

Online Appendices

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Online Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics and Additional Regression Results

Below are descriptive statistics on our key dependent and independent variables for the analysis presented in the main text related to the 2012 US presidential election.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Key Dependent and Independent Variables

Variable	N	μ	σ	Min	Max
<i>Feeling Thermometer Obama</i>					
All Individuals	4,521	56.31	35.24	0	100
Black Only	1,020	89.39	16.21	0	100
White Only	3,501	46.68	33.41	0	100
<i>Feeling Thermometer Romney</i>					
All Individuals	4,496	45.76	31.10	0	100
Black Only	1,010	26.85	23.89	0	100
White Only	3,486	51.23	30.80	0	100
<i>Policy Distance (Obama)</i>					
All Individuals	4,062	2.26	1.81	0	6
Black Only	786	1.20	1.28	0	6
White Only	3,276	2.52	1.83	0	6
<i>Policy Distance (Romney)</i>					
All Individuals	4,035	2.02	1.60	0	6
Black Only	778	2.82	1.55	0	6
White Only	3,257	1.83	1.56	0	6
<i>Black</i>	4,530	0.23	0.42	0	1

In the main text, we jointly estimated our two core models using feasible generalized least squares in a seemingly unrelated regression setup (Zellner, 1962a,b; Cameron and Trivedi, 2010). We now show that our results are robust to estimating our two models separately. The first two columns in Table 4 present the results from the main text where the two models were jointly estimated. The next two columns present the results when we estimate the two models separately. It should be immediately obvious that the two sets of results, both for our key independent variables of interest and our control variables, are very similar. As we noted in the main text, jointly estimating the two models is preferable on theoretical grounds and because a Breusch-Pagan test for error independence indicates that there is a statistically significant correlation between the two errors.

Table 4: Policy, Race, and Support for Barack Obama and Mitt Romney in the 2012 US Presidential Elections

Dependent Variable: *Feeling Thermometer*, 0 – 100

	Estimated Jointly (SUR)		Estimated Separately	
	Obama	Romney	Obama	Romney
<i>Policy Distance</i>	-8.83*** (0.25)	-8.07*** (0.29)	-9.96*** (0.26)	-9.36*** (0.30)
<i>Black</i>	10.24*** (1.22)	-20.09*** (1.81)	9.11*** (1.24)	-22.44*** (1.85)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Black</i>	7.46*** (0.62)	5.33*** (0.56)	8.02*** (0.64)	6.23*** (0.58)
<i>Controls</i>				
<i>Democrat</i>	18.02*** (0.85)	-13.29*** (0.92)	16.91*** (0.86)	-11.78*** (0.92)
<i>Republican</i>	-11.41*** (0.94)	18.62*** (0.92)	-9.57*** (0.95)	17.35*** (0.92)
<i>Age</i>	-0.01 (0.02)	0.15*** (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.14*** (0.02)
<i>Female</i>	1.57** (0.66)	0.11 (0.68)	1.42** (0.66)	0.18 (0.68)
<i>Above Median Income</i>	0.32 (0.72)	0.03 (0.74)	0.24 (0.72)	0.05 (0.74)
<i>High School</i>	-0.14 (1.32)	1.72 (1.37)	-0.39 (1.32)	1.88 (1.38)
<i>Undergraduate</i>	1.92 (1.47)	3.16** (1.53)	1.77 (1.46)	3.48** (1.53)
<i>Graduate</i>	5.16*** (1.56)	1.72 (1.63)	4.85*** (1.56)	2.38 (1.63)
<i>Constant</i>	65.72*** (1.85)	54.08*** (1.94)	67.83 (1.85)	56.63*** (1.95)
Observations	3,611	3,611	3,635	3,615
R^2	0.69	0.58	0.69	0.58

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

In the main text, we also reported results related to linked fate when we split our sample by race. However, we didn't present the results with respect to the control variables. We do so now in Table 5.

Table 5: Policy, Race, and Support for Barack Obama and Mitt Romney

Dependent Variable: *Feeling Thermometer*, 0 – 100

	Black Voters Only		White Voters Only	
	Obama	Romney	Obama	Romney
<i>Policy Distance</i>	-3.38*** (0.72)	-2.40** (0.99)	-7.59*** (0.42)	-7.43*** (0.46)
<i>Linked Fate</i>	-1.85 (1.62)	-3.87 (3.85)	1.14 (1.40)	4.19*** (1.26)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Linked Fate</i>	2.33*** (0.89)	0.04 (1.21)	-1.05** (0.46)	-0.91* (0.52)
<i>Controls</i>				
<i>Democrat</i>	11.19*** (1.45)	-13.52*** (2.36)	19.38*** (1.06)	-13.68*** (1.05)
<i>Republican</i>	-7.93** (3.08)	13.03*** (4.95)	-12.30*** (1.07)	18.45*** (0.97)
<i>Age</i>	0.08** (0.04)	0.17*** (0.06)	-0.02 (0.02)	0.15*** (0.02)
<i>Female</i>	4.34*** (1.13)	-2.71 (1.81)	1.29 (0.80)	0.85 (0.78)
<i>Above Median Income</i>	0.20 (1.35)	-4.53** (2.16)	-0.18 (0.85)	1.07 (0.82)
<i>High School</i>	-1.30 (1.78)	-1.89 (2.84)	0.47 (1.80)	2.14 (1.74)
<i>Undergraduate</i>	-3.72* (2.19)	0.27 (3.51)	2.82 (1.95)	3.27* (1.88)
<i>Graduate</i>	-4.39* (2.49)	-2.66 (4.00)	6.85*** (2.05)	1.68 (1.98)
<i>Constant</i>	79.92*** (3.08)	40.59*** (5.17)	64.03*** (2.47)	50.27*** (2.43)
Observations	629	629	2,650	2,650
R^2	0.24	0.17	0.62	0.59

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Online Appendix B: Vote Choice rather than Feeling Thermometers

In the main text, we used feeling thermometer questions as the dependent variables to evaluate our theoretical hypotheses. We did so because they provide us with a direct measure of the utilities that individuals get from supporting a particular candidate and so correspond most closely to our theoretical setup. We noted that vote choice is less preferred as a dependent variable for several reasons. First, vote choice is affected by things such as strategic concerns related to electoral viability and therefore doesn't cleanly capture one's underlying support or utility for a candidate. Second, the discrete nature of vote choice throws away important variation in candidate support. This is especially likely to be the case in the empirical context of the 2012 US presidential elections where the vast majority of Black voters voted for Obama. We know, for example, that Black voters who voted for Obama weren't all equally enamored with Obama (Hutchings, 2009; Harris, 2012; Price, 2016; Stephens-Dougan, 2020). While many Black voters were enthusiastic supporters of Obama, others supported him much more reluctantly. This variation in the level of support for Obama among Black voters, which is relevant for evaluating our hypotheses, is lost when we use a dichotomous measure of vote choice as the dependent variable. Third, we cannot explicitly evaluate the impact of racial incongruence or racial distance between the two presidential candidates and the voters when we employ vote choice as the dependent variable. This is because vote choice models only capture the support of one candidate *relative to that of the other*. We can't, for example, evaluate whether the difference between Black voters and White voters is larger or smaller when the candidate is Black (Obama) than when the candidate is White (Romney). This is something that we were able to do when using the two separate feeling thermometer questions for the presidential candidates.

All that said, it could be argued that we would have more confidence in our theoretical story if the results from the main text where we use feeling thermometer questions as our dependent variables extend (where relevant) to the case where we use vote choice as a dependent variable. In the main text, we stated that our empirical claims are robust to using candidate vote choice as our dependent variable. We now demonstrate the empirical basis for this statement.

In Table 6, we present the results from three models that all use candidate vote choice as the dependent variable. The dependent variable, *Vote for Obama*, is coded 1 if the respondent voted for Obama

Table 6: Policy, Race, and Vote Choice for Barack Obama in the 2012 US Presidential Elections

Dependent Variable: *Vote for Obama (1/0)*

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Black</i>	0.05** (0.02)	0.61*** (0.03)	0.39*** (0.04)
<i>Policy Distance to Obama</i>	-0.13*** (0.005)		-0.10*** (0.004)
<i>Policy Distance to Obama</i> × <i>Black</i>	0.10*** (0.01)		0.07*** (0.01)
<i>Policy Distance to Romney</i>		0.13*** (0.01)	0.10*** (0.005)
<i>Policy Distance to Romney</i> × <i>Black</i>		-0.14*** (0.01)	-0.10*** (0.01)
<i>Controls</i>			
<i>Democrat</i>	0.25*** (0.02)	0.23*** (0.02)	0.16*** (0.01)
<i>Republican</i>	-0.19*** (0.02)	-0.27*** (0.02)	-0.13*** (0.02)
<i>Age</i>	-0.0005 (0.0004)	-0.0003 (0.0004)	0.0001 (0.0003)
<i>Female</i>	-0.02 (0.66)	0.002 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
<i>Above Median Income</i>	-0.01 (0.12)	0.003 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)
<i>High School</i>	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.001 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.02)
<i>Undergraduate</i>	-0.002 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)
<i>Graduate</i>	0.06** (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)
<i>Constant</i>	0.80*** (0.04)	0.22*** (0.04)	0.52*** (0.04)
Observations	2,552	2,547	2,544
R^2	0.68	0.67	0.72

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Note: Results are based on a linear probability model.

and 0 if they voted for Romney. Model 1 includes information on the left-right policy distance between the respondents and Obama, Model 2 includes information on the left-right policy distance between the respondents and Romney, and Model 3 includes information on the left-right policy distances between the respondents and both presidential candidates. The results are consistent across all three models, and so we

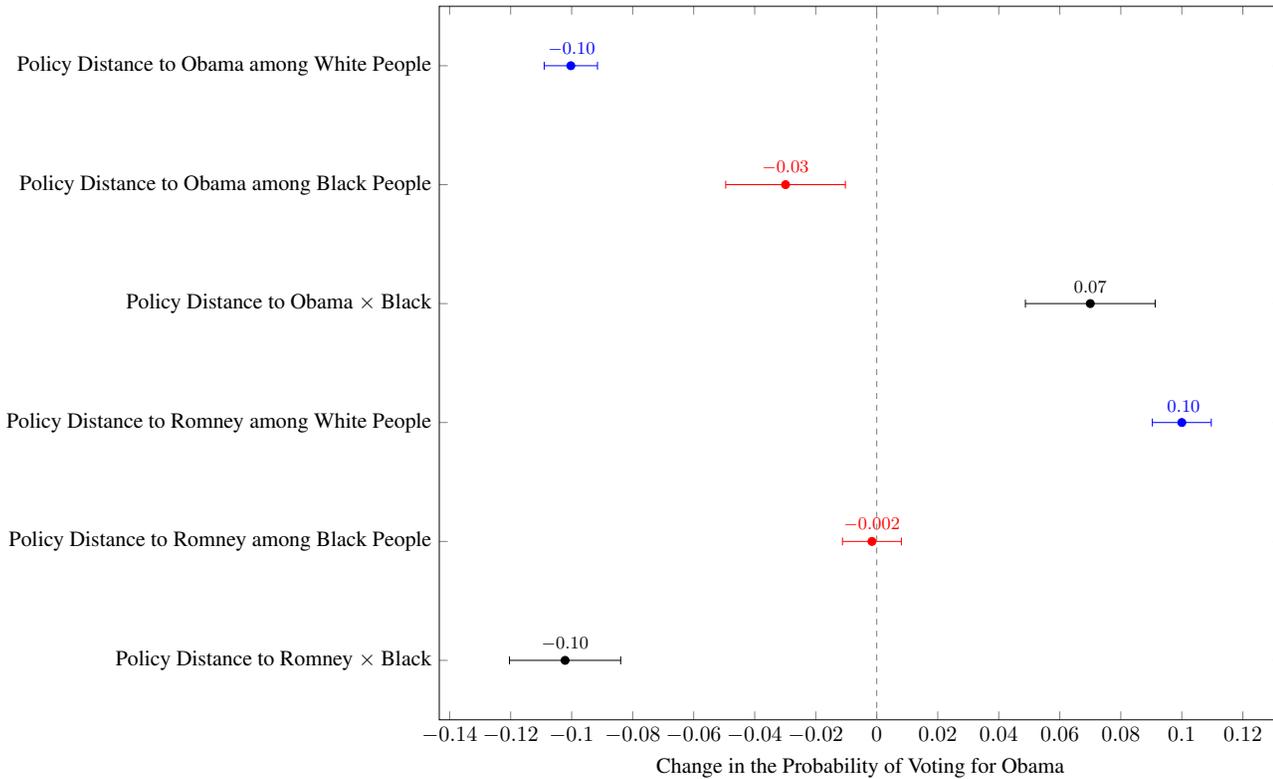
focus our upcoming discussion on the results from Model 3.

We start by discussing the results with respect to the effect of policy distances to the candidates on vote choice. Concerns with policy representation would lead us to expect that, holding everything else constant, the probability of voting for Obama would go down as Obama becomes more policy incongruent but would go up as Romney becomes more policy incongruent. Our theory suggests that White voters will place greater emphasis on policy representation concerns than Black voters. As predicted, and consistent with our discussion in the main text, White voters care about policy representation and impose an electoral punishment on both candidates whenever they're policy incongruent. This is indicated by the negative and statistically significant coefficient on *Policy Distance to Obama* and the positive and statistically significant coefficient on *Policy Distance to Romney*. To be more specific, a one unit increase in the policy distance to Obama reduces the probability that a White individual votes for Obama by -0.10 [-0.11 , -0.09]. As before, two-tailed 95% confidence intervals are shown in parentheses. White voters also impose a similarly-sized electoral punishment on the White candidate, Romney, if he becomes more policy incongruent. Specifically, a one unit increase in the policy distance to Romney increases the probability that a White individual votes for Obama by 0.10 [0.09 , 0.11]. These effects of policy distance for White voters are shown in blue in Figure 5.

As predicted, and consistent with our discussion in the main text, we find that Black voters place much less emphasis on policy representation concerns than White voters. This is indicated by the positive and statistically significant coefficient on the interaction term *Policy Distance to Obama* \times *Black* and the negative and statistically significant coefficient on the interaction term *Policy Distance to Romney* \times *Black*. These interaction effects are shown in black in Figure 5. A one unit increase in the policy distance to Obama only reduces the probability that a Black individual votes for Obama by 0.03 [0.01 , 0.05]. The magnitude of this electoral punishment is 70% smaller than that for White voters and is substantively small. The effect of a one unit increase in the policy distance to Romney is even smaller and not statistically significant: -0.002 [-0.02 , 0.01]. The electoral punishment for policy incongruence with respect to Romney imposed by Black voters is over 99% smaller than that imposed by White voters. The effects of policy distance for Black voters are shown in red in Figure 5. Overall, there's very strong evidence that White voters care more about policy representation than Black voters.

