behavior (Lai, 1999; Segura and Valenzuela, 2010; Ramakrishnan et al., 2009).

Multiple studies indicate that Latinos and African-Americans do not hold views of one another that would easily lead to political cooperation. McClain et al. (2006) find that Latino immigrants hold quite negative stereotypic beliefs about Blacks, and often these stereotypes are actually more negative than those expressed by Whites. In their study, they find evidence that Latinos believe they have more political commonality with Whites than with Blacks, but that this feeling of commonality is not reciprocated by Whites. Their study provides an intriguing case of how Latinos approach racial positioning in a new destination city (their research is restricted to the Durham, NC area), but may not be applicable to Latino attitudes toward Blacks in the rest of the
nation or to how U.S.-born Latinos perceive African-Americans.

Despite the evidence that Latinos do not hold overwhelmingly positive views of African-Americans, Segura and Valenzuela (2010) argue that race is not the political cleavage for Latino voters that it is for Whites, and therefore racial attitudes are not brought to bear on Latinos’ voting behavior in the way they are for White Americans. As research on anti-Black sentiment has typically focused on White attitudes, we lack a clear understanding of how racial prejudice against African-Americans factors into the Latino voter calculus. However, the limited evidence indicates that racial resentment may not be the barrier to Latino-Black political coalitions that it is to White support for Black candidates (or support for White candidates who are considered racial liberals).

Although existing work offers mixed findings about the propensity for Blacks and Latinos to cooperate, many scholars agree that building (and maintaining) cross-racial/ethnic coalitions may be difficult. Several scholars suggest that perceived commonality can help to overcome Latino prejudice toward African-Americans (and Black opposition to Latinos) and help to foster cooperation. Indeed, Kaufmann (2003) argues that simply occupying a similar place of disadvantage in U.S. society is not sufficient to construct Black-Latino coalitions, but that a sense of commonality is required. Moreover, she argues that panethnic identification (identification with the larger Latino ethnic group versus identification with the nation of origin group) among Latinos is likely to increase the cross-racial commonality that Hispanics perceive they have with African-Americans (see also McClain et al. (2006)). In other words, Latinos who identify panethnically seem to have a more expansive view of their in-group. Panethnically identified Latinos view their in-group as extending past their co-nationals to include individuals with ancestry from other Latin American nations, and in turn this makes them more likely to perceive a shared group interest with Black Americans, than are Latinos who identify primarily with their nation of origin/ancestry.

Quantitative research on minority political behavior has a shorter history in political science than research on the racial majority. As such, researchers are still just laying the
foundation to understand how Blacks and Latinos (let alone Asian-Americans) think about and participate in politics. Given the high cost of conducting large-N survey research on minority populations, much of this research has relied on observational election data. This has provided a great deal of understanding about patterns of behavior, but we lack the diversity of methodological approaches that have been more easily brought to bear on samples of White respondents, or on nationally representative samples for which race/ethnicity is treated as a simple intercept shift. This study takes an important step in conducting experimental research on a Latino sample to offer a unique contribution to this literature. Importantly, this project offers an opportunity to move toward causal identification of a variety of the theories that have been posited by earlier research.

This paper identifies how threat affects minority political coalitions, and tests whether threat can be manipulated. Much of the research on minority relations ends at predicting Black and Latino opinions regarding social or political commonality between the two groups and provides little in the way of behavioral analysis. I am aware of no current research that explicitly tests how the threat of discrimination alters Latino attitudes toward Blacks or support for African-American candidates, nor how support for candidates is contingent on their ties to different racial interest groups. By manipulating ethnic group threat, I test whether threat can motivate a more broad-based minority identity politics to foster cross-racial coalitions.

4 Theory

Blacks and Latinos occupy similarly precarious social and political positions: on average both groups earn less than Whites or Asians, have lower wealth accumulation, worse educational outcomes, are overrepresented in prisons, and underrepresented in political institutions. Numerous scholars and popular pundits suggest that this can either mean that they view each other as competitors for scarce resources, or as potential
political allies. Both outcomes—cooperation and conflict—seem to rely on perceptions of threat. As the threat to the racial or ethnic group increases, so should the tendency to either compete or cooperate. In this section, I use social identity theory and intersectional theory to highlight how Latino identity can be contextually contingent, and in particular how group threat can affect Latino political identity and behavior. Lastly, I present the hypotheses from the theory.

