MEDIA, RACE, AND PRESIDENTIAL LEGITIMACY: THE ROLE (AND NON-ROLE) OF MASS MEDIA IN THE ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENTIAL LEGITIMACY

by
Nicholle Zarkower

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2016

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

As members of the Dissertation Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Nicholle Zarkower, titled Media, Race, and Presidential Legitimacy: The Role (and Non-Role) of Mass Media in the Assessment of Presidential Legitimacy, and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

_____Date: (May 5, 2016)

Kate Kenski

_____Date: (May 5, 2016)

Jake Harwood

_____Date: (May 5, 2016)

Steve Rains

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copies of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

_____ Date: (May 5, 2016)

Dissertation Director: Kate Kenski

STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of Arizona and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

SIGNED: Nicholle Zarkower

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like first to thank Dr. Michael Dues, lecturer emeritus in the University of Arizona Communication department, for introducing to me to the communication field of study and its application to the "real world." He sparked an interest that led me to enter the UA Communication doctoral program.

I could not have pursued this field of study if Communication department leadership, Drs. Chris Segrin and Jake Harwood, had not been willing to make an exception and allow me to pursue a PhD in a part-time capacity, essentially as a cohort of one. Thank you for taking a chance!

And an immense thanks to Dr. Kate Kenski, my advisor, for believing that supporting a student who was not on the research faculty path was a worthwhile endeavor because, to paraphrase her, "It's important to have people out there who understand and can explain research." Kate has been patient and accommodating, but has challenged me to do better – and she never lowered her standards despite my unconventional status in the department. I learned a lot from Kate.

Thanks, of course, to my two committees: the comprehensive examination defense committee [Drs. Kate Kenski, Steve Rains, Kyle Tusing, and Barbara Norrander] and to my dissertation defense committee [Drs. Kenski, Harwood, and Rains] for pushing me to improve, to continue to learn. Thanks in particular to the dissertation committee members for their patience, as several "life gets in the way" moments slowed my progress.

I continued to work full-time as a director in the UA housing department during the eight years it took to me to earn this degree. Therefore, support from my supervisors and colleagues was essential. I definitely could not have done this without the wonderful staff in the area I oversee: as I have said many a time, you all are the true experts in your field!

Friends and family . . . I have been somewhat absent over the past eight years, but they stuck by me. Thanks to Linda Cordier, my dearest friend in Tucson, for always being there to listen. And thanks to all my other friends (too many to name!) for their patience.

My father, Alan, sister, Dani, and brother, Jon, have been the epitome of understanding when I did not call as often as I should have or when I complained a little more than necessary. I love you all. Mark, my husband, has gone above and beyond in terms of patience. Without his love and support, this would not have been possible. I love you.

Finally, I want to thank my mother, Marti, who taught me to value education and ensured I received the best education possible. Every time we talked, she would ask, "When should I come for your graduation?" She would have been proud I finally got this done! I love you, Mom.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures and Tables 7

Abstract 12

Chapter I. Introduction: The 2008 United States Presidential Election 14
- Why Race Matters 16
- Presidential Legitimacy 21
- Dissertation Overview 22

Chapter II. Whites and Blacks: Separate and Parallel American Experiences 24
- The Linked Fate of African Americans 30
- Cultivation Theory 41
  - Portrayals of African Americans in the Mass Media 44
- Social and Ethnic Identity Gratifications Theories 50
- The Expectation States Theory Paradigm 62
  - The Role of Status Characteristics in Determining Societal Position 63

Chapter III. Measurement and Analysis 74
- Data 74
  - Data: 2008 National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) 74
  - Data: Textual Semantic Analysis 75
- Candidate Qualities 76
- Textual Semantic Analysis 78
  - Sample 78
  - Semantic Analysis Method 82
  - Reliability 87
  - Semantic Analysis Results 90
- 2008 NAES Sample 97
- Study Variables 100
  - Control Variables 101
  - Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism 105
  - Partisan Lean of News Source 107
  - Amount of Television Viewing 114
  - Television Believability 115
  - Presidential Legitimacy Ratios 116
  - Presidential Legitimacy Assessments by NAES Respondents 116
- Analytical Procedures 119

Chapter IV. Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism for African Americans 125
- Results: Responses to NAES Racial Group Favoritism Questions 125
- Results: Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism Model 134
- Summary of Results: Individual Question Models and Perceived

Black Racial Group Favoritism Model 136

Chapter V. Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, and the Media 139
Results: Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism and TV Network Preference 139
Results: Televised News Source Believability 147
Summary of Results 162

Chapter VI. Expectation States Effects on Perceived Candidate Legitimacy 165
Results: Race and Presidential Legitimacy Assessments 165
Summary of Results: Race and Presidential Legitimacy Assessments 178