We can also look at the effect of race on presidential vote choice. In Figure 6a, we show how the

Figure 5: The Conditional Effect of Policy Distance on the Probability of Voting for Obama in the 2012 US Presidential Elections

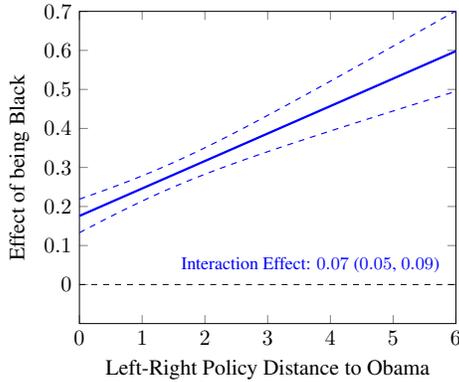


Note: The plot shows the effects of a one-unit increase in policy distance between respondents (White and Black) and presidential candidates (Obama and Romney) on the probability of voting for Obama. The effects of policy distance for White voters are shown in blue, while those for Black voters are shown in red. The plot also shows how the effects of a one-unit increase in policy distance with respect to Obama and Romney vary with race; these interaction effects are shown in black.

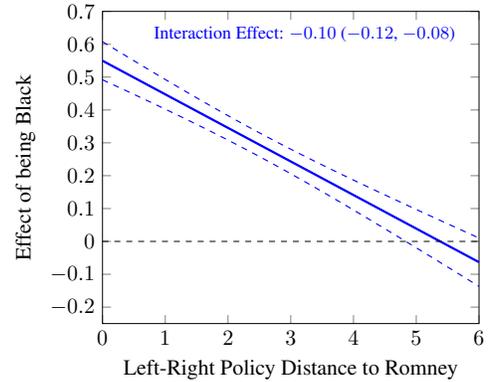
effect of being Black varies across *Policy Distance to Obama* when the policy distance to Romney is at its mean value (2.07). Positive values indicate that Black people are more likely to vote for Obama than White voters, while negative values indicate that Black people are less likely to vote for Obama than White voters. In line with our discussion in the main text, Black people (with average distance to Romney) are always more likely to vote for Obama. Also as predicted, the extent to which Black people are more likely to vote for Obama increases as they become more policy distant to Obama. This is consistent with our earlier claim in the main text that Black people care relatively less about policy representation than White people. In effect, the evidence in Figure 6a suggests that Black people generally retain their support for the Black candidate, Obama, even when they disagree strongly with his policy position. In contrast, White people increasingly reduce their support for Obama the more they disagree with his policy position. It's this differential response to any increased policy distance to Obama that generates the growing pro-Obama gap

Figure 6: The Conditional Effect of Race on the Probability of Voting for Obama across the Policy Distance to Each of Obama and Romney

(a) The Conditional Effect of being Black when Policy Distance to Romney is at its Mean Value



(b) The Conditional Effect of being Black when Policy Distance to Obama is at its Mean Value



Note: The plots show the effect of being Black on the probability of voting for Obama across the policy distance to Obama (a) and Romney (b) when the policy distance to the other candidate takes on its mean value. The curved dashed lines indicate two-tailed 95% confidence intervals. Both panels are based on the results from Model 3 in Table refTab5.

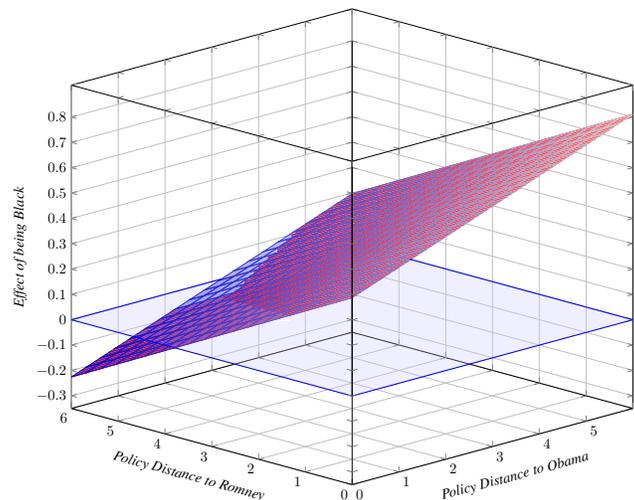
between Black voters and White voters indicated by the upward sloping line in Figure 6a.

In Figure 6b, we show how the effect of being Black varies across *Policy Distance to Romney* when the policy distance to Obama is at its mean value (2.30). Black people who hold the same policy position as Romney (*Policy Distance to Romney* = 0) are much more likely to vote for Obama than similarly ideologically-located White people. This is consistent with the idea that Black people care about identity representation as they're much more likely than White people to vote for Obama even though they're policy congruent with the White candidate. This is also consistent with the idea that White people care about identity representation as well – they have a preference for the White candidate, at least when the White candidate is ideologically close to them. Importantly, and exactly as predicted, the pro-Obama gap in voting between Black people and White people declines as Romney becomes more policy incongruent. Black voters obviously have an even stronger reason to vote for Obama when they're ideologically distant from Romney. The downward sloping line in Figure 6b, though, is consistent with the idea that White voters start turning to Obama at even higher rates than Black voters as Romney becomes more policy incongruent. While White voters may have a preference for Romney on identity representation grounds, the evidence suggests that they're increasingly likely to switch their vote to the Black candidate, Obama, when Romney is distant from them in the policy space. In effect, concerns with policy representation trump concerns with

identity representation for White voters. Indeed, when the policy distance to Romney is greater than 4.84, we find that there's no statistically significant difference in the likelihood of voting for Obama between Black people and White people.

One limitation of the panels in Figure 6 is that they only show the effects of being Black across the policy distance to Obama (a) or Romney (b) when the policy distance to the other candidate is at its mean value. In Figure 7, we provide a 3-D effect plot showing how the effect of being Black on the probability of voting for Obama varies across the full range of values for the policy distances to both Obama and Romney. This effect of being Black is captured by the sloping meshed surface, which is shaded red when it is statistically significant.¹ The solid blue 'zero surface' performs that same function as the 'zero lines'

Figure 7: The Conditional Effect of *Black* on the Probability of Voting for Obama across the Policy Distances to both Obama and Romney.



Note: The meshed surface shows how the effect of being Black on the probability of voting for Obama varies with the policy distances of the respondent to Obama and Romney. The meshed surface is shaded red when the effect is statistically significant at the 95% level and blue otherwise. The solid colored 'zero surface' is equivalent to the 'zero lines' in Figure 6 and helps to indicate if and when the effect of Black is 0. Figure 7 is based on the results in Model 3 of Table 6.

in Figure 6 and helps to indicate when the effect of being Black is different from zero. When the meshed surface is above the zero surface, Black people are more likely to vote for Obama than White people. When it is below the zero surface, Black people are less likely to vote for Obama than White people.

The information shown in Figure 7 strongly supports the points we've already made. The fact that

¹The sloping effect lines shown in the two panels of Figure 6 essentially capture two lines going across the meshed surface in Figure 7, one for when *Policy Distance to Romney* is 2.07 and one for when *Policy Distance to Obama* is 2.30.

the meshed surface slopes up to the right indicates that relative Black support for Obama increases with policy distance to Obama. This is consistent with the idea that Black people continue to vote for the Black candidate, Obama, even when he is policy distant from them but that White people reduce their support for Obama in the same circumstances. This is in line with our claim that Black voters are much more likely to privilege identity representation and impose a smaller electoral penalty on the Black candidate for poor policy representation than White people. The fact that the meshed surface also slopes down to the left indicates that relative Black support for Obama decreases with policy distance to Romney. This fits with the idea that White people respond more to increases in Romney's policy distance by voting for Obama than Black voters. This results in the pro-Obama gap between Black voters and White voters shrinking. In fact, the statistically significant negative effect of being Black shown in the bottom left corner of Figure 7 indicates that White people are actually more likely to vote for Obama than Black people when they're close in the policy space to Obama and distant from Romney. These particular results again indicate that White people impose a larger electoral penalty on candidates who provide poor policy representation, even when those candidates share their same racial background.

In sum, the results with regard to vote choice presented here largely mirror the results reported in the main text with respect to feeling thermometer scores for the two presidential candidates in the 2012 US presidential elections.

Online Appendix C: Racial Resentment Amongst White Voters

In the main text, we measured the group consciousness of White voters in terms of linked fate (Dawson, 1994; Gay and Tate, 1998; Simien, 2005; White, 2007; McClain et al., 2009). Here we measure the group consciousness of White voters in terms of racial resentment or ‘symbolic racism’ (Kinder and Sanders, 1996). Following existing studies, our measure of racial resentment is based on four survey questions:

1. “Irish, Italians, Jewish 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.”
3. “Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve.”
4. “It’s really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as Whites.”

Each survey question is measured on a 1 – 5 scale, where 1 indicates that the respondent ‘strongly agrees’ with the statement, 3 indicates that the respondent ‘neither agrees nor disagrees’ with the statement, and 5 indicates that the respondent ‘strongly disagrees’ with the statement. Where necessary, we reversed the values of these scales (items 1 and 4) so that higher numbers always indicate greater racial resentment. We then measured a respondent’s level of racial resentment as the average of these four re-scaled variables. While Black respondents can also exhibit racial resentment (Orey, 2004; Orey et al., 2012; Zigerell, 2015; Kam and Burge, 2018, 2019), we focus here on racial resentment amongst White voters only. To keep things simple, we create a dichotomous *Racial Resentment* variable that is coded 1 if a White respondent has an above average (> 3.64) racial resentment score and 0 otherwise. The results of our new analysis are shown in Table 7. We first use these results to calculate the marginal effect of *Policy Distance* for different scenarios. The resulting information is presented in Figure 8.

As before, White voters always care about policy representation and thus impose a punishment on candidates who are policy incongruent. This is indicated by the fact that the marginal effect of *Policy Distance* is negative and statistically significant in all four cells in Figure 8. Consistent with our previous

Table 7: Policy, Racial Resentment, and Support for Barack Obama and Mitt Romney among White Voters in the 2012 US Presidential Elections

Dependent Variable: *Feeling Thermometer*, 0 – 100

	Obama	Romney
<i>Policy Distance</i>	-7.48*** (0.38)	-7.05*** (0.36)
<i>Racial Resentment</i>	-7.36*** (1.31)	9.32*** (1.19)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Racial Resentment</i>	-0.95** (0.44)	-1.80*** (0.48)
<i>Controls</i>		
<i>Democrat</i>	18.47*** (0.99)	-13.11*** (1.00)
<i>Republican</i>	-10.71*** (1.00)	17.50*** (0.92)
<i>Age</i>	-0.02 (0.02)	0.15*** (0.02)
<i>Female</i>	0.83 (0.75)	0.96 (0.73)
<i>Above Median Income</i>	0.56 (0.80)	0.58 (0.78)
<i>High School</i>	0.64 (1.65)	2.93* (1.61)
<i>Undergraduate</i>	1.73 (1.79)	5.20*** (1.75)
<i>Graduate</i>	4.87** (1.89)	4.21** (1.85)
<i>Constant</i>	68.47*** (2.30)	46.63*** (2.26)
Observations	2,931	2,931
R^2	0.64	0.60

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Note: Results are based on a seemingly unrelated regression.

claims, we again find strong evidence that White voters care relatively more about policy representation than Black voters. This is because the absolute magnitude of the marginal effect of *Policy Distance* reported in Figure 8 is always much larger than what we saw in the main text for Black voters. Just as we saw when we operationalized group consciousness in terms of linked fate, there's some evidence that White voters who exhibit racial resentment impose a larger penalty on a Black candidate (Obama) who's distant from them in the policy space than other White voters. To be specific, a one unit increase in *Policy Distance* is associated

Figure 8: The Conditional Marginal Effect of Increased Policy Distance by Racial Resentment on Support for Obama and Romney among White Voters

		Presidential Candidate		Difference
		Obama (Black)	Romney (White)	
Racial Resentment	No	-7.48*** (-8.23, -6.74) 60.88	-7.05*** (-7.76, -6.34) 40.24	0.43 (-0.56, 1.43)
	Yes	-8.43** (-9.05, -7.82) 35.71	-8.85*** (-9.61, -8.08) 59.70	-0.41 (-1.36, 0.53)
Difference (Interaction Effect)		-0.95** (-1.81, -0.09)	-1.80*** (-2.74, -0.85)	

Note: 95% two-tailed confidence intervals are shown in parentheses. The small blue numbers in the bottom right corner of each cell indicate the mean level of support for the candidates among White voters with and without racial resentment. The ‘Difference (Interaction Effect)’ row indicates the differences in the effect of increased policy distance for White respondents who exhibit racial resentment as opposed to White respondents who do not for each presidential candidate; they are equivalent to the interaction term coefficients in Table 7. The ‘Difference’ column indicates the differences in the effect of policy distance when the presidential candidate is Romney (White) rather than Obama (Black) for White respondents who differ in their level of racial resentment. The information shown here is based on the results in Table 7.

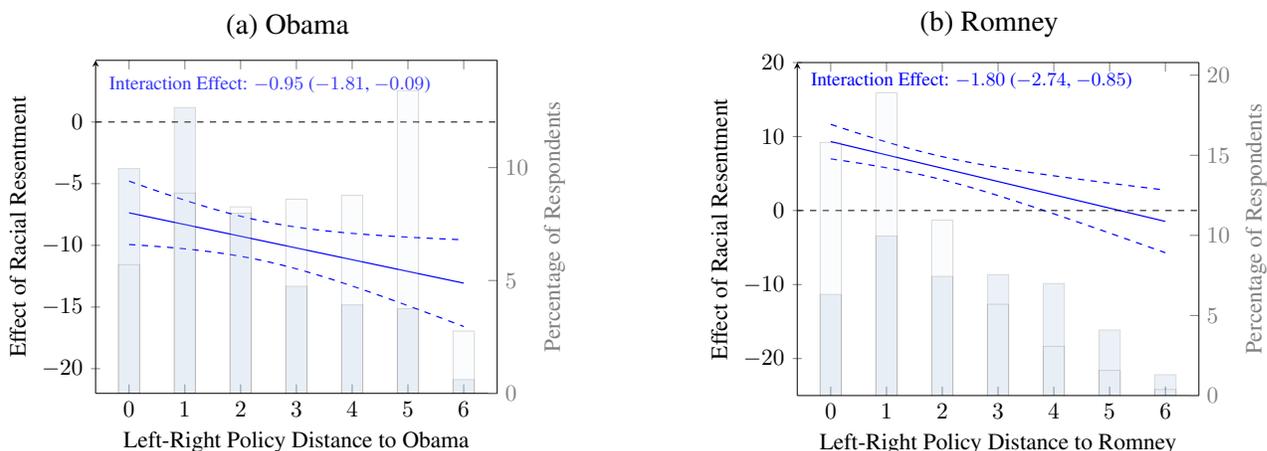
with an 8.43 unit reduction in support for Obama among White voters who exhibit racial resentment and a 7.48 unit reduction among other White voters. This difference (-0.95) is statistically significant. This might suggest that White voters who exhibit racial resentment are willing to penalize a Black candidate for being policy incongruent more than other White voters. However, we again suggest that not too much should be read into this. The main reason for this is that White voters who exhibit racial resentment also impose a larger penalty than other White voters on the White candidate. Indeed, the difference (-1.80) is, in fact, twice as large for the White candidate. For whatever reason, White voters who exhibit racial resentment seem to care slightly more about policy representation than other White voters. Importantly, there’s no statistically or substantively significant evidence that any White voters impose a larger electoral punishment for being policy incongruent on Black candidates than White candidates. This is indicated by the fact that the differences reported in the ‘Difference’ column are not statistically significant and are relatively small.