4.1 The Contingent Latino Identity

Though it seems a simple term, “identity” is actually quite complex and can change with context. In defining “social identity,” Henri Tajfel (1982) asserts that it is “that part of the individuals’ self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (p. 2, emphasis in original). Empirical studies of social identity show that even temporary and constructed group memberships can produce large effects of in-group preference among members of these fabricated groups and distrust of out-groups (Tajfel et al., 1971; Doise, 1978; Turner, 1980).

Although Tajfel notes that individuals may belong to multiple groups at the same time, all of which may informs part of their self-concept, this recognition of multiple identities is often overlooked in social identity research. By contrast, scholars of intersectionality posit that understanding inequality is impossible, or at least severely limited, without examining how multiple identities interact simultaneously (Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1991; Hancock, 2007; Harris-Perry, 2011). For instance, Crenshaw (1989) shows how legal doctrine can fail to account for job discrimination against Black women if their case demonstrates that they are treated differently than both other women and Black men.

Often intersectional research treats identity as fixed, though complicated. We can consider the social position of low-income Black women by analyzing how class, race,
and gender together affect their life chances. However, this paradigm of analysis has been somewhat ineffective when it comes to Latino identity. Though popular media often treat “Hispanic” and “Latino” as singular racial identities, there is wide variation in how Latino Americans identify racially, and unlike many other Americans, Latinos understand their racial and ethnic identity as a mixture of multiple racial categories (Rodríguez, 2000; Gómez, 2007; Roth, 2012; Dowling, 2014). For Latinos, this suggests a contingent form of racial/ethnic identity. At times, “Latino” may be the salient identity, and members of this ethnic group might see themselves as members of a racial/ethnic minority. At other times, those Latinos who consider themselves White and Latino may identify primarily as White rather than as an ethnic minority.

Clearly, how Latinos identify varies person to person. A Latina individual who does not see herself as White, is more likely to see herself as both Latina and a racial minority. Latinos who identify as White may only identify as an ethnic minority without ever perceiving themselves as a racial minority. Others might think of themselves as White in some contexts and a minority in others, while still others might think of themselves as Latino only, and not consider themselves either White or a racial minority. Still others might think of themselves as primarily members of their national origin group, but when pressed could consider themselves either White, Latino, or a racial minority—or any combination of these identity groups. Figure 1 shows how racial and ethnic identity might intersect for Latino Americans.

4.2 Group Threat and the Relevant In-Group

Social identity theorists assert that threats to the in-group lead to greater identification with the in-group and distrust of or hostility toward out-groups (Sherif and Sherif, 1953; LeVine and Campbell, 1972; Brewer, 1999). Given the complex nature of racial/ethnic identity for Latino Americans, the question becomes: what is the relevant out-group for Latinos? If Latino ethnicity is made salient via priming anti-Latino discrimination,
Latinos are most likely to consider Whites the relevant out-group, increasing distrust and hostility toward Whites specifically. Existing data supports this theoretical contention. When asked the race of the person who most recently discriminated against them, Latino respondents overwhelmingly answer “White” (see Figure 2). This may be tempered among Latinos who identity as both Latino and White, but is likely to be exaggerated among Latinos who never identify as White.

Moreover, a significant proportion of Latinos perceive that they have common political and social goals with African-Americans (Kaufmann, 2003). Increasing the sociopolitical threat against Latinos is likely to positively affect perceived political commonality with Blacks, particularly for those Latinos who identify primarily as Latino rather than by national origin (i.e., panethnically-identified Latinos), and those who see themselves as members of a racial minority group.

Apart from simply prompting greater trust between Latinos and Blacks, increasing group threat should yield changes in political behavior. Previous observational research indicates that as the political environment becomes more hostile toward Latino interests, Latinos respond with increased political interest, participation, and mobi-
Figure 2: Race of Person Who Most Recently Discriminated Against Respondent

![Graph showing the proportion of Latino respondents who identified the race of the discriminator.]

Proportion of Latino Respondents who Identified Race of Discriminator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because, for Latino Americans, the threat of discrimination is largely perceived as originating from Whites, I anticipate that the increased salience of discrimination will prompt not only feelings of commonality with African-Americans, but should lead to greater political cooperation and higher support for Black politicians on the part of Latino voters.

4.3 Hypotheses

Based on the theory outlined above, I argue that Latinos view Black Americans as potential coalitional partners, but that their coalitional behavior is not a foregone conclusion. Instead, it is contingent on several factors: the ties Black candidates have to Latino organizations, the threat to Latinos, and the racial attitudes and identification of Latino voters.

Although I argue that some Latinos perceive their identity as overlapping Black
identity, either because a Latina individual considers herself Black or because she sees herself as a member of a broader minority group, I anticipate that on average Latino candidates will attract greater political support than Black candidates:

\[ H_1: \] Latino respondents will prefer Latino candidates relative to Black candidates on average.

However, there is variation among Black candidates in terms of their representation of Latino interests, and co-minority alliances can be fostered through candidates’ attention to other minority groups’ interests. I anticipate that when Black candidates signal their commitment to Latino interests, Latino respondents will reward this commitment by increasing their support. This hypothesis relies on issue politics rather than group identity, but suggests that while Black candidates are able to build co-minority alliances, they are by no means assured. Thus I expect support for the following hypothesis:

\[ H_2: \] Black candidates who work with ethnic Latino organizations will attract greater support than Black candidates who do not.

The first two hypotheses suggest that in many ways Latino voters are like voters of any racial or ethnic group. They give preference to candidates from their own ethnic community and reward candidates of other (or perhaps intersecting) backgrounds who demonstrate their interest in their community’s issue politics. Evidence for the theory of Latino identity-based politics outlined above requires manipulation of group threat however. The crux of the argument is in the following testable hypothesis:

\[ H_3: \] Priming in-group threat (discrimination against Latinos) will increase voter support for Black candidates.

Finally, I anticipate that Latino respondents will not perceive Black and Latino interests to be a zero-sum game, such that respondents will not punish a Latino candidate
for working with African-American political organizations relative to a Latino candidate who makes no effort to represent Black political interests. This is stated as the following hypothesis:

\[ H_4: \] Respondents will express equivalent support for Latino candidates who have ties to both Latino and Black organizations and who have ties to only Latino organizations.

While I anticipate there should be main effects of both challenger identity and interest group affiliation, there is also a theoretical basis to presume that different subsets of the Latino population are more or less responsive to these factors. In particular, I expect racial resentment and panethnicity to moderate the findings. Racial resentment should be associated with a decrease in support for Black candidates running against a White incumbent of the same party. Latino panethnicity should be associated with greater support for Black candidates, as panethnic identification is a predictor of increased sense of commonality with Black Americans.

I test these hypotheses with three dependent variables: \textit{Vote choice}, \textit{Campaign contributions}, and \textit{Perceived representation}. If results for political support (vote and contributions) were simply a result of issue politics, we should expect no findings on the representation variable. However, if priming discrimination affects respondents’ perceptions of how candidates will represent their interests, that would indicate support for the identity-based theory articulated here. By measuring multiple types of electoral behavior as well as perceptions of representation, I am better able to capture how and when identity matters to Latino voters when choosing among diverse candidates.

\section{Design}

I designed a survey experiment to test the potential for cross-racial minority electoral coalition building. The survey experiment features a $2 \times 2$ design and appeared twice
in the survey. Each respondent is informed about a mayoral election in a large city that features a White Democratic incumbent (Michael Thompson) who faces a challenger from his same party. I use a local election to provide a hard test of political cooperation. Local, urban contexts are those in which we typically see the least cooperation between Blacks and Latinos, while national offices usually feature higher levels of political cooperation.

The challenger is randomly assigned to be either an African-American or Latino man who either has political ties to a racial/ethnic out-group organization or does not. Race/ethnicity is randomized via photos and the names of candidates. Information about the challengers political ties is given briefly after identifying their name and current political office. The challengers always have ties to their own in-group as well: Latino candidates work with the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda; Black candidates work with the NAACP. If the respondent saw a challenger who signals out-group political ties, there was an additional line to convey this information (the Latino candidate also worked with the NAACP; the Black candidate also worked with the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda). Table I provides the features of the challengers and the abbreviations used throughout the paper for each. Figure 3 shows an example of the treatment with the Black challenger with out-group ties (BOT).

Later in the survey, after approximately four minutes of unrelated content, respon-

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3I opted to control party identity in this survey as the majority of partisan-identified Latinos are Democrats, and a supermajority votes Democratic. Moreover, while some mayoral elections are non-partisan, I wanted to remove the possibility that respondents inferred partisanship from the racial identity of the candidates.

4The photos and names were pre-tested on Amazon MechanicalTurk on a sample of Latino respondents to verify that respondents accurately identify the race/ethnicity of each candidate and that candidates are judged to be similarly attractive. Additional information about the candidates previous office-holding was also included. Each challenger previously held a local office, either City Council or Board of Supervisors. Each biography was pretested on Amazon MechanicalTurk to ensure that each challenger was deemed comparably competent.