Overall, there's limited evidence that White voters, including those who exhibit racial resentment, are willing to trade off policy representation for better identity representation when evaluating political candidates.

What about the effect of racial resentment on candidate support? In Figure 9, we show the effect of racial resentment on support for (a) Obama and (b) Romney among White voters across the observed range of *Policy Distance*. The dashed blue lines represent two-tailed 95% confidence intervals. The effect line essentially captures the difference in support for the identified candidate between White voters who exhibit racial resentment and White voters who don't. Thus, positive values indicate that White voters who exhibit racial resentment support the identified candidate more.

The effect plot in panel (a) indicates that White voters who exhibit racial resentment always display significantly less support for the Black candidate Obama than White voters who don't exhibit racial resentment. The magnitude of this negative effect increases as Obama becomes more policy incongruent. This is consistent with the idea that White voters who exhibit racial resentment penalize Obama more for increased policy distance than other White voters. In effect, White voters with strong racial resentment weigh concerns with policy representation more than other White voters when evaluating a Black candidate. The effect plot in panel (b) indicates that, so long as Romney isn't too policy incongruent (*Ideological Distance* < 3.83),

Figure 9: The Effect of *Racial Resentment* across *Policy Distance* on Support for Obama and Romney among White Voters



Note: The two histograms in each panel show the percentage of White respondents who either exhibit racial resentment (light) or do not exhibit racial resentment (dark) at different levels of policy distance to the presidential candidates. The vertical axis for the histograms is shown the right of each panel.

support for Romney is significantly higher among White voters who exhibit racial resentment than other White voters. However, this difference disappears as the policy distance to Romney grows. This suggests that White voters with strong racial resentment value identity representation and prefer the White candidate more than other White voters but not if this comes at too large of a cost for policy representation.

All of these results are consistent with those we found in the main text when we operationalized group consciousness in terms of linked fate.

Online Appendix D: Objective Candidate Policy Positions

In the main text, *Policy Distance* is measured on a 0 – 6 scale and captures the absolute policy distance between the respondent’s self-placement on the left-right dimension and the respondent’s placement of Obama or Romney on the same dimension. Respondents are asked to place themselves and the two candidates on a 1 – 7 scale, where 1 indicates they are extremely liberal, 4 indicates they are moderate, and 7 indicates they are extremely conservative. In the main text, we stated that scholars sometimes criticize the use of candidate placement by respondents because respondents tend to place candidates they feel close to near them in the policy space. We argued that this isn’t a problem in this study because we’re interested in how respondents trade off policy and identity concerns based on their own perceptions. We believe that this justifies our decision to measure *Policy Distance* in the way that we do. However, we now examine whether our inferences generalize to the situation where we measure *Policy Distance* as the absolute distance between the respondent’s placement and the ‘objective’ position of the candidates.

Of course, this requires that we know the ‘objective’ position of the candidates. This is, in a strict sense, not possible given the available data.² This is another reason for simply using the respondent’s own placement of the candidates. That said, we follow existing studies and identify the ‘objective’ position of the candidates as either (i) the mean candidate placement among all of the respondents or (ii) the mean candidate placement among the top 40% most educated respondents (Golder and Stramski, 2010; Alvarez and Nagler, 2004). The motivation for using only the most highly educated respondents to place the candidates comes from research showing that uninformed (uneducated) voters tend to place a candidate that they are unfamiliar with in the middle of the issue dimension rather than report no opinion at all (Alvarez and Franklin, 1994, 681-684). Using the most educated respondents to place the candidates is designed to ameliorate this problem. Obama’s ‘objective’ position is 2.62 if we look at all respondents and 2.39 if we restrict ourselves to the 40% most educated. Romney’s ‘objective’ position is 5.21 if we look at all respondents and 5.54 if we restrict ourselves to the 40% most educated. The fact that the candidate placements by the top 40% most educated are further from the center is consistent with the idea that the less informed or less educated have a tendency to place candidates who they may not know much about closer to the center. We calculate two

²Even if we ignore the data constraints that exist with our survey, how could we ever know what a candidate’s objective position is? Is it what they say it is? Is it what they actually do or how they vote on legislation? Is it their true preferences? Is it what other people think it is? Each of these things could be different. Which of them counts as the candidate’s ‘objective’ position?

‘alternative’ policy distance variables, *Policy Distance (Mean)* and *Policy Distance (40)*, that measure the absolute policy distance between the respondent’s self-placement and each of our two ‘objective’ measures of candidate position. In terms of summary statistics, the average policy distance to Obama is 2.26 if we use the respondent’s placement of Obama, 1.86 if we use the mean respondent placement of Obama, and 2.03 if we use the mean placement of Obama by the 40% most educated. And the average policy distance to Romney is 2.02 if we use the respondent’s placement of Obama, 1.45 if we use the mean respondent placement of Obama, and 1.62 if we use the mean placement of Obama by the 40% most educated.

The results of our new analysis are shown in Table 8. The first two columns report the original results shown in the main text. The next two columns show the results when we use *Policy Distance (Mean)*. And the last two columns show the results when we use *Policy Distance (40)*. The important thing to note is that the coefficients on the key independent variables in our new models have the same sign and level of statistical significance as those in our original models. In addition, they also have a similar magnitude to those we found in our original models. This suggests that our inferences are generally robust to using these

Table 8: Policy, Race, and Support for Barack Obama and Mitt Romney among Black People and among White People

Dependent Variable: *Feeling Thermometer*, 0 – 100

	Original Model		<i>Ideological Distance (Mean)</i>		<i>Ideological Distance (40)</i>	
	Obama	Romney	Obama	Romney	Obama	Romney
<i>Policy Distance</i>	-8.83*** (0.25)	-8.07*** (0.29)	-8.82*** (0.40)	-6.53*** (0.45)	-9.66*** (0.39)	-8.06*** (0.42)
<i>Black</i>	10.24*** (1.22)	-20.09*** (1.81)	9.08*** (1.65)	-19.19*** (1.81)	7.24*** (1.67)	-23.91*** (1.91)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Black</i>	7.46*** (0.62)	5.33*** (0.56)	9.43*** (0.89)	7.12*** (0.86)	10.01*** (0.84)	8.39*** (0.81)
<i>Controls</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Constant</i>	65.72*** (1.85)	54.08*** (1.94)	63.14*** (2.04)	47.19*** (2.10)	66.12*** (2.04)	51.93*** (2.10)
Observations	3,611	3,611	3,668	3,668	3,668	3,668
R^2	0.69	0.58	0.62	0.50	0.63	0.52

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Note: Results are based on a seemingly unrelated regression. We include the same control variables as shown in Table 1.

alternatives measures of candidate position and policy distance.

We can, of course, dig deeper into the results as we did in the main text. In Figure 10, we start by plotting the effect of being Black instead of White (solid blue line) on support for Obama (left) and Romney (Right) across the observed range of policy distance between the respondent and the candidate. The dashed blue lines represent two-tailed 95% confidence intervals. The effect line essentially captures the difference in the level of support for the candidates between Black voters and White voters. Thus, positive values indicate that Black voters support the identified candidate more than White voters, and negative values indicate that Black voters support the candidate less than White voters. The top two panels use our original measure of *Policy Distance* and are essentially equivalent to the panels shown in the main text in Figure 2. The middle two panels are based on the models where we use *Policy Distance (Mean)*. Finally, the bottom two panels are based on the models where we use *Policy Distance (40)*.

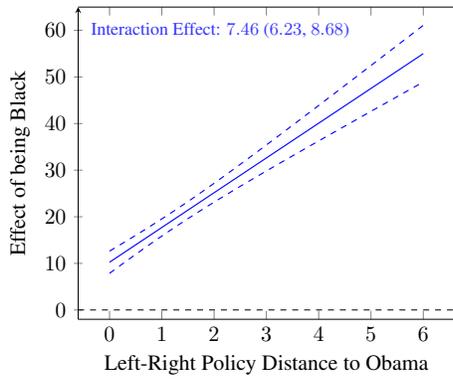
It should be immediately obvious that the effect plots are qualitatively similar across all three of our measures of ideological distance. The panels on the left indicate that Black voters always exhibit more support for Obama than White voters. Given that we control for the policy distance to Obama, this can be interpreted as Black voters caring about identity representation. The fact that the effect lines all slope upward indicates that the positive difference in support for Obama between Black and White voters grows with policy distance to Obama. This is consistent with our claim that Black voters care relatively less about policy representation compared to identity representation than White voters.

The three panels on the right are also very similar. For example, they all show that Black voters exhibit less support for Romney than White voters when they hold the same policy position as Romney. The upward sloping effect lines indicate that the negative difference in support for Romney between Black and White voters declines in magnitude as respondents become more policy incongruent to Romney. The difference in support for Romney between Black and White voters not only becomes 0 as policy distance to Romney increases but it also changes direction in all three panels. These results indicate that White voters care relatively more about policy representation as opposed to identity representation than Black voters. Essentially, White voters are willing to give the White candidate, Romney, less support than Black voters if he's too policy incongruent.

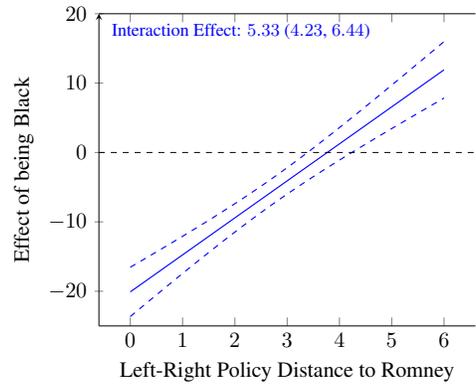
We can also examine the marginal effect of increased policy distance between the respondent and the candidates. In Figure 11, we show the marginal effect of each of our policy distance measures on candidate

Figure 10: The Effect of *Black* across *Policy Distance* on Support for Obama and Romney

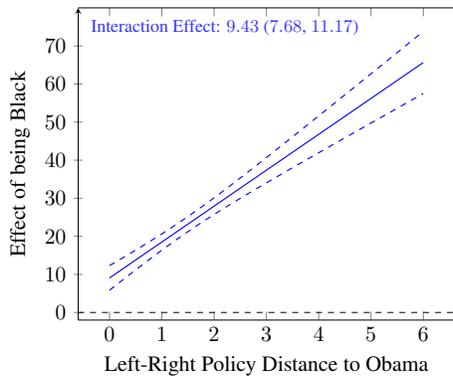
(a) Obama: *Policy Distance*



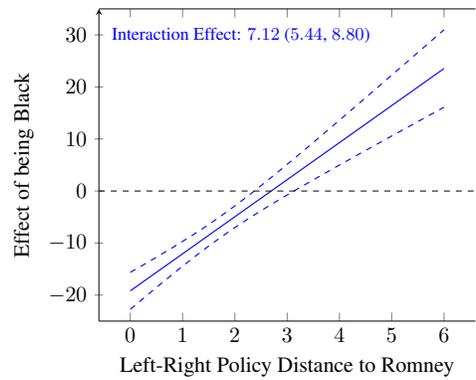
(b) Romney: *Policy Distance*



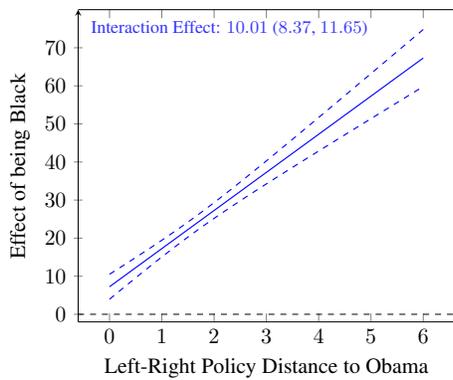
(c) Obama: *Policy Distance (Mean)*



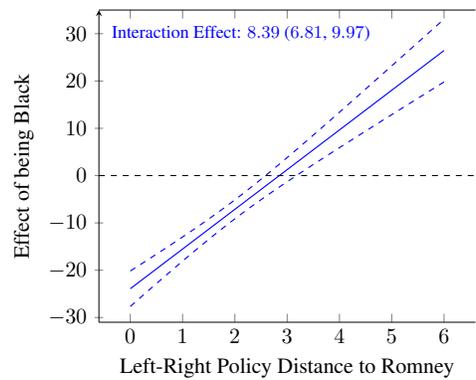
(d) Romney: *Policy Distance (Mean)*



(e) Obama: *Policy Distance (40)*



(f) Romney: *Policy Distance (40)*



support for different scenarios. The shaded cells indicate the marginal effect of policy distance for a White voter and a Black voter on their support for Obama and Romney. The “Difference (Interaction Effect)” row at the bottom indicates the difference in the effect of increased policy distance for Black as opposed to White voters for each presidential candidates. The “Difference” column indicates the differences in the effect of policy distance when the presidential candidate is Romney rather than Obama for White and Black respondents. The panel on the left is based on our original measure of *Policy Distance* and is equivalent to Figure 1 in the main text. The middle panel is based on *Policy Distance (Mean)*. The right panel is based on *Policy Distance (40)*.

The main difference with the results reported in the main text is that there’s no longer any evidence that Black voters care about policy representation irrespective of whether the candidate is Black or White. The marginal effect of policy distance is statistically insignificant (and positive) for Black voters for both Obama and Romney when we use *Policy Distance (Mean)* and *Policy Distance (40)* measures. In contrast, we continue to see that White voters impose a substantively meaningful electoral punishment on candidates who are policy incongruent. We also see that the magnitude of this punishment is larger when the candidate is Black than when the candidate is White.

Figure 11: The Conditional Marginal Effect of Increased Policy Distance by Linked Fate on Support for Obama and Romney among Black Voters and among White Voters

(a) Policy Distance

(b) Policy Distance (Mean)

(b) Policy Distance (40)

		Presidential Candidate		
		Obama (Black)	Romney (White)	Difference
Race of Voter	White	-8.83*** (-9.32, -8.35)	-8.07*** (-8.63, -7.51)	0.76** (0.04, 1.49)
	Black	-1.37** (-2.52, -0.23)	-2.74*** (-3.72, -1.75)	-1.36* (-2.84, 0.12)
Difference		7.46*** (6.23, 8.68)	5.33*** (4.23, 6.44)	

		Presidential Candidate		
		Obama (Black)	Romney (White)	Difference
Race of Voter	White	-8.82*** (-9.61, -8.04)	-6.53*** (-7.41, -5.65)	2.29*** (1.21, 3.37)
	Black	0.61 (-0.98, 2.19)	0.59 (-0.88, 2.06)	-0.02 (-1.96, 1.92)
Difference		9.43*** (7.68, 11.17)	7.12*** (5.44, 8.80)	

		Presidential Candidate		
		Obama (Black)	Romney (White)	Difference
Race of Voter	White	-9.66*** (-10.42, -8.89)	-8.06*** (-8.89, -7.23)	1.59*** (0.63, 2.56)
	Black	0.36 (-1.13, 1.84)	0.33 (-1.06, 1.72)	-0.03 (-1.74, 1.69)
Difference		10.01*** (8.37, 11.65)	8.39*** (6.81, 9.97)	

Note: 95% confidence intervals are shown in parentheses. The 'Difference' row indicates the differences in the effect of increased policy distance for Black respondents as opposed to White respondents. The 'Difference' column indicates the differences in the effect of policy distance when the presidential candidate is Romney (White) rather than Obama (Black) for White and Black respondents.

Online Appendix E: 2008 US Presidential Elections, Obama vs McCain

To test our hypotheses regarding a possible trade-off between policy and identity representation, it's necessary to have an election where one candidate is White and one candidate is Black. We're particularly interested in presidential elections because the literature on political representation at the presidential level has largely ignored issues of race. The empirical analysis in the main text focused on the 2012 US presidential election between Barack Obama, a Black candidate, and Mitt Romney, a White candidate. We focused on this particular election for both substantive and practical reasons. Substantively, this was an important election because it involved the first-ever Black incumbent president. On a more practical, but important, front, the data for this election from the 2012 [American National Election Studies \(2014\) Time Series Study](#) were unusual in two key respects that were beneficial for our empirical analysis. First, the 2012 data included an oversampling of African Americans. This made it more feasible for us to test our hypotheses, especially as they relate to the presence of interaction or conditional effects. No other ANES survey associated with the five presidential elections we examine in the main text and the various appendices (2008-2024) include an oversampling of Black voters. Second, the 2012 ANES survey is the only one in this time period to include information about racial group consciousness for both Black *and* White voters ([McClain et al., 2009](#); [Gay, Hochschild and White, 2016](#); [Schildkraut, 2017](#); [Jardina, 2019](#)). This was important for testing our claims about how the modifying effects of group consciousness varied by race.

The 2008 US presidential election also involved a Black candidate, Barack Obama, and a White candidate, John McCain. The 2008 [American National Election Studies \(2015\) Time Series Study](#) doesn't include an oversampling of African Americans. Nor does it include information about the racial group consciousness of Black and White voters. With these significant caveats in mind, we now set out to test our hypotheses in these additional elections.³ In the main text, we state that our hypotheses, where possible, actually receive even stronger support when we focus on the 2008 elections. We now demonstrate the empirical basis for this claim.

The results of our analysis, which is designed to match that in the main text, are shown in [Table 9](#). The

³The 2024 US presidential election also involved a Black candidate, Kamala Harris, and a White candidate, Donald Trump. Unlike the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections, though, the 2024 election didn't involve candidates of the same sex. Given the possible intersectional effects of race and sex when it comes to evaluating substantive and descriptive representation, we examine the 2024 election separately in [Online Appendix G](#).

Table 9: Policy, Race, and Support for Barack Obama and John McCain in the 2008 US Presidential Elections

Dependent Variable: *Feeling Thermometer*, 0 – 100

	Obama	McCain
<i>Policy Distance</i>	-8.13*** (0.51)	-7.08*** (0.54)
<i>Black</i>	8.78*** (2.18)	-10.76*** (2.78)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Black</i>	6.01*** (1.19)	1.67*** (0.90)
<i>Controls</i>		
<i>Democrat</i>	8.70*** (1.60)	-9.47*** (1.57)
<i>Republican</i>	-10.20*** (1.85)	12.17*** (1.62)
<i>Age</i>	-0.03 (0.04)	0.09** (0.04)
<i>Female</i>	3.28** (1.27)	0.53 (1.20)
<i>Above Median Income</i>	-1.28 (1.38)	0.32 (1.30)
<i>High School</i>	-2.56 (5.34)	-4.67 (5.02)
<i>Undergraduate</i>	1.40 (5.38)	-3.07 (5.05)
<i>Graduate</i>	7.24 (5.57)	-2.61 (5.23)
<i>Constant</i>	72.75*** (6.02)	66.91*** (5.76)
Observations	1,007	1,007
R^2	0.57	0.50

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Note: Results are based on a seemingly unrelated regression.

key thing to note from the table is that the coefficients on *Policy Distance*, *Black*, and *Policy Distance* × *Black* all have the predicted signs, which match those shown in the main text in Table 1 for the 2012 presidential elections, and are all statistically significant. As before, rather than interpret the coefficients directly, we start by using them to calculate the marginal effect of *Policy Distance* for different scenarios (Clark and Golder, 2023). This information is presented in Figure 12. The shaded cells indicate the marginal effect of *Policy Distance* for a White voter and a Black voter on their support for Obama and McCain. The small blue

Figure 12: The Conditional Marginal Effect of Increased Policy Distance by Race of Voter on Support for Obama and McCain in the 2008 US Presidential Elections

		Presidential Candidate		Difference
		Obama (Black)	McCain (White)	
Race of Voter	White	-8.13*** (-9.13, -7.14) 52.91	-7.08*** (-8.13, -6.03) 54.60	1.05 (-0.37, 2.48)
	Black	-2.12** (-4.22, -0.02) 84.44	-5.41*** (-6.89, -3.92) 36.29	-3.29** (-5.83, -0.74)
Difference (Interaction Effect)		6.01*** (3.69, 8.34)	1.67* (-0.09, 3.43)	

Note: 95% two-tailed confidence intervals are shown in parentheses. The small blue numbers in the bottom right corner of each cell indicate the mean level of support for the candidates among White respondents and Black respondents. The ‘Difference (Interaction Effect)’ row indicates the differences in the effect of increased policy distance for Black respondents as opposed to White respondents for each presidential candidate; they are equivalent to the interaction term coefficients in Table 9. The ‘Difference’ column indicates the differences in the effect of policy distance when the presidential candidate is McCain (White) rather than Obama (Black) for White and Black respondents. The information shown here is based on the results in Table 9.

numbers in the bottom right corner of each cell indicate the mean level of support for the candidates among White people and Black people. They provide a useful metric for evaluating the substantive magnitude of the reported effects of policy distance. The “Difference (Interaction Effect)” row at the bottom indicates the differences in the effect of increased policy distance for Black as opposed to White voters for each presidential candidate; they’re equivalent to the interaction term coefficients in Table 9. The “Difference” column indicates the differences in the effect of policy distance when the presidential candidate is McCain (White) rather than Obama (Black) for White and Black individuals.

As predicted, White voters care about policy representation and thus impose a penalty on candidates who are policy incongruent. This is indicated by the negative and statistically significant effects reported in the top row of Figure 12. Also as predicted, the magnitude of this penalty is slightly larger for Black candidates than White candidates. To be specific, each one unit increase in the policy distance between a

White voter and the candidate is associated with a reduction of 8.13 units of support when the candidate is Obama (Black) and 7.08 units of support when the candidate is McCain (White). These reductions in candidate support are both statistically and substantively significant. They equate to a 15.37% reduction in the average level of White support for Obama (52.91) and a 12.97% reduction in the average level of White support for Romney (54.60). The penalty imposed by White voters on the White candidate (McCain) for being policy incongruent is only slightly smaller (1.05 units) than the one they imposed on the Black candidate (Obama). The fact that this difference is statistically insignificant and substantively small suggests that White voters are unwilling to trade off lower levels of policy representation for increased identity representation. These particular results are very similar to the ones we reported for White voters in Figure 1. The one slight difference is that the reduction in the size of the penalty that White voters impose on the White, as opposed to the Black, candidate isn't statistically significant here. In other words, the results from the 2008 elections provide slightly stronger evidence that White voters are unwilling to trade off lower levels of policy representation for increased identity representation compared to the results from the 2012 elections.

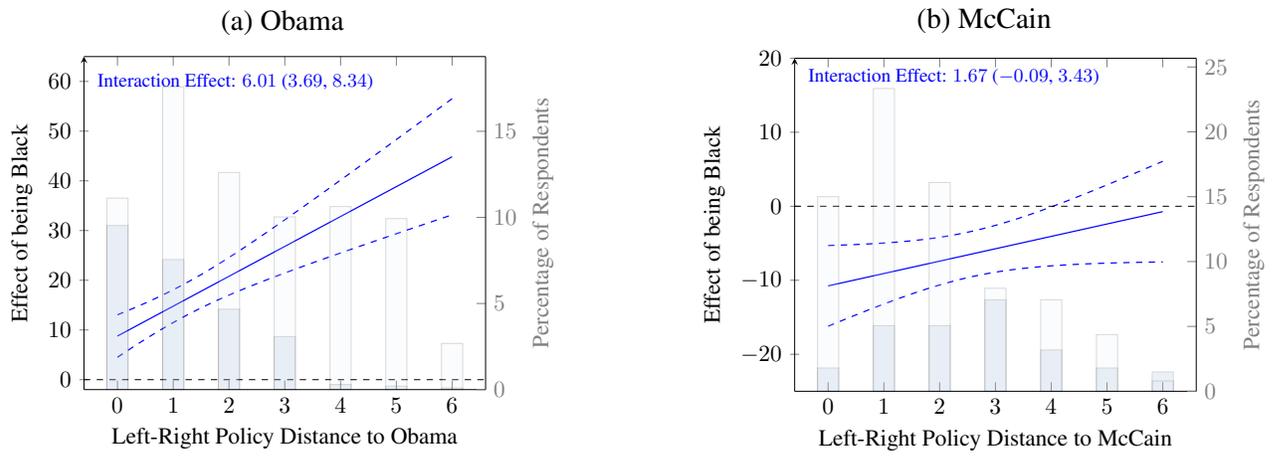
In line with our predictions and the results we reported in the main text, Black voters also care about policy representation and thus impose a penalty on candidates who are policy incongruent. This is indicated by the negative and statistically significant effects reported in the bottom row of Figure 12. As expected, this penalty is larger for White candidates than Black candidates. To be specific, each one unit increase in the policy distance between a Black voter and the candidate is associated with a statistically significant reduction of 2.12 units of support when the candidate is Obama (Black) and with a statistically significant reduction of 5.41 units when the candidate is McCain (White). The magnitude of the penalty on Obama, the Black candidate, is substantively very small; it equates to only a 2.51% reduction in the average level of Black support for Obama (84.44). In contrast, the magnitude of the penalty is much more meaningful for the White candidate, McCain. Here the penalty equates to a 14.90% reduction in the average level of Black support for McCain (36.29). In other words, the penalty imposed by Black voters on candidates for being policy incongruent is 3.29 units or 2.61 times larger when the candidate is White than when the candidate is Black. This difference is substantively large and suggests that Black voters are willing to trade off lower levels of policy representation for increased identity representation. Again, these particular results are very similar to the ones we reported for Black voters in Figure 1. The one slight difference is that the increase in the size of the penalty that Black voters impose on the White, as opposed to the Black, candidate is even larger in the 2008 elections than in the 2012 elections.

The evidence is also consistent with our prediction that Black voters don't care as much about policy representation as White voters when it comes to evaluating political candidates of different racial backgrounds. This is because the penalty imposed by Black voters on candidates who are policy incongruent is always much smaller than that imposed by White voters. To be specific, the penalty is 6.01 units or 73.9% smaller when the candidate is Black, and it is 1.67 units or 23.6% smaller when the candidate is White. The fact that the modifying effect of being Black on the effect of *Policy Distance* is smaller (27.8%) when the candidate is White (1.67) than when the candidate is Black (6.01) is also consistent with our expectations. Again, these particular results for the 2008 elections are very similar to the equivalent ones that we reported in the main text in Figure 1. In sum, we have very strong empirical support for our *Policy Distance (General)* and *Policy Distance (Identity) Hypotheses*.

What about the effect of race and hence identity representation on candidate support? In Figure 13, which is equivalent to Figure 2 in the main text, we show the effect of being Black instead of White (solid blue line) on support for Obama (panel a) and McCain (panel b) across the observed range of ideological distance between the respondent and the candidate. The dashed blue lines represent two-tailed 95% confidence intervals. The effect line essentially captures the difference in the level of support for the candidates between Black voters and White voters. Thus, positive values indicate that Black voters support the identified candidate more than White voters and negative values indicate that Black voters support the candidate less than White voters. The two histograms in each panel show the percentage of Black (dark) and White (light) respondents at different levels of policy distance to the presidential candidates.

As predicted, and in line with the results presented in the main text, Black voters always exhibit more support for Obama. This is indicated by the fact that the effect line in panel (a) is always above the dashed horizontal zero line and hence always positive. Given that we control for the policy distance to Obama, this suggests that voters care about identity representation. That the effect line in panel (a) slopes upward is consistent with our claim that the positive difference in support for Obama between Black and White voters grows with policy distance to Obama. To be specific, while Black voters exhibit 8.78 units more support for Obama than White voters when they are policy congruent with Obama, they exhibit fully 44.84 units more support when they are six units away from Obama's left-right policy position. The fact that the difference in support for Obama between Black and White voters increases so much with the policy distance to Obama is consistent with our claim that Black voters care relatively less about policy representation compared to identity representation than White voters. The evidence suggests that Black voters generally retain their

Figure 13: The Effect of *Black* across *Policy Distance* on Support for Obama and McCain in the 2008 US Presidential Elections



Note: The two histograms in each panel show the percentage of Black (dark) and White (light) respondents at different levels of policy distance to the presidential candidates. The vertical axis for the histograms is shown on the right of each panel.

support for the Black candidate, Obama, even when they disagree strongly with his policy position. In contrast, White voters increasingly reduce their support for Obama the more they disagree with his policy position. The information in Figure 13a for the 2008 presidential elections is very similar to that reported in Figure 2a for the 2012 presidential elections.

Also as predicted, Black people exhibit less support for McCain than White people when they hold the same policy position as McCain. This is indicated by the fact that the effect line in panel (b) is negative and statistically significant when *Policy Distance* is 0. As expected, the effect line in panel (b) slopes upward. This indicates that the negative difference in support for McCain between Black and White voters declines in magnitude as respondents become more policy incongruent from McCain. The difference in support for McCain between Black and White voters remains negative and statistically significant so long as the policy distance to McCain is less than 4.04; 91.56% of the estimation sample falls in this region of statistical significance. These results again indicate that White voters care relatively more about policy representation as opposed to identity representation than Black voters. Essentially, White voters pull their support for the White candidate, McCain, at higher rates than Black voters as the White candidate becomes more policy incongruent. This results in the gap in support for McCain between Black and White voters shrinking with policy distance. The information in Figure 13b for the 2008 presidential elections is similar

to that reported in Figure 2b for the 2012 presidential elections.

While our focus has been on interpreting the results with respect to the effects of policy and identity representation, it's worth noting that the results with respect to our control variables remain largely consistent with those in the existing literature and with those we presented in the main text. Democrats are more likely to support Obama and less likely to support McCain than independents, and Republicans are more likely to support McCain and less likely to support Obama than independents. Older respondents exhibit more support for McCain, while women provide more support for Obama than men. Income has no significant effect on support for Obama or McCain.

The bottom line is that the results from the 2008 US presidential elections are remarkably similar to those that we presented in the main text for the 2012 US presidential elections. Both sets of results are consistent with our theoretical predictions. If anything, the results for the 2008 elections are even more supportive than those presented in the main text from the 2012 elections.