5While the NAACP is a more well known political group than the NHLA, the asymmetrical name recognition of the two groups is likely to bias against my hypotheses. Moreover, there are few national level organizations advocating for Latino/Hispanic issues (NALEO is an organization of leaders and elected officials), and I specifically wanted a panethnic Latino organization rather than a national organization. NHLA fits this criteria: it is an umbrella organization that includes many smaller national groups.
Table 1: Experimental Treatments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenger Label</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Out-group cue</th>
<th>Out-group organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before Discrimination Prime</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOT (Latino Out-group Ties)</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>NAACP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LNOT (Latino No Out-group Ties)</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOT (Black Out-group Ties)</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>National Hispanic Leadership Agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNOT (Black No Out-group Ties)</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After Discrimination Prime</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOT (Latino Out-group Ties)</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>NAACP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LNOT (Latino No Out-group Ties)</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOT (Black Out-group Ties)</td>
<td>Black</td>
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<td>National Hispanic Leadership Agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNOT (Black No Out-group Ties)</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

dents were reminded about the incumbent, Mayor Michael Thompson—constantly held as a Democratic White male—and were given information about a second possible challenger. This randomization was conditional on the first such that respondents never saw the same challenger twice. In the first and second match-ups in the survey I observe respondents who received each of the four randomized challengers. Figure 4 shows an example of the second treatment with the Latino challenger with no out-group ties (LNOT).

The second randomization was immediately preceded by a discrimination prime, such that responses to the first challengers are in the low-threat condition, while responses to the second challenger are under the high-threat condition. To prime discrimination, respondents were asked about their opinions and experiences of ethnic discrimination (see Appendix for question wording). By repeating the experiment immediately following these questions about discrimination, respondents were primed to consider discrimination while evaluating the political candidates they encountered next. This is a subtle means of priming threat to the ethnic in-group, as respondents
Figure 3: Example: Incumbent versus Experimentally Randomized Challenger 1

![Incumbent versus Challenger 1](image1)

We’d like to tell you about a mayoral election in a large city.

The current mayor is Democrat Michael Thompson. Mayor Thompson has served the city as mayor for the past four years.

There are several Democratic politicians considering running against Mayor Thompson in the next election. One of these Democrats is Christopher Hall. Christopher Hall has served on the City Council and has been involved in the community through his work for the NAACP. Additionally, Christopher has worked closely with the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda.

Figure 4: Example: Incumbent versus Experimentally Randomized Challenger 2

![Incumbent versus Challenger 2](image2)

As a reminder, Michael Thompson has served as mayor of a large city for the past four years.

Another Democrat considering running against Mayor Michael Thompson is Carlos Rodriguez. Carlos Rodriguez has served on the Board of Supervisors and has been involved in the community through his work for the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda.
were not informed that discrimination was a contested issue in the election, nor did the candidates take positions on the issue. Respondents were merely answering a separate survey question on their own experiences and beliefs about anti-Latino discrimination prior to evaluating political candidates.

5.1 Dependent Variables

After each candidate pairing, respondents were asked several questions to gauge support for the candidates. These variables are *Vote choice*, *Campaign contributions*, and *Perceived representation* (see Appendix for question wordings). Vote choice was measured using a branching question to yield a seven-point scale, recoded to range from 0 (strongly support the incumbent) to 1 (strongly support the challenger). Campaign contributions were measured by asking respondents how they would divide $10 between the incumbent, the challenger, and themselves. Perceived representativeness of both the incumbent and the challenger was measured along a seven-point scale, recoded to range from 0 (extremely poorly) to 1 (extremely well).

*Vote choice* and *Campaign contributions* provide two different measures of candidate support to test the robustness of any findings. *Perceived representation* provides evidence of the proposed mechanism. If priming discrimination broadens the in-group beyond the Latino community to encompass other racial minorities, we would expect that the perceived representativeness of the African-American challengers would be affected by this prime.

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6 Though research on priming originally focused on how the media’s focus on certain issues affects how individuals evaluate politicians’ performance, the use here fits the criteria that priming does not involve changing beliefs but rather, “it simply alters the issues on which individuals base their overall evaluations” (Druckman and Holmes, 2004).

7 Here I analyze donations to the challenger which range from $0 to $10.
6 Data and Methods

The survey experiment was a part of an omnibus survey designed by members of the Laboratory for the Study of American Values (LSAV) at Stanford University and included a variety of questions about political attitudes and opinions in both the domestic and foreign context.\textsuperscript{8} The survey was fielded in English to 1,000 Latino American respondents in August 2013 by the international polling firm YouGov on their web-based survey platform.