Online Appendix F: 2016 US Presidential Election, Clinton vs Trump

In the conclusion of the main text, we note that scholars might conduct alternative studies to examine the conditions under which other identity groups besides Black voters might engage in a policy-identity representation trade-off. As a step in this direction, we note that the 2016 US presidential elections involved a contest between a female candidate, Hillary Clinton, and a male candidate, Donald Trump. We might wonder whether female and male voters used policy and identity concerns differently when evaluating the candidates in this election.

Based on the theoretical story we presented in the main text, there are several reasons to think that female voters won't exhibit the same pattern of demand for different forms of political representation as Black voters. In particular, there are reasons to think that identity representation won't matter as much for women as it does for Black voters, and, as a result, women won't be as willing to trade off policy representation for increased identity representation.

From a psychological perspective, we argued that members of groups that are politically underrepresented and who have been subject to a history of mistrust and discrimination should place a higher value on identity representation than members of other groups. This suggests that Black voters will care more about identity representation than White voters, and that women will care more about it than men. However, scholars such as [Mansbridge \(1999\)](#) note that the history of mistrust and discrimination has been significantly more severe on the issue of race than it has been on the issue of sex. As a result, we wouldn't expect female voters to value identity representation as much as Black voters.

From a political resource perspective, we argued that legislators have little incentive to respond to Black voters because they rarely comprise a large enough voting block, given the majoritarian electoral system, to be politically pivotal. If Black candidates are (perceived to be) more responsive to Black voters than White candidates, which is consistent with previous research ([Lublin, 1997](#); [Canon, 1999](#); [Hutchings, McClerking and Charles, 2004](#); [Grose, 2011](#); [Broockman, 2013](#); [Harden, 2016](#); [Stout, 2018](#); [English, Pearson and Strolovitch, 2019](#)), then identity representation concerns will be especially salient to Black voters. From the same political resource perspective, things are different for women. Given their group size and geographic dispersion, women are much more likely to be electorally pivotal. As a result, all legislators have incentives to be responsive to women's interests. In these circumstances, identity representation becomes

relatively less important for women. Consistent with the idea that female voters don't demand identity representation as much as Black voters, studies show that female and male legislators, unlike Black and White legislators, don't differ significantly in their desire to supply identity representation [Harden \(2016\)](#).

There are other reasons why identity representation might not matter as much for women as it does for Black voters. One is that Black identity tends to be more cohesive or homogenous than female identity. This is reflected in voting behavior. For example, the partisan racial gap whereby Black voters tend to align with the Democratic party more than White voters is significantly larger than the partisan sex gap whereby women tend to align with the Democratic party more than men ([Kaufmann, Petrocik and Shaw, 2008](#); [England et al., 2023](#)). Moreover, the gap between Black and White people with respect to political attitudes is significantly larger than the gap in political attitudes between men and women. There's also evidence that party affiliation tends to overwhelm sex as a predictor of legislator behavior and responsiveness. These factors all suggest that Black voters will place a higher value on identity representation than women ([Swers and Rouse, 2011](#); [Wolak, 2020](#); [England et al., 2023](#)). It follows that Black voters will also be more willing to engage in a policy-identity trade-off when evaluating political candidates than women.

What do we find? In Table 10, we show results from a seemingly unrelated regression model that matches the one for 2012 shown in Table 1 in the main text except for the fact that we now include the interaction term *Policy Distance* × *Female*. The substantively small and statistically insignificant coefficients on *Policy Distance* × *Female* for both Clinton and Trump indicates that male and female voters didn't impose different penalties on policy incongruent candidates. We do, however, continue to see that Black voters impose a substantively and statistically significantly smaller penalty on policy distant candidates than White voters. This is indicated by the positive and statistically significant coefficients on *Policy Distance* × *Black* for both candidates.

In Figure 14, we show how the marginal effect of *Policy Distance* on support for the two presidential candidates varies across male and female voters from both racial groups. In line with our previous analyses, panel (a) shows that White voters impose a substantively large and statistically significant penalty on policy incongruent candidates. There's no evidence that the size of this penalty differs across male and female voters or across the female and male candidates. In sum, there's no evidence that White men or White women engaged in a policy-identity representation trade-off at these elections. The evidence presented in panel (b) is also consistent with our previous analyses showing that Black voters always impose a smaller penalty on policy incongruent candidates. This is because the magnitude of the estimated effects in each cell

Table 10: Policy, Gender, and Support for Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in the 2016 US Presidential Elections

Dependent Variable: *Feeling Thermometer*, 0 – 100

	Clinton	Trump
<i>Policy Distance</i>	−9.40*** (0.52)	−9.64*** (0.72)
<i>Female</i>	2.74 (2.01)	−3.67 (2.38)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Female</i>	0.07 (0.65)	0.96 (0.88)
<i>Black</i>	4.28 (3.24)	−31.02*** (6.01)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Black</i>	8.32*** (1.93)	6.15*** (1.78)
<i>Controls</i>		
<i>Democrat</i>	19.02*** (1.65)	−10.67*** (2.05)
<i>Republican</i>	−6.64*** (1.74)	16.29*** (2.04)
<i>Age</i>	0.09** (0.03)	0.05 (0.04)
<i>Above Median Income</i>	1.44 (1.27)	−5.18*** (1.56)
<i>High School</i>	−5.10 (3.94)	6.77 (4.86)
<i>Undergraduate</i>	0.42 (4.02)	−2.44 (4.96)
<i>Graduate</i>	3.32 (4.08)	−3.58 (5.05)
<i>Constant</i>	51.03*** (4.61)	56.79*** (5.75)
Observations	1, 257	1, 257
R^2	0.64	0.52

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Note: Results are based on a seemingly unrelated regression. Data come from the 2016 American National Election Studies (2019).

of panel (b) are statistically significantly smaller than the estimated effects shown in the equivalent cells of panel (a). In fact, while the estimated penalty imposed by Black voters on the policy incongruent presidential candidates is always negative, it's only statistically significant for Black men in the case of Donald Trump. In effect, there's clear evidence that Black voters, whether male or female, don't care as much about policy

Figure 14: The Effect of *Policy Distance* across *Female* for White and Black voters on Support for Clinton and Trump in the 2016 US Presidential Elections

		(a) White Voters			(b) Black Voters		
		Presidential Candidate			Presidential Candidate		
		Clinton (Female)	Trump (Male)	Difference	Clinton (Female)	Trump (Male)	Difference
Sex of Voter	Male	-9.40*** (-10.41, -8.38)	-9.64*** (-11.06, -8.22)	-0.25 (-1.95, 1.45)	-1.08 (-4.87, 2.71)	-3.50** (-6.98, -0.01)	-2.42 (-7.51, 2.68)
	Female	-9.32*** (-10.38, -8.26)	-8.68*** (-10.01, -7.35)	-0.64 (-1.01, 2.29)	-1.01 (-4.74, 2.72)	-2.54 (-6.00, 0.92)	-1.53 (-6.57, 3.51)
Difference (Interaction Effect)		0.07 (-1.20, 6.69)	0.96 (-0.77, 2.69)		0.07 (-1.20, 6.69)	0.96 (-0.77, 2.69)	

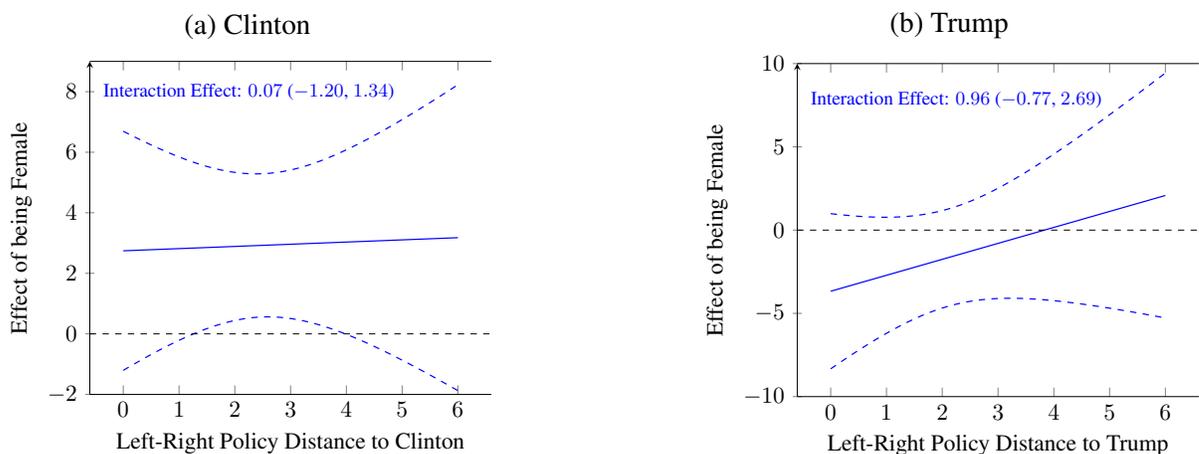
Note: 95% two-tailed confidence intervals are shown in parentheses. The ‘Difference (Interaction Effect)’ row indicates the differences in the effect of increased policy distance for Female respondents as opposed to Male respondents across White (panel a) and Black (panel b) voters for each presidential candidate; they’re equivalent to the interaction term coefficients in Table 10. The ‘Difference’ column indicates the differences in the effect of policy distance when the presidential candidate is Trump (Male) rather than Clinton (Female) for male and female respondents. The information shown here is based on the results in Table 10.

representation as White voters. Once again, there's no evidence that the penalty imposed by Black men is different from that imposed by Black women. Nor is there any evidence that Black men or Black women impose a different penalty depending on whether the candidate is male or female. In sum, there's no evidence that Black men or Black women engaged in a policy-identity representation trade-off at these elections.

While we find no evidence of a policy-identity representation trade-off when it comes to men and women in the 2016 US presidential election, we note that we don't have data on the level of group consciousness for male and female respondents. As a result, we can't rule out the possibility that male and female respondents with high levels of group consciousness might engage in such a trade-off. We should note at this point that our intersectional analysis in [Online Appendix G](#) of the 2024 US presidential election involving a Black female candidate and White male candidate finds that Black women are willing to make a substantive-descriptive representation trade-off. This isn't the case for Black men, White women, or White men. Taken together with the results in this appendix, we have suggestive evidence that sex and race interact to influence when particular identity groups are willing to trade off substantive representation for better descriptive representation. We encourage scholars to investigate this more fully in future research as the number of elections in which the candidates differ in terms of both race and sex increase.

Finally, let us briefly examine the effect of voter sex on candidate evaluations in the 2020 election. In [Figure 15](#), we show how the effect of voter sex (being female as opposed to male) on support for Clinton

Figure 15: The Effect of *Female* across *Ideological Distance* on Support for Clinton and Trump in the 2016 US Presidential Elections



(panel a) and Trump (panel b) varied across the observed range of policy distance between the voter and the candidate. The effect line captures the difference in the level of support for the candidates between female and male voters. Thus, positive values indicate that female voters support the identified candidate more than male voters, and negative values indicate that female voters support the candidate less than male voters. As we've already indicated, the coefficients on *Policy Distance* × *Female* for both candidates are small and statistically insignificant. This means that the slopes of the two effect lines are small and not statistically significant, indicating that the gap in support for the two candidates between female and male voters doesn't vary with policy distance to the candidates. Given the lack of conditionality and the fact that the effect lines are almost always statistically insignificant, the information in panels (a) and (b) indicate that male and female voters didn't differ in their support for either candidate in the 2016 presidential election.⁴ As [Online Appendix G](#) indicates, very similar results are obtained for White voters in the 2024 US presidential election. There's very little difference in how White women and White men evaluated the two candidates in that election. As previously indicated, though, we do find significant differences in the 2024 election between how Black women evaluate the Black female candidate and how Black men evaluate the Black female candidate. Black women go easier on the Black female candidate than Black men, especially as policy incongruence with the Black female candidate grows. This again is consistent with an intersectional relationship between race and sex when it comes to evaluating political candidates for policy and identity representation.

⁴It's true that panel (a) shows that women are significantly more likely to support Clinton than men when the policy distance to Clinton is moderate. However, we shouldn't read anything into this as we know that the effect of being female doesn't vary statistically significantly with policy distance to Clinton. If we remove the statistically insignificant interaction term *Policy Distance* × *Female*, we find no evidence that men and women differ in their support for the candidates.

Online Appendix G: 2024 US Presidential Elections, Harris vs Trump

To test our hypotheses regarding a possible trade-off between policy and identity representation, it's necessary to have an election where one candidate is White and one candidate is Black. We're particularly interested in presidential elections because the literature on political representation at the presidential level has largely ignored issues of race. The empirical analysis in the main text focused on the 2012 US presidential election between Barack Obama, a Black candidate, and Mitt Romney, a White candidate. We focused on this particular election for both substantive and practical reasons. Substantively, this was an important election because it involved the first-ever Black incumbent president. On a more practical, but important, front, the data for this election from the 2012 [American National Election Studies \(2014\) Time Series Study](#) were unusual in two key respects that were beneficial for our empirical analysis. First, the 2012 data included an oversampling of African Americans. This made it more feasible for us to test our hypotheses, especially as they relate to the presence of interaction or conditional effects. No other ANES survey associated with the five presidential elections we examine in the main text and the various appendices (2008-2024) include an oversampling of Black voters. Second, the 2012 ANES survey is the only one in this time period to include information about racial group consciousness for both Black *and* White voters ([McClain et al., 2009](#); [Gay, Hochschild and White, 2016](#); [Schildkraut, 2017](#); [Jardina, 2019](#)). This was important for testing our claims about how the modifying effects of group consciousness varied by race.

The 2024 US presidential election offers a third opportunity after the 2008 and 2012 elections to test our hypotheses regarding a possible trade-off between policy and identity representation. This is because the 2024 election also involved a race between a Black candidate (Kamala Harris) and a White candidate (Donald Trump). There are at least two important characteristics, though, that make the 2024 election different from the 2008 and 2012 elections and that should, therefore, be taken into account.

The first characteristic concerns Kamala Harris's perceived racial identity. Harris's mixed-race heritage – half-Black (Jamaican) and half South Asian (Indian) – was a significant issue during the campaign. In an interview with the National Association of Black Journalists in 2024, Trump questioned Harris's identification as Black, claiming that she “happened to turn Black” only a few years ago ([Oladipo, 2024](#)). Some Black political commentators, such as Candace Owens, and Black celebrities, such as Janet Jackson, also questioned the authenticity of Harris's ‘Blackness’ ([Watts, 2024](#)). In a CBS News focus group conducted

in a barber shop just prior to the election, some Black men suggested that Harris's identification as Black during the campaign was just a cynical ploy to get Black votes (CBS News, 2024). An opinion poll in October 2024 found that less than half of Black respondents (47%) identified Harris as Black or African American and that 8% identified her as South Asian or Indian American (Shell, 2025). In contrast, 60% of Black respondents identified Obama, the Black candidate in the 2008 and 2012 elections, as Black and none identified him as White.⁵ The opinion polls, which were reflected in the actual election results, showed that Kamala Harris was much less popular among Black voters than was Obama. There's considerable evidence to support the idea that the Black electorate's attraction to Obama based on a shared racial identity wasn't present to anywhere near the same degree for Harris (Shell, 2025). Given the issues with Harris's racial identity, it's not unreasonable to think that some Black voters might not perceive Kamala Harris as providing high levels of descriptive representation. In effect, some Black voters might be less willing to trade off substantive representation for descriptive representation in the 2024 presidential election than they were in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections.