The sample has good variation and is well-balanced across treatments on many key variables including family income, ideology, gender, voter registration, racial resentment, and panethnicity. The distributions of each of these variables are not perfectly representative of those from the 2006 Latino National Survey, however this is expected given the different sampling structure used by online polling firms and the seven intervening years between the sample collection efforts. As the survey was fielded in English-only, the sample is more acculturated than the Latino American population, on average. Acculturation (particularly English fluency) is associated with increased political participation (\textsuperscript{Cho, 1999}) but not with increased closeness to African-Americans (\textsuperscript{Kaufmann, 2003}). These previous findings indicate that this sample is appropriate for testing the question of how discrimination promotes Latino support for Black candidates, and does not bias my results in favor of the theory. Moreover, online surveys with imperfect sampling frames have been shown to replicate experimental results from other, more representative survey modes (\textsuperscript{Berinsky, Huber and Lenz, 2012}).

As this analysis leverages the benefits of random assignment, I use difference of means tests to analyze treatment effects of candidate identity and group ties.

\textsuperscript{8}Information on the LSAV is available via https://www.stanford.edu/group/opinionlab/cgi-bin/wordpress/.
7 Findings

Across the four experimental challengers, I find that respondents prefer the challengers—both Latino and Black—to the incumbent, Michael Thompson. However, there are marked differences between the candidates by race/ethnicity, group ties, and the salience of discrimination. Overall, Latino candidates are preferred relative to Black candidates (support for \( H_1 \)), ties to Latino organizations boosts support for Black candidates (support for \( H_2 \)), respondents do not punish Latino candidates with ties to Black political organizations (support for \( H_4 \)), and priming discrimination promotes Latino support for Black candidates with ties to Latino political groups (conditional support for \( H_3 \)).

Tables 2 and 3 show the difference of means for vote choice and contributions to the challengers for each of the experimentally randomized challengers in both the low- and high-threat settings. There is a clear race effect in the low-threat setting for both dependent variables. The Latino candidates attract significantly greater vote share and garner larger campaign contributions than the two Black candidates, therefore I accept \( H_1 \). However, while contributions to the two Black candidates are not significantly different from each other, the Black candidate with political ties to the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda attracts significantly more vote share than the Black candidate without ties. This provides some support for \( H_2 \) as ties to Latino organizations boost vote support for Black candidates in the low-threat setting, but do not significantly increase campaign contributions, a more “costly” form of political support.

In the high-threat setting, the results change somewhat. The pattern of vote support remains the same, with the two Latino candidates equivalently supported, the Black candidate with ties to the Latino community significantly less supported, and the Black candidate with no ties to the Latino community significantly less supported still. However, the magnitude of the difference between the Latino candidates and the Black candidate with ties decreases while the difference between the Black candidates with and without Latino organizational ties increases. This suggests that raising the
Figure 5: Mean Vote Support for Each Challenger

![Graph showing vote support for each challenger before and after discrimination prime](image)

Table 2: Vote Differences by Challenger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenger</th>
<th>Before prime</th>
<th>After prime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOT BNOT</td>
<td>-0.15*** -0.09***</td>
<td>-0.02 -0.15*** -0.07**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LNOT</td>
<td>0.01 -0.16*** -0.10***</td>
<td>-0.02 -0.14*** -0.05*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOT</td>
<td>— -0.16*** -0.10***</td>
<td>— -0.14*** -0.05*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNOT</td>
<td>— — 0.06**</td>
<td>— — 0.08***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cell is column minus row. *p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01

Salience of threat to Latinos fosters slight increases in vote support of African-American challengers who work with Latino organizations, but does not affect responses to Black challengers who work only in their own community.

The effect of threat on campaign contributions is more stark. Heightening the salience of discrimination increases the contributions to the Black candidate with ties such that there is a significant difference between the Black candidate with no ties and the other three candidates. Together, the findings from the vote choice and campaign contribution variables indicate interactional support for $H_2$ and $H_3$: increasing the salience of threat increases support for Black candidates ($H_3$), but only those who signal their commitment to Latino political interests ($H_2$).
Table 3: Contribution Differences by Challenger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before prime</th>
<th>After prime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LOT</td>
<td>BNOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LNOT</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>-1.34***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOT</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>-0.85***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNOT</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cell is column minus row. *p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01

While up to this point the analysis has focused on measures of respondents’ support for candidates, I now turn to the examination of perceived representation of interests. I argued in the theory section that threats to the Latino ethnic in-group may prompt Latinos to perceive themselves as a part of a larger minority in-group. If this is true, it implies that in the high-threat context Latinos will perceive Black candidates to be better able to represent their interests and concerns. If the discrimination prime merely promoted greater attention to issue politics, it should not affect how Latinos perceive Black candidates’ representational abilities. Table 4 shows the difference of means for the perceived representativeness variable. In the low-threat context, I once again obtain a clear racial difference. Respondents believe that the two Latino candidates will
simply represent their interests while the two Black candidates will represent them significantly less well. By contrast, after respondents reflect on anti-Latino discrimination, they express no difference in their perception that the Latino candidates and the Black candidate with ties will represent them. Instead, respondents are significantly more pessimistic about only the Black candidate without ties relative to the other three.

This provides some evidence to support the theory offered here: priming discrimination does seem to broaden the conception of the in-group to include other racial minorities, but this effect is conditional on other minorities signaling their co-minority identity as well. If Latino support of Black candidates were simply issued based, then
it should not matter if Latino identity is threatened via a discrimination prime. An issue based theory would anticipate that Latino voters would perceive that the BOT challenger would represent their interests, regardless of the political environment. The finding here, suggests instead that there is a contingent and interactional effect of identity and issue politics, such that co-minority identity matters to Latino voters, but is limited by the extent to which other minorities align with Latino interests.

The findings from the three dependent variables (Vote choice, Campaign contributions, and Perceived representation) thus far indicate that there are significant differences in perceptions of candidates’ ability to represent Latino interests and these are reflected in support for these candidates. Importantly, challengers’ race is not the only factor in respondents’ support, and Black candidates who signal solidarity with Latino interests are able to attract votes and dollars from Latinos. Moreover, this cross-racial voting coalition is strengthened when respondents are primed to think about discrimination prior to evaluating political candidates. The evidence provides support for my hypotheses, but suggests that \( H_2 \) and \( H_3 \) are contingent.

7.1 Who Responds?

The Role of Racial Attitudes and Panethnicity

The main effects indicate the relevance of both candidate identity, interest group affiliation, and threat, but now I turn to the analysis of how racial attitudes and group identity moderate support for candidates and perceptions of representation. As I asserted previously, I anticipate that respondents won't be uniformly affected by the treatments. I expect racially resentful individuals to be less supportive of Black candidates, independent of Latino organizational ties or the context of threat. Racial resentment predicts White opposition to Black candidates, but fewer studies test its effect on Latino voters. Here, I examine the means of the dependent variables for respondents with racial resentment scores below and above the sample mean.
Figure 8: Vote Support: Interaction of Challenger and Racism

Figure 9: Campaign Contributions ($): Interaction of Challenger and Racism
As Figures 8 and 9 show, racial resentment actually has a negative association with donating to and voting for all four challengers. Less resentful respondents are more supportive of (in terms of both vote choice and campaign contributions) each challenger than are more resentful respondents, in both the high- and low-threat settings. This means that for Latinos, racial resentment is negatively associated with support for not only Black challengers running against White incumbents, but also Latino challengers running against White incumbents. It is clear though that the largest effect of racial attitudes is on support, both vote and contributions, for the Black candidate without out-group ties. Though this candidate is the least popular of the challengers for less resentful respondents as well, he is particularly unpopular among resentful respondents, even when discrimination has been primed. Indeed, under both threat settings the White incumbent achieves a majority of the vote only against this candidate, and only among more racially resentful respondents.

Interestingly, prior to the prime, racial resentment is associated with more than a $1 average drop in campaign contributions to the Latino candidate with out-group ties. After priming discrimination, this precipitous drop in contributions along the racial resentment scale diminishes such that the gap in donations to Latino candidates between more and less racially resentful Latinos is minimized. The pattern in donations to this candidate are not replicated for vote choice however. It seems that while racially resentful individuals are loathe to contribute to a Latino candidate working with the NAACP, they are not opposed to voting for him. This fits with other work suggesting that campaign contributions are more costly than vote support in an experimental setting (Israel-Trummel N.d.).

Lastly, these figures show that the discrimination prime seems to be most strongly affecting how less resentful respondents react to the Black candidate with out-group ties. After priming discrimination, less resentful individuals vote for the Black candidate with organizational ties at higher rates and donate no less to his campaign than they do to the two Latino candidates. This suggests that the conditional evi-
The above findings indicate that attitudes toward African-Americans do affect individuals’ responses to the treatment: less racially resentful individuals are those who respond most strongly to the discrimination prime, increasing their support for Black candidates with ties to Latino interest groups when discrimination is salient. It is similarly important to examine how in-group identity moderates treatment effects. Panethnicity should influence identity-based political behavior, and in particular should moderate responses to Black candidates, as panethnically-identified Latinos are more likely to agree that Latinos and Blacks share political goals and interests. The findings offer support for this connection between panethnicity and behavior.