The second characteristic that makes the 2024 election different from the ones in 2008 and 2012 is that the candidates in the 2024 elections differed on both race *and* sex. In 2008 and 2012, the competing candidates were both men, allowing us to focus solely on identity representation as it relates to race. The 2024 election requires that we adopt a more intersectional approach and consider identity representation as it relates to both race and sex (Block Jr., Golder and Golder, 2023). As a Black female candidate, Kamala Harris provides greater descriptive representation to Black women than she does to Black men, White women, or White men. As a result, we would expect that it's Black women who will be most willing to trade off substantive representation for descriptive representation. In effect, Black women should go especially easy on Kamala Harris with respect to ideological distance. White men, who differ from Kamala Harris with respect to both race and sex, should impose a higher penalty on Kamala Harris for ideological distance than Donald Trump. It's not immediately obvious to us how the two other identity groups, Black men and White women, will 'process' policy distance with respect to the two candidates. Much depends

⁵Barack Obama's mixed-race heritage – Black father and White mother – was raised to some extent during his presidential campaigns. However, as these 2024 survey responses indicated, he was rarely ever considered White. He was always considered the Black candidate. Mixed-race heritage based on Black and White ancestry is somewhat common in the United States and there has been a history, intimately tied to the legacy of slavery, of treating anyone with African ancestry from such a background as Black. This was the basis of the 'one-drop rule' in the South, which identified an individual with a mixed Black-White heritage as Black if they had a single drop of 'Black blood.' Individuals with different mixed-race backgrounds, such as Kamala Harris, aren't viewed through the same historical lens. It's less obvious that such a mixed-race individual with African ancestry will necessarily identify or, more importantly, be identified by voters as Black. This is important when it comes to providing identity representation.

on whether they place more weight on their racial or sex affinity with the candidates. We leave this as an empirical question.

With these two important characteristics of the 2024 election noted, we conduct an intersectional analysis to evaluate our hypotheses. Our new model specification is shown below, where *Candidate* is either Harris or Trump:

$$\begin{aligned}
\textit{Feeling Thermometer Candidate} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \textit{Policy Distance (Candidate)} + \beta_2 \textit{Black} + \beta_3 \textit{Female} \\
& + \beta_4 \textit{Policy Distance (Candidate)} \times \textit{Black} \\
& + \beta_5 \textit{Policy Distance (Candidate)} \times \textit{Female} \\
& + \beta_6 \textit{Black} \times \textit{Female} \\
& + \beta_7 \textit{Policy Distance (Candidate)} \times \textit{Black} \times \textit{Female} \\
& + \beta \textit{Controls} + \epsilon.
\end{aligned} \tag{10}$$

The results of our analysis are shown in Table 11. The key thing to note from the table is the presence of statistically significant coefficients on some of the interaction terms. This indicates evidence of intersectionality, especially as it relates to evaluating Kamala Harris (Block Jr., Golder and Golder, 2023). In particular, the statistically significant coefficient on *Policy Distance* × *Black* × *Female* in the Kamala Harris model indicates that the way race modifies the effect of policy distance on evaluations of Kamala Harris varies with voter sex (and equivalently, the way that sex modifies the effect of policy distance on evaluations of Kamala Harris varies with voter race.) As before, rather than interpret the coefficients directly, we use them to calculate the marginal effects of policy distance, race, and sex for different scenarios (Clark and Golder, 2023).

The Conditional Effect of Policy Distance

We start by examining the effect of *Policy Distance*. The marginal effect of *Policy Distance* is calculated as

$$\frac{\partial \textit{Feeling Thermometer}}{\partial \textit{Policy Distance}} = \beta_1 + \beta_4 \textit{Black} + \beta_5 \textit{Female} + \beta_7 \textit{Black} \times \textit{Female}. \tag{11}$$

Table 11: Policy, Race, and Support for Kamala Harris and Donald Trump in the 2024 US Presidential Elections

Dependent Variable: *Feeling Thermometer*, 0 – 100

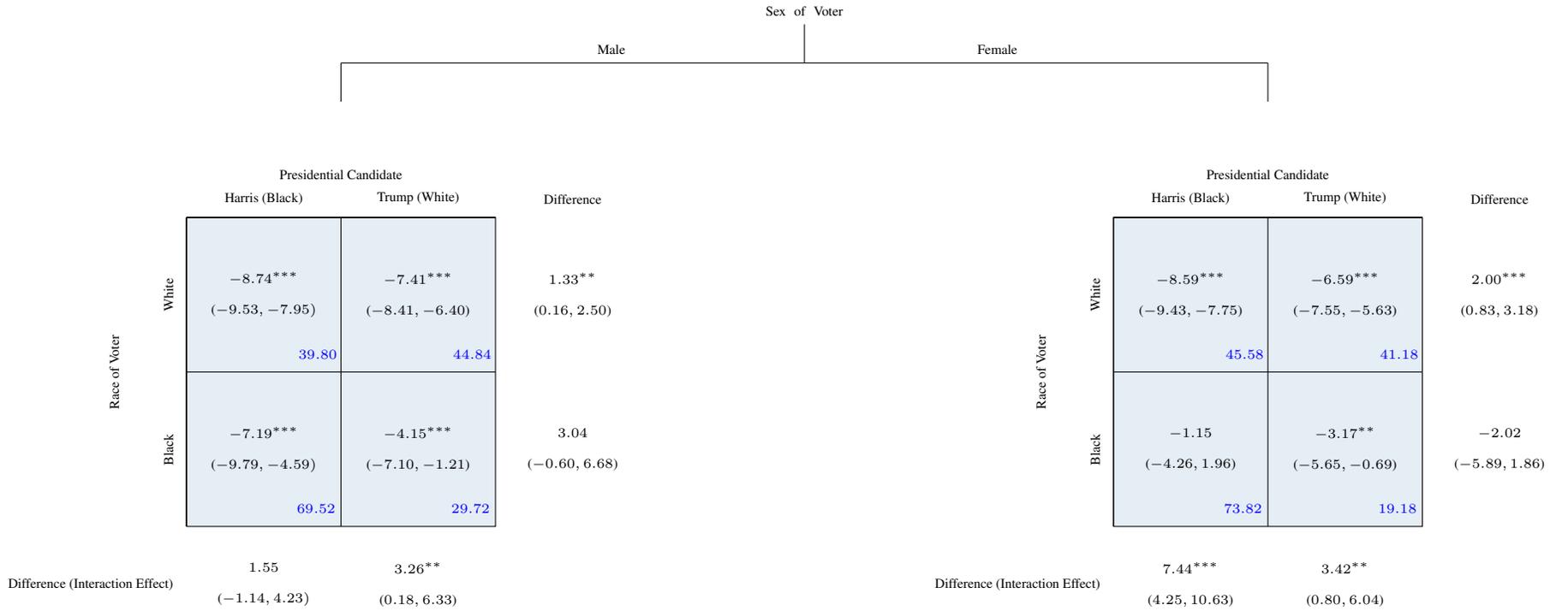
	Harris	Trump
<i>Policy Distance</i>	-8.74*** (0.40)	-7.41*** (0.51)
<i>Black</i>	9.64*** (3.43)	-10.29** (4.85)
<i>Female</i>	2.16 (1.55)	-3.24* (1.72)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Black</i>	1.55 (1.37)	3.26** (1.57)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Female</i>	0.15 (0.47)	0.82 (0.58)
<i>Black</i> × <i>Female</i>	-10.95** (4.54)	-4.38 (6.45)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Black</i> × <i>Female</i>	5.90*** (2.11)	0.16 (2.04)
<i>Controls</i>		
<i>Democrat</i>	22.14*** (1.23)	-16.51*** (1.48)
<i>Republican</i>	-14.70*** (1.38)	32.37*** (1.43)
<i>Age</i>	0.17*** (0.03)	-0.08*** (0.03)
<i>Above Median Income</i>	1.01 (0.99)	-3.62*** (1.14)
<i>High School</i>	6.17** (2.59)	-6.33** (2.95)
<i>Undergraduate</i>	10.04*** (2.68)	-12.18*** (3.07)
<i>Graduate</i>	10.99*** (2.75)	-13.10*** (3.16)
<i>Constant</i>	46.97*** (3.17)	67.70*** (3.59)
Observations	1,784	1,784
R^2	0.74	0.68

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Note: Results are based on a seemingly unrelated regression. Data come from the 2024 American National Election Studies (2025).

The shaded cells in the left table in Figure 16 indicate the marginal effects of *Policy Distance* for White men (β_1) and Black men ($\beta_1 + \beta_4$) on their support for Harris and Trump. The small blue numbers in the bottom right corner of each cell indicate the mean level of support for the candidates among White and Black men. The “Difference (Interaction Effect)” row at the bottom indicates the differences in the effect of increased policy distance for Black men as opposed to White men for each candidate; they are equivalent to the inter-

Figure 16: The Conditional Marginal Effect of Increased Policy Distance by Race and Sex of Voter on Support for Harris and Trump in the 2024 US Presidential Election



action term coefficients on *Policy Distance* \times *Black* in Table 11 i.e. β_4 . The “Difference” column indicates the differences in the effect of policy distance when the presidential candidate is Trump (White) rather than Harris (Black) for White and Black men. The shaded cells in the right table are similar to those in the left table except that they relate to White women ($\beta_1 + \beta_5$) and Black women ($\beta_1 + \beta_4 + \beta_5 + \beta_7$). The “Difference (Interaction Effect)” row at the bottom indicates the differences in the effect of increased policy distance for Black women as opposed to White women for each candidate; they’re equivalent to the sum of the coefficients on the interaction terms *Policy Distance* \times *Black* and *Policy Distance* \times *Black* \times *Female* in Table 11 i.e. $\beta_4 + \beta_7$. The “Difference” column indicates the differences in the effect of policy distance when the presidential candidate is Trump (White) rather than Harris (Black) for White and Black women.

As predicted, White voters, both male and female, care about policy representation and thus impose a penalty on candidates who are policy incongruent. This is indicated by the negative and statistically significant effects reported in the top rows of both tables in Figure 16. Also as predicted, the magnitude of this penalty is slightly larger for the Black candidate than the White candidate. To be specific, each one unit increase in the policy distance between a White man and the candidate is associated with a reduction of 8.74 units of support when the candidate is Harris (Black) and 7.41 units of support when the candidate is Trump (White). These reductions in candidate support are both statistically and substantively significant. They equate to a 21.95% reduction in the average level of White male support for Harris (39.80) and a 16.52% reduction in the average level of White male support for Trump (44.84). Results are similar for White women. Each one unit increase in the policy distance between a White woman and the candidate is associated with a reduction of 8.59 units of support when the candidate is Harris (Black) and 6.59 units of support when the candidate is Trump (White). These reductions in candidate support are again both statistically and substantively significant. They equate to a 18.73% reduction in the average level of White female support for Harris (45.58) and a 16.00% reduction in the average level of White female support for Trump (41.18). The penalty imposed by White voters on the White candidate is smaller than the penalty imposed by White voters on the Black candidate. For White men, it’s 1.33 units or 15.21% smaller. For White women, it’s 2.00 units or 23.31% smaller.⁶ These differences across the candidates are statistically significant and provide some evidence that White voters were willing to trade off lower levels of policy representation for increased identity representation in the 2024 election. As we’ll see shortly, though, these

⁶These particular results suggest that White men aren’t more willing to trade off policy representation for identity representation than White women. This is despite the White candidate in the race being a man. This suggests that sex doesn’t modify how White voters use policy distance to evaluate the candidates.

differences are minimal compared to those exhibited by Black women. Overall, the results regarding the effect of policy distance for White voters in the 2024 election are qualitatively very similar to the ones we reported for White voters in Figure 1 for the 2012 election in the main text.

We now turn to Black voters. In line with our predictions and the results we reported in the main text, Black men also care about policy representation and thus impose a penalty on candidates who are policy incongruent. This is indicated by the negative and statistically significant effects reported in the bottom row of the left table in Figure 16. Each one unit increase in the policy distance between a Black man and the candidate is associated with a reduction of 7.19 units of support when the candidate is Harris (Black female) and 4.15 units of support when the candidate is Trump (White male). These reductions in candidate support are both statistically and substantively significant. They equate to a 10.34% reduction in the average level of Black male support for Harris (69.52) and a 13.97% reduction in the average level of Black male support for Trump (29.72). Interestingly, the punishment that Black men impose on the White male candidate for policy distance is 3.04 units smaller (42.28%) than the punishment they impose on the Black female candidate. This difference almost reaches conventional levels of statistical significance ($p < 0.102$) despite the small sample size. Note, though, that the smaller punishment that Black men impose on the White male candidate as opposed to the Black female candidate for policy distance (-4.15 vs -7.19) actually represents a larger percentage reduction (13.97% vs 10.34%) in the average level of Black male support for the White candidate. This is because the average level of Black male support for the White male candidate is so low. This suggests that any difference in how Black men treat policy distance with respect to the Black female candidate and the White male candidate is substantively small.

The impact of policy distance on candidate evaluations for Black women is quite different. As the bottom row of the right table in Figure 16 indicates, Black women don't care about policy representation when it comes to evaluating the Black female candidate but they do care about it when it comes to evaluating the White male candidate. A one-unit increase in the policy distance between a Black woman and the Black female candidate is associated with a 1.15 unit reduction in support for the Black female candidate. This penalty isn't statistically significant and represents just a 1.56% reduction in the average level of Black female support for the Black female candidate. In contrast, Black women do impose a statistically significant penalty for policy distance (-3.17) on the White male candidate. Substantively, this punishment equates to a 16.52% reduction in the average level of Black female support for the White male candidate (19.18). The penalty for policy distance imposed by Black women is 2.02 units or fully 2.75 times larger when the

candidate is a White male as opposed to a Black female. This difference, which is substantively very large, is consistent with our claim that Black women are willing to trade off lower levels of policy representation for increased identity representation. The percentage change in the penalty that Black women impose on the White male as opposed to the Black female candidate is more than 7 times larger than the percentage change in the penalty that White voters impose on the Black female as opposed to the White male candidate.

The evidence presented in Figure 16 is also largely consistent with our prediction that Black voters don't care as much about policy representation as White voters when it comes to evaluating political candidates of different racial and sex backgrounds. This is because the penalty imposed by Black voters on candidates who are policy incongruent tends to be smaller than that imposed by White voters. This is always the case for Black women. To be specific, the penalty imposed by Black women is 7.44 units (86.61%) smaller than that imposed by White women and 7.59 units (86.83%) smaller than that imposed by White men when the candidate is Black. It is 3.42 units (51.92%) smaller than that imposed by White women and 4.24 units (57.24%) than that imposed by White men when the candidate is White. These differences are all statistically significant and substantively large. Things are different for Black men. The penalty imposed on candidates for policy distance by Black men is always smaller than that imposed by White men or White women. However, these differences are only statistically significant when comparing how Black and White men punish the White male candidate for policy distance. In all of the other comparisons, there's no statistically significant difference in how Black men and White voters punish the candidates for policy distance. In particular, we point out that Black men impose a fairly similar penalty (-7.19) on the Black female candidate as both White men (-8.74) and White women (-8.59). These results are consistent with our intersectional theory.