Figures 10 and 11 show that panethnically-identified respondents are more supportive of the Black challengers than those who do not identify panethnically. The one exception is a slight and insignificant decline in support along panethnicity for the
Black candidate with ties when discrimination is not salient. When discrimination is primed however, panethnic identifiers are significantly more likely to vote for either Black candidate than are non-identifiers. Most striking, both with and without the discrimination prime, panethnicity is associated with moving support for the Black candidate who does not signal ties to the Latino community from under 0.50 to above the 0.50 threshold. This means that non-panethnically-identified Latinos are more likely to vote for the White incumbent than for a Black challenger who has no ties to the Latino community, regardless of the discrimination prime. By contrast, panethnic Latinos are more likely to vote for the Black challenger than for the White incumbent.

The finding that non-panethnically-identified Latinos are not reacting to the discrimination prime in terms of their support for Black candidates is consistent with the theory. Discrimination promotes a widening of the in-group reference, therefore we should anticipate that this would yield heterogeneous effects amongst Latinos by group identity. Panethnic Latinos are most likely to see African-Americans as mem-
bers of a larger minority in-group. Thus the lack of effect amongst non-identifiers is an observable implication of the theory.

Panethnicity and perceived representation are clearly associated with one another, as seen in Figure 12. Both before and after priming discrimination, there is a great deal of overlap in perceptions of the four challengers’ representativeness and they are ranked in the same order by panethnic and non-panethnic respondents. Among panethnic identifiers, there is racial divergence between the candidates when discrimination has not been primed: panethnicity is positively related to perceptions of all challengers’ representativeness, but panethnic respondents think a Latino candidate can represent their interests significantly better than a Black candidate. However, after priming discrimination panethnic respondents see little difference in representational ability between the Latino candidates and the Black candidate with organizational ties. This suggests that while panethnicity can lead Latinos to perceive commonality with African-Americans, it is dependent upon the political environment. When
discrimination is salient, panethnicity can help to foster cross-racial minority political cooperation, but only when Black candidates signal their ties to Latino issue politics. Absent this cue however, it may be more difficult to build Black-Brown voter coalitions.

8 Conclusion

This paper argued that while Latinos are open to supporting Black candidates, their support is not inevitable. Instead, it is made more likely by a number of relevant factors. Black candidates who build bridges to work with Latino organizations can attract greater support from Latino voters, particularly when the salience of anti-Latino discrimination is heightened.

Overall, I find support for my hypotheses. On average, Latinos express stronger support for co-ethnic candidates than for Black candidates although each of the four randomized challengers are preferred relative to the White incumbent. While I hypothesized there should be positive effects for Black candidates with ties to Latino organizations and for Black candidates when racial/ethnic threat is primed, I find that these effects are conditional on one another. Priming respondents with discrimination increases support for Black candidates who signal ties to Latino interests but not for Black candidates without any such ties.

The interaction effect between Latino organizational affiliation and the discrimination prime supports the theory articulated here regarding Latino group identity. Heightening the salience of discrimination builds Latino political support for the Black candidate who works with the NHLA, indicating that the findings here are not simply a result of issue politics. If issue politics were the primary explanation, we would expect to see Latino respondents 1) support Black candidates who work with Latino interest groups and 2) see these candidates as more likely to represent their political interests than Black candidates who do not work with such groups. However, I find that only when discrimination is primed do Latinos perceive the Black challenger with
Latino group ties to be more likely to represent their interests than a Black candidate without such ties. Moreover, in the prime condition respondents do not discern differences between the representational abilities of the Black candidate with ties and the two Latino candidates. This interaction of findings supports the theory that threats to the ethnic group promote identification with the larger minority group and in turn enhance political support for Black challengers who signal their commitment to the larger minority group interests.

Both racial resentment and panethnicity are found to be important moderating variables in this study. Racially resentful Latinos are particularly negative about Black candidates who lack ties to the Latino community, both before and after the discrimination prime. By contrast, the positive effects garnered by the Black candidate with ties in the discrimination prime condition are attributable to less racially resentful respondents and panethnically identified respondents. Prior to the prime, panethnic identifiers exhibit a clear racial gap in their belief that Latino and Black candidates can represent their interests. After the prime, the racial differentiation in responses among panethnic identifiers disappears. This suggests that the mechanism posited here is correct—Latinos who identify panethnically are more disposed to believe they have common interests with African-Americans, and discrimination increases this sense of commonality. There are clear behavioral results from this linkage between panethnicity, discrimination, and political commonality, leading to greater Latino support for Black candidates and an increased sense that Black candidates who work with Latino organizations can represent the interests of Latino constituents.

While the evidence provides support for the theory outlined here, additional work is needed to test the mechanism I propose. I argue that threats like discrimination, which are associated with the racial majority, serve to broaden the in-group for Latinos such that it includes other racial minorities. Future work will examine how and when in-group threats affect the perceptions and composition of the in-group.

Lastly, the findings here demonstrate the importance of looking at more than just
White respondents when we build theories of racial politics. A plethora of studies find that highlighting racial issues typically decreases White support for Black candidates or even liberal White candidates (Kinder and Sears, 1981; Sears, Citrin and Kosterman, 1987; Reeves, 1997; Mendelberg, 2001; Hutchings, 2009). Indeed, many have suggested that Obama’s relative success among Whites compared to previous Black Democrats was due to his concerted effort to run a “race-neutral” or “post-racial” campaign. However, with Latinos it seems that this type of effort may fail, and highlighting racial commonality may be a key strategy to build minority political coalitions.
9 Appendix

Treatment and Dependent Variables

Challenger treatment (first pairing in the survey, prior to discrimination prime)

A random number is generated between 1 and 4. Each number is associated with a single candidate: his race, previously held office, in-group organizations he’s worked with, and whether he’s worked with an out-group organization.

The vignette reads as follows:

Wed like to tell you about a mayoral election in a large city. The current mayor is Democrat Michael Thompson. Mayor Thompson has served the city as mayor for the past four years.

There are several Democratic politicians considering running against Mayor Thompson in the next election.

One of these Democrats is [Diego Gonzalez/Carlos Rodriguez/Christopher Hall/Jonathan Martin]. [Diego Gonzalez/Carlos Rodriguez/Christopher Hall /Jonathan Martin] has served on the [City Council/Board of Supervisors/City Council/ Board of Supervisors] and has been involved in the community through his work for the [National Hispanic Leadership Agenda/National Hispanic Leadership Agenda/NAACP/NAACP]. [Additionally, Diego has worked closely with the NAACP/. /Additionally, Christopher has worked closely with the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda/.

Challenger treatment (second pairing in the survey, following discrimination prime)

A random number is generated between 1 and 4 conditional on the number generation from the first match up such that the same number is not chosen a second time (keeping respondents from viewing the same candidate twice). Each number is associated with a single candidate: his race, previously held office, in-group organizations he’s worked with, and whether he’s worked with an out-group organization.

The vignette reads as follows:

As a reminder, Michael Thompson has served as mayor of a large city for the past four years.

Another Democrat considering running against Mayor Michael Thompson is [Diego Gonzalez/Carlos Rodriguez/Christopher Hall/Jonathan Martin]. [Diego Gonzalez/Carlos Rodriguez/Christopher Hall/Jonathan Martin] has served on the [City Council/Board of Supervisors/City Council/Board of Supervisors] and has been involved in the community through his work for the [National Hispanic Leadership Agenda/National Hispanic Leadership Agenda /NAACP/NAACP]. [Additionally, Diego has worked closely with the NAACP /./ Additionally, Christopher has worked closely with the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda /.]

Vote choice. If Michael Thompson and [challenger] were the two candidates, who would you vote for in this election? IF R makes a choice: IHow much do you prefer
[Michael Thompson/challenger]? If R answers they would vote for neither: If you had to choose would you lean towards voting for Michael Thompson or [challenger]? (1= strongly support Michael Thompson...7= strongly support [challenger].)

**Campaign contributions.** Early on in campaigns, small donations from people like you are an important way for candidates to raise awareness and gain supporters. If you had $10 to donate to one, both, or neither of these candidates, how would you donate that money? Answer must total $10.

**Perceived representativeness.** How well do you think Michael Thompson and [Challenger] would represent your concerns and interests? (1= extremely poorly...7= extremely well, for each candidate)

**Discrimination prime.** Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements (1= Completely disagree.... 5= Completely agree).

I am treated with less respect than other people because of my ethnicity.

Americans are hostile towards my ethnic group.

**Independent Variables**

**Racial resentment scale.** Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (1= Disagree strongly.... 5= Agree strongly)

1. Irish, Italians, Jews and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.

2. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class. (Reverse coded)

3. Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve. (Reverse coded)

4. It’s really a matter of people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.

**Latino panethnicity.** Do you agree or disagree with the statement that [Hispanics/Latinos] in the United States share a group identity in the same way that Blacks in the United States share a group identity? (uses R’s preferred term) (1= Agree, 2= Disagree 3= Don’t Know)
References