To summarize, the key result with respect to the effect of *Policy Distance* in the 2024 US presidential election is that we find evidence of a trade-off between policy and identity representation when we adopt an intersectional approach and focus on Black women. Our results are consistent with Black women being willing to trade off less policy representation for more identity representation. Black women received the highest level of identity representation from Kamala Harris as she matched them on both race *and* sex. Black men differed from Kamala Harris with respect to sex. This helps to explain why Black women were willing to go easier on Harris for policy distance but Black men were not. Indeed, if anything, Black men went easier on the White male candidate. There's some evidence that White voters went easier on the White candidate for policy distance than the Black candidate. However, this difference is several orders of magnitude smaller

than the difference exhibited by Black women.

The Conditional Effect of *Black*

What about the effect of race and hence racial identity representation on candidate support? The effect of *Black* is calculated as

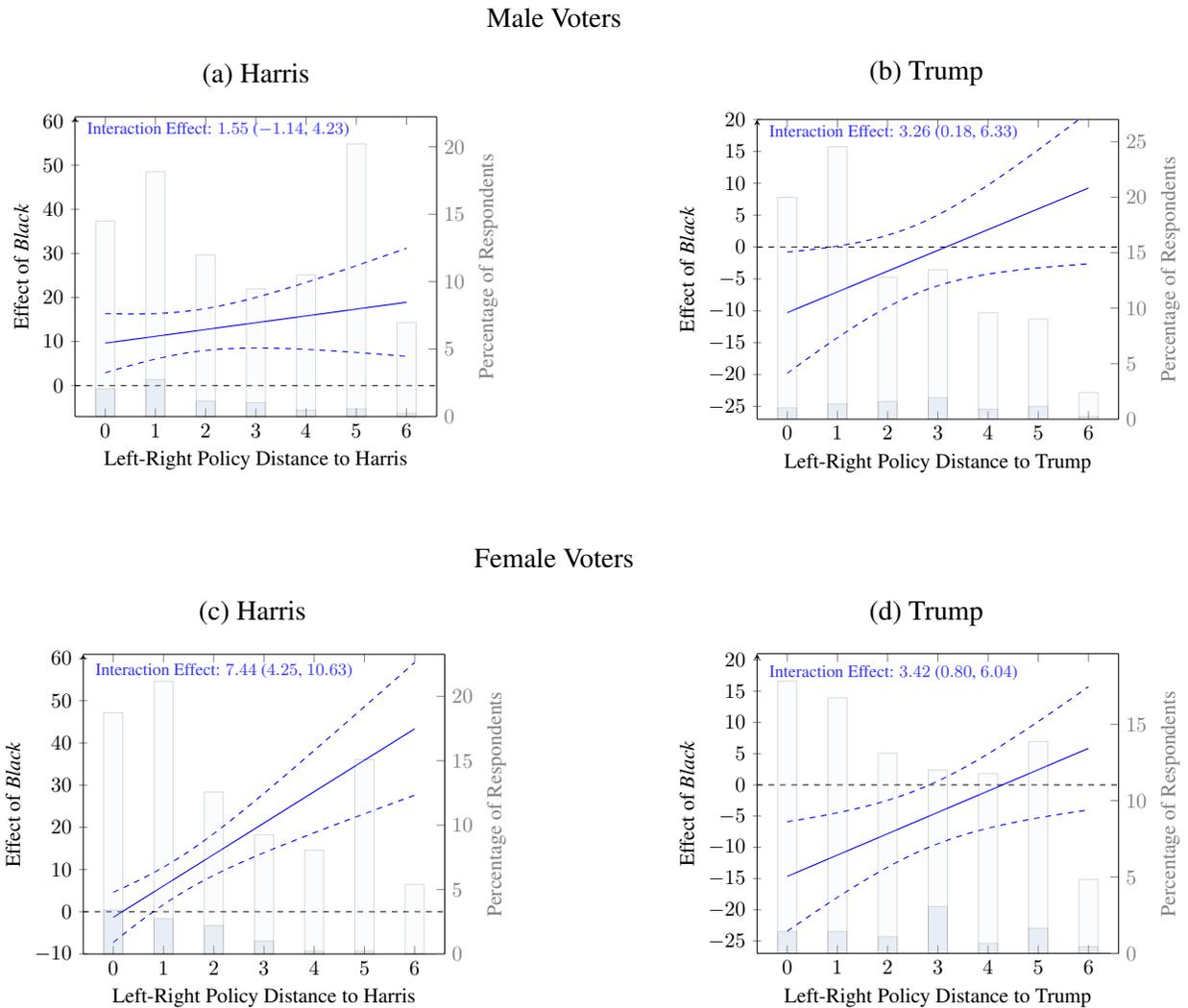
$$\frac{\partial \text{Feeling Thermometer}}{\partial \text{Black}} = \beta_2 + \beta_4 \text{Policy Distance} + \beta_6 \text{Female} + \beta_7 \text{Policy Distance} \times \text{Female}. \quad (12)$$

In Figure 17, we show the effect of being Black instead of White (solid blue line) on support for Harris (left) and Trump (right) for men (top) and women (bottom) across the observed range of policy distance between the respondent and the candidate. The dashed blue lines represent two-tailed 95% confidence intervals. The effect lines essentially capture the difference in the level of support for the candidates between Black men (women) and White men (women). Thus, positive values indicate that Black voters support the identified candidate more than White voters and negative values indicate that Black voters support the candidate less than White voters. The histograms in each panel show the percentage of Black (dark) and White (light) respondents at different levels of policy distance to the presidential candidates.

As expected, Black men always exhibit more support for Harris than White men. This is indicated by the fact that the effect line in panel (a) is always above the dashed horizontal zero line and hence always positive. Given that we control for the policy distance to Harris, this suggests that Black men care about identity representation. While the effect line in panel (a) has a positive slope, the slope isn't statistically significant, as indicated by the statistically insignificant interaction effect reported at the top of the panel. This indicates that the difference in support for Harris between Black and White men doesn't grow significantly with ideological distance. In effect, and following our discussion in the previous section, Black men don't go easier on the Black female candidate for ideological incongruence than White men.

Black women almost always exhibit more support for Harris than White women. There's no significant difference in the level of support for Harris between White women and Black women when those women are perfectly policy congruent with Harris. However, a difference does emerge as soon as any policy distance to Harris appears. In fact, the positive difference in support for Harris from Black women compared to White women grows significantly as policy distance increases. This is indicated by the positive and

Figure 17: The Effect of *Black* across *Policy Distance* on Support for Harris and Trump among Male and Female Voters



Note: The histograms in each panel show the percentage of Black (dark) and White (light) respondents (male or female) at different levels of policy distance to the presidential candidates. The vertical axis for the histograms is shown on the right of each panel.

statistically significant interaction effect reported at the top of the panel. To be specific, while Black women exhibit 1.31 $[-4.62, 7.25]$ units less support for Harris than White women when they are policy congruent with Harris, they exhibit fully 43.33 $[27.65, 59.04]$ units more support when they're six units away from Harris's left-right policy position. The fact that the difference in support for Harris between Black and White women increases so much with the policy distance to Harris is consistent with our claim that Black women care relatively less about policy representation compared to identity representation than White women. The

evidence suggests that Black women generally retain their support for the Black female candidate, Harris, even when they disagree strongly with her policy position. In contrast, White women increasingly reduce their support for Harris the more they disagree with her policy position.

Turning now to evaluations of Trump, we find that Black men exhibit less support for Trump than White men when they hold the same policy position as Trump. This is indicated by the fact that the effect line in panel (b) is negative and statistically significant when *Policy Distance* is 0. As expected, the effect line in panel (b) slopes upward, indicating that the negative difference in support for Trump between Black and White men declines in magnitude as respondents become more policy distant from Trump. This positive slope is statistically significant, as indicated by the interaction effect reported at the top of the panel. As soon as the policy distance to Trump exceeds 0.87, there's no longer any difference in the level of support exhibited by Black and White men. 79% of male respondents have a policy distance to Trump larger than this, suggesting that for most men there's no statistically significant difference in their support for Trump along racial lines.

Things are different for women. Black women exhibit substantially less support (-14.67) for Trump than White women when they hold the same policy position as Trump. As expected, the effect line in panel (d) slopes upward, indicating that the negative difference in support for Trump between Black and White women declines in magnitude as respondents become more policy distant from Trump. This positive slope is statistically significant, as indicated by the interaction effect reported at the top of the panel. Black women continue to give Trump statistically significantly less support than White women so long as policy distance to Trump is less than 2.83; 51.65% of the female voters have a policy distance to Trump less than this. These results indicate that White women care relatively more about policy representation as opposed to identity representation than Black women. Essentially, White women pull their support for the White male candidate at higher rates than Black women as the White male candidate becomes more policy distant. This results in the gap in support for Trump between Black and White women shrinking with policy distance.

The Conditional Effect of *Female*

What about the effect of voter sex and hence sex identity representation on candidate support? The effect of *Female* is calculated as

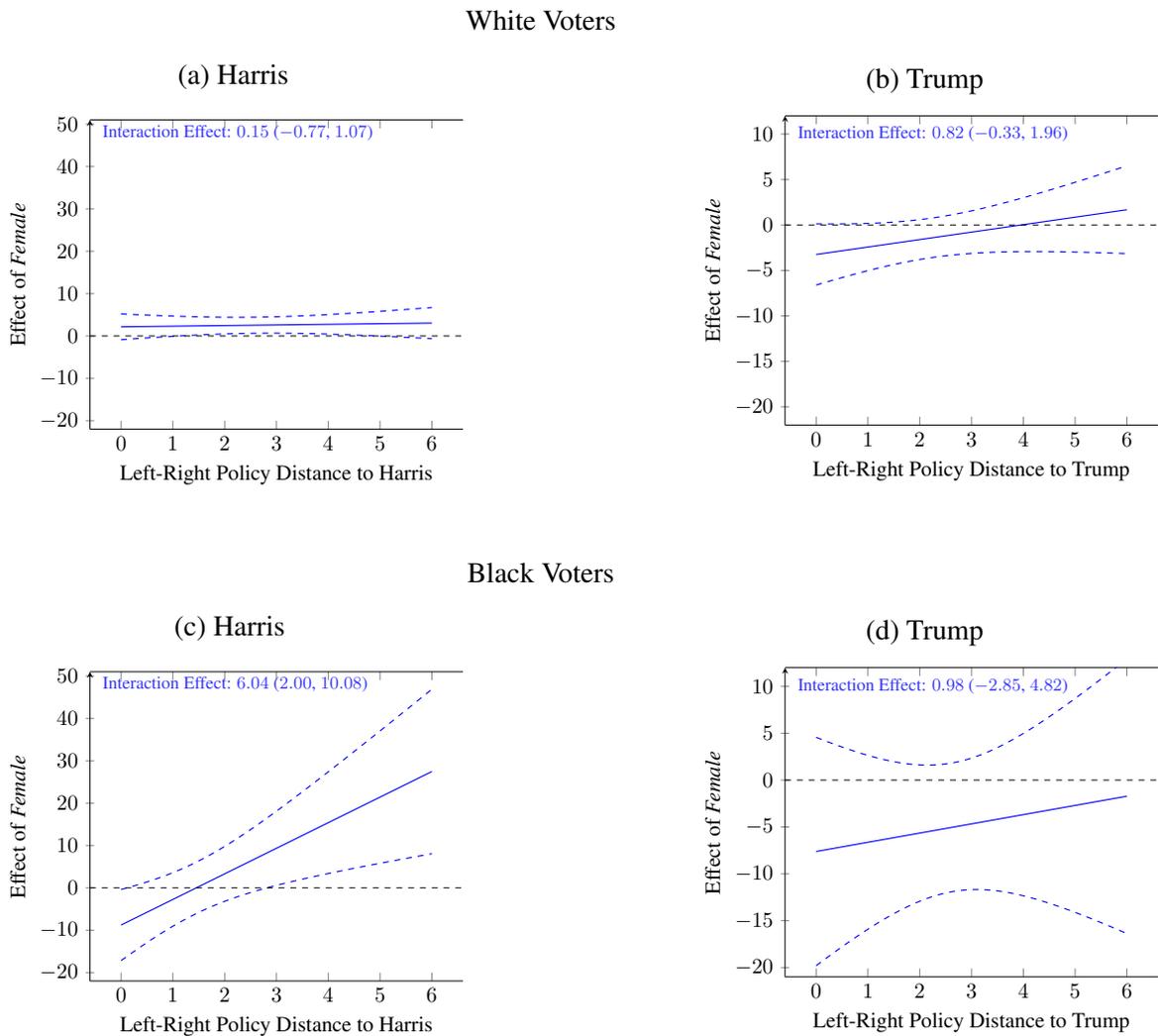
$$\frac{\partial \text{Feeling Thermometer}}{\partial \text{Female}} = \beta_3 + \beta_5 \text{Policy Distance} + \beta_6 \text{Black} + \beta_7 \text{Policy Distance} \times \text{Black}. \quad (13)$$

In Figure 18, we show the effect of being female instead of male (solid blue line) on support for Harris (left) and Trump (right) for White voters (top) and Black voters (bottom) across the observed range of policy distance between the respondent and the candidate. The dashed blue lines represent two-tailed 95% confidence intervals. The effect lines essentially capture the difference in the level of support for the candidates between White (Black) men and White (Black) women. Thus, positive values indicate that women from a particular racial group support the identified candidate more than men from the same racial group, and negative values indicate that women support the candidate less than men.

With respect to White voters, there's little difference in how men and women evaluate either of the candidates. This is indicated by the fact that the slopes of the solid blue lines in the top two panels have a very small magnitude and are almost never statistically significant. In line with what we've discussed previously, White women don't evaluate the White male candidate any differently than White men. There's also no evidence that ideological distance between the voters and the candidates modifies the effect of voter sex on candidate evaluations. This is indicated by the fact that the interaction effects reported in the top two panels are very small and never statistically significant. These results are entirely consistent with what we saw in [Online Appendix F](#) for the 2016 presidential election involving Clinton and Trump (see Figure 15).

As predicted, things are different for Black voters. As panel (d) indicates, there's no evidence that Black women evaluate Trump any differently than Black men; the solid blue line is never statistically significant. However, as panel (c) indicates, there's very strong evidence that Black women treat the Black female candidate differently than Black men. While there's no significant difference in how Black women and Black men evaluate Harris when they're policy congruent with her, the support for Harris among Black women as opposed to Black men grows with policy distance. As the information on the interaction effect in panel (c) indicates, this modifying effect of policy distance is statistically significant. In effect, the results

Figure 18: The Effect of *Female* across *Policy Distance* on Support for Harris and Trump among White and Black Voters



are consistent with the idea that Black women continue to support the Black female candidate even as she becomes more policy distant from them, whereas Black men lower their support for her. This results in a growing gap between Black women and Black men in their evaluation of Harris. In effect, Black women increase their support for the Black female candidate relative to Black men as policy incongruence grows. This is consistent with our earlier claim that Black women are engaging in a policy-descriptive representation trade-off with respect to the Black female candidate, whereas Black men are not.

Online Appendix H: 2008-2024 US Presidential Elections – Substantive Representation Across Black and White Voters

The main focus of our paper is to examine whether voters are willing to trade off substantive and descriptive representation in US presidential elections. The possibility of such a trade-off requires that the presidential candidates differ in their racial identities. Given our particular theoretical story, we require one of the presidential candidates to be Black and one of them to be White. There have been three presidential elections in recent US history (2008, 2012, and 2024) where one of the two main candidates is Black and the other is White. In the main text and in [Online Appendix E](#), we showed that Black voters were willing to trade off policy representation for greater identity representation in the 2008 and 2012 elections, but that White voters were not. This was exactly what we predicted. The 2024 election was complicated by the fact that the two candidates differed in terms of their sex as well as their race. In [Online Appendix G](#), we showed evidence of intersectionality in the 2024 election ([Block Jr., Golder and Golder, 2023](#)). Consistent with our theoretical expectations, we found that Black women were willing to trade off policy representation for greater identity representation, but that Black men and White voters in general were not.

A secondary implication of our theoretical story, though, was that Black voters will place less emphasis on policy representation when evaluating political candidates than White voters. Testing this particular implication doesn't require that the two presidential candidates differ in their racial identity. In this online appendix, we extend our original empirical analysis in the main text to examine whether Black voters care less about policy representation than White voters in the last five US presidential elections: 2008, 2012, 2016, 2020, and 2024. As we'll demonstrate, and in line with our predictions, we find that Black voters always impose a smaller penalty on policy distant candidates of both political parties than White voters. This is consistent with our claim that Black voters care less about policy representation when evaluating candidates than White voters.

The results of our analysis, which is designed to match that in the main text, are shown in [Table 12](#). As before, we estimated seemingly unrelated regressions for each election. In all of the models, we control for a respondent's partisan affiliation, age, sex, income, and education. Rather than focus on the individual coefficients, which all have the predicted signs and are statistically significant, we use them to calculate our desired quantity of interest, which is the effect of a one-unit increase in policy distance

Table 12: Policy, Race, and Support for Presidential Candidates, 2008-2024

Dependent Variable: *Feeling Thermometer*, 0 – 100

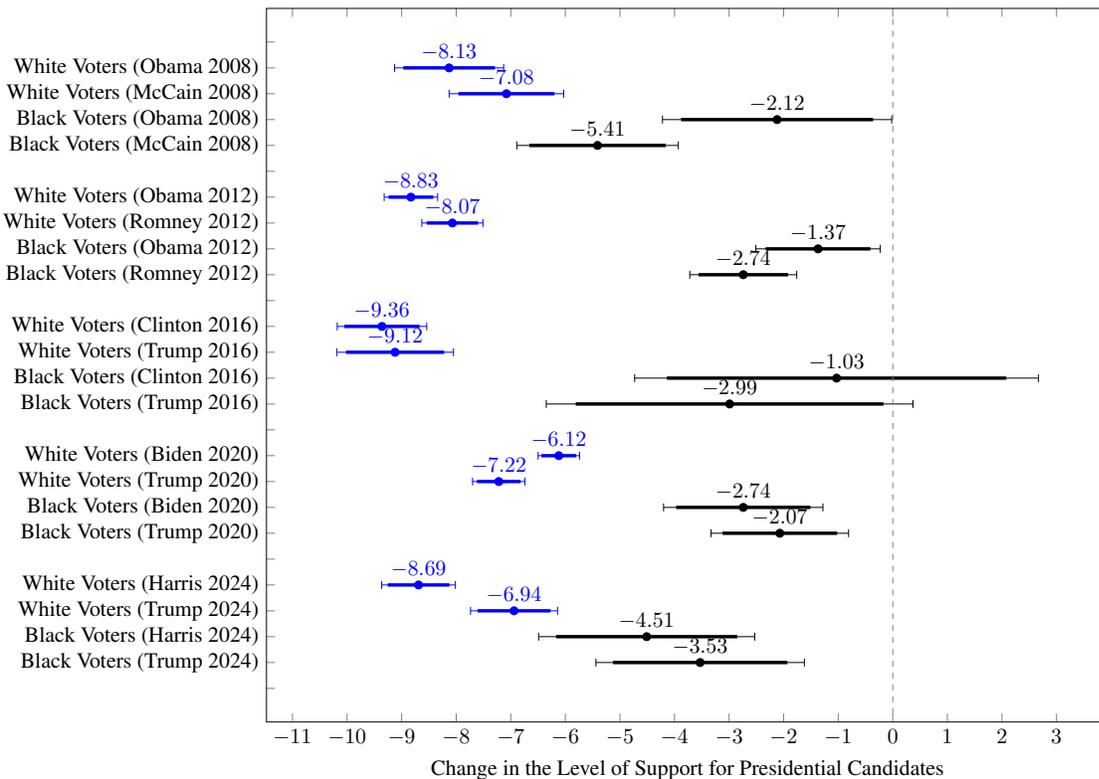
	2008		2012		2016		2020		2024	
	Obama	McCain	Obama	Romney	Clinton	Trump	Biden	Trump	Harris	Trump
<i>Policy Distance</i>	-8.13*** (0.51)	-7.08*** (0.54)	-8.83*** (0.25)	-8.07*** (0.29)	-9.36*** (0.42)	-9.12*** (0.55)	-6.12*** (0.19)	-7.22*** (0.24)	-8.69*** (0.34)	-6.94*** (0.41)
<i>Black</i>	8.78*** (2.18)	-10.76*** (2.78)	10.24*** (1.22)	-20.09*** (1.81)	4.26 (3.24)	-30.98*** (6.01)	6.39*** (1.40)	-21.82*** (2.24)	3.78* (2.27)	12.92*** (3.36)
<i>Policy Distance</i> × <i>Black</i>	6.01*** (1.19)	1.67* (0.90)	7.46*** (0.62)	5.33*** (0.56)	8.34*** (1.92)	6.13*** (1.78)	3.37*** (0.76)	5.15*** (0.67)	4.18*** (1.04)	3.42*** (1.03)
<i>Controls</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Constant</i>	72.75*** (6.02)	66.91*** (5.76)	65.72*** (1.85)	54.08*** (1.94)	50.93*** (4.51)	55.85*** (5.69)	44.09*** (1.96)	55.68*** (2.34)	47.10*** (3.10)	66.82*** (3.53)
Observations	1,007	1,007	3,611	3,611	1,257	1,257	4,858	4,858	1,784	1,784
R^2	0.57	0.50	0.69	0.58	0.64	0.52	0.67	0.67	0.74	0.68

Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Note: Results are based on seemingly unrelated regressions for each election. Each model includes the same control variables as shown in Table 1. Data come from the 2008 [American National Election Studies \(2015\)](#), the 2012 [American National Election Studies \(2014\)](#), the 2016 [American National Election Studies \(2019\)](#), the 2020 [American National Election Studies \(2021\)](#), and the 2024 [American National Election Studies \(2025\)](#).

between a voter and a candidate for Black and White voters on support for the two main presidential candidates in each of the five presidential elections. This information is presented graphically in Figure 19. Negative effects can be interpreted as a penalty that voters impose on candidates who become more policy distant from them. The effects for White voters are shown in blue, while those for Black voters are shown in black. Along with the effect sizes, we also report two-tailed 95% (thin) and 90% (thick) confidence intervals. As predicted, the estimated effects are always negative, indicating that voters impose a penalty on the candidates in each of the elections if they become more policy distant. With the exception of Black voters with respect to Hilary Clinton in 2016, these negative effects are always statistically significant at at least the 90% level (two-tailed). This suggests, in line with our predictions, that both Black and White voters generally care about policy representation.

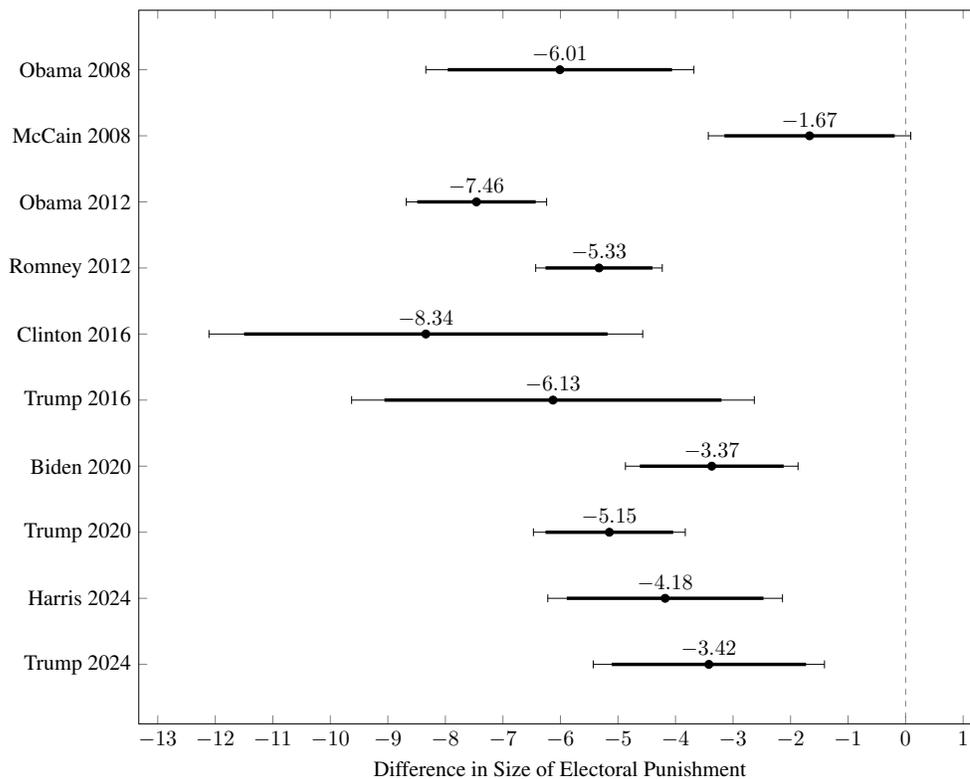
Figure 19: The Conditional Marginal Effect of a One-Unit Increase in Policy Distance by Race of Voter on Support for US Presidential Candidates, 2008-2024



Note: The plot shows the effects of a one-unit increase in policy distance between respondents (White and Black) and presidential candidates on the level of support for the presidential candidates. The effects of policy distance for White voters are shown in blue, while those for Black voters are shown in black. Effects are accompanied by two-tailed 95% (thin) and 90% (thick) confidence intervals. The dashed vertical gray line indicates a zero effect size.

Importantly, the penalty imposed by White voters is always larger than that imposed by Black voters. The largest penalty imposed by Black voters is -5.41 (John McCain in 2008), while the smallest penalty imposed by White voters is -6.12 (Joe Biden in 2020). The average size of the penalty imposed by White voters is a substantively large -7.96 and ranges from a low of -6.12 to a high of -9.36 . In contrast, the average size of the penalty imposed by Black voters is just -2.85 and ranges from a low of -1.02 to a high of -5.41 . In Figure 20, we show the difference in the size of the penalty imposed on the ten presidential candidates by White voters as opposed to Black voters. Negative values indicate that White voters impose a larger penalty for policy distance than Black voters. In all ten cases, we see that White voters impose a statistically significantly larger penalty on the presidential candidates than Black voters. With the exception of John McCain in 2008, these differences are all substantively large.

Figure 20: The Difference in the Size of the Punishment Imposed on Presidential Candidates for a One-Unit Increase in Policy Distance by White Voters as Opposed to Black Voters



Note: The plot shows the difference in the size of the punishment imposed on presidential candidates for a one-unit increase in policy distance by White voters as opposed to Black voters. Negative values indicate that White voters impose a larger punishment for policy distance than Black voters. Differences are accompanied by two-tailed 95% (thin) and 90% (thick) confidence intervals. The dashed vertical gray line indicates a zero difference.

Overall, the results presented in Figures 19 and 20 provide strong additional evidence to support our claim that White voters generally care more about policy representation than Black voters in contemporary US presidential elections. They're also consistent with previous research showing racial differences in how policy concerns affect candidate evaluations (Griffin and Flavin, 2007; Boudreau, Elmendorf and MacKenzie, 2019; Dun and Jessee, 2020).

One additional feature to note from Figure 19 is that in two of the elections where a trade-off between policy and identity representation is possible (2008 and 2012) Black voters impose a substantially larger penalty on the White candidate for policy distance than they do the Black candidate. In contrast, while White voters do impose a smaller penalty on the White candidate than the Black candidate in these elections, the difference is substantively small. We discussed these particular results in more detail in the main text and in [Online Appendix E](#). A trade-off between policy and identity representation is also possible in the 2024 election. As Figure 19 indicates, though, we find in this election that there's not really a significant difference in the penalty that Black voters impose on the Black candidate (Harris) for policy distance as compared to the White candidate (Trump). At first glance, this would seem to run counter to our argument. As we discuss in more detail in [Online Appendix G](#), though, it's important to recognize that the candidates in the 2024 elections differ in terms of both race *and* sex. This context requires more of an intersectional analysis. We would expect, for example, that Black women rather than Black voters in general would go easier on the Black female candidate (Harris) than on the White male candidate. In fact, this is exactly what the intersectional analysis we conduct in [Online Appendix G](#) finds. In effect, there's strong evidence that Black women are willing to trade off policy representation for identity representation in the 2024 US presidential election.

We recognize that we have just three mixed-race presidential contests, and in all three cases the Black candidate ran as a Democrat. One potential concern that follows from this is that Black voters may not be going easier on policy distant *Black* candidates, as we claim, and may instead be going easier on policy distant *Democratic* candidates. In other words, rather than trading off policy representation and 'racial' identity representation, Black voters might be trading off policy representation and 'partisan' identity representation. This possibility can't be definitively ruled out. However, there are reasons to believe that Black voters really are trading off policy representation and racial identity representation. First, we control for the partisan identity of voters in our analyses. Thus, the policy-identity representation trade-off that we observe in the 2008 and 2012 elections (as well as in the 2024 elections for Black women) occurs *after* controlling for a

voter's partisan connection with particular candidates. Second, we don't see a trade-off between policy representation and partisan identity in the two presidential elections (2016 and 2020) when the candidates are both white. In both of these elections, the penalty that Black voters impose on policy distant candidates isn't statistically significantly smaller for the Democratic candidate than the Republican candidate. Indeed, in the 2020 election, the penalty imposed on a policy distant Democratic candidate is larger than that imposed on a policy distant Republican candidate. As [Online Appendix G](#) indicates, this is also true with respect to Black men in the 2024 election – Black men impose a larger penalty on the *Democratic Black female* candidate than they do on the *Republican White male* candidate. While we're obviously dealing with only a small number of observations (five elections), the results are clearly more consistent with our claim that Black voters are trading off policy representation and racial identity representation than with the possibility that they're trading off policy representation and partisan identity representation.

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