Chapter VII. Televised Media Effects on Presidential Legitimacy Assessments 181
Results: Televised Media and Presidential Legitimacy Assessments 182

Chapter VIII. Discussion, Study Limitations, and Future Directions 202
Discussion: The Obama and McCain Legitimacy Models 202
Study Limitations 210
Future Directions for Research 214

Appendix A: Legitimacy Semantic Tree for Textual Analysis 216

Appendix B: Presidential Legitimacy Categorization Steps and Guidelines 229

References 248

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. Proposed Model 28

Figure 2. Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism (IGF) Interaction: Partisan Lean of Preferred Television Source for Campaign News 146

Figure 3. Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism (IGF) Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential legitimacy 172, 186

Figure 4. MSNBC Believability and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential legitimacy 187

Figure 5. Fox News Believability and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential legitimacy 188

Figure 6. Race and Number of Days Watched TV for Presidential Campaign News Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential legitimacy 190

Figure 7. Race and Obama Semantic Analysis Ratio Interaction: McCain's Perceived Presidential legitimacy 197

Table 1: Semantic Textual Analysis Television News Programs 80

Table 2: Semantic Textual Analysis: Unique Instances Excluded and Included by Network 86

Table 3: Number of Instances Recategorized to a Different Legitimacy Category 87

Table 4: Percentage of Instances Recategorized to a Different Legitimacy Category 88

Table 5: Percentage of Instances Recategorized by Network 88

Table 6: Literal and Opposite Instance Meaning by Candidate by Legitimate (L) or Non-Legitimate (NL) Designation 89

Table 7: Candidate Legitimacy Ratios by Network 90

Table 7a: Standardized Candidate Legitimacy Ratios by Network 91

Table 8: Semantic Textual Analysis Results: Legitimacy and Non-legitimacy Instance Counts by Candidate, Network, and Legitimacy Category 93

Table 9: Textual Semantic Analysis Results: Top 20 Instance/Word Occurrences by Candidate 94

Table 10: Weighted Candidate Legitimacy Ratios by Network from Semantic Analysis of News Shows 108

Table 11: Distribution of Presidential Campaign Television News Source by Network and Network Partisan Lean 114

Table 12: Media Believability by Network and Race 116

Table 13: Mapping of 2008 NAES Perception of Candidate Questions to Presidential Legitimacy Qualities 119

Table 14: Generalized Logistic Regression of 2008 NAES Question 1 on Whether Agree Black Elected Officials Favor Blacks for Government Employment by Race and Control Demographics 129

Table 15: Generalized Logistic Regression of 2008 NAES Question 2 on Whether Agree Black Elected Officials Support Spending that Favors Blacks by Race and Control Demographics 131

Table 16: Generalized Logistic Regression of 2008 NAES Question 3 on Whether Agree Black Elected Officials Give Special Favors to Black Community by Race and Control Demographics 133

Table 17: Generalized Logistic Regression of 2008 NAES Question 3 on Whether Agree Black Elected Officials Give Special Favors to Black Community by Race, Partisan Identification-Race Interaction, and Control Demographics 134

Table 18: Regression Analysis of Perceived Black Group Favoritism by Race, Partisan Identification-Race Interaction, and Control Demographics 136

Table 19: Generalized Logistic Regression of Partisan Lean of Preferred News Outlet by Race and Control Demographics 142

Table 20: Generalized Logistic Regression of Partisan Lean of Preferred News Outlet by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics 143

Table 21: Generalized Logistic Regression of Partisan Lean of Preferred News Outlet by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 145

Table 22: NAES Television News Source for Presidential Campaign News by Race 149

Table 23: Generalized Logistic Regression of Broadcast Television Believability by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, and Control Demographics 151

Table 24: Generalized Logistic Regression of CNN Believability by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, and Control Demographics 154

Table 25: Generalized Logistic Regression of CNN Believability by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 155

Table 26: Generalized Logistic Regression of MSNBC Believability by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, and Control Demographics 158

Table 27: Generalized Logistic Regression of MSNBC Believability by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 159

Table 28: John McCain: Means for Candidate Evaluation Question Responses by Black and White Race 167

Table 29: Barack Obama: Means for Candidate Evaluation Question Responses by Black and White Race 167

Table 30: John McCain: Means for Presidential Legitimacy Qualities and Summative Presidential Legitimacy Score by Black and White Race 168

Table 31: Barack Obama: Means for Presidential Legitimacy Qualities and Summative Presidential Legitimacy Score by Black and White Race 168

Table 32: Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics 169

Table 33: Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 170

Table 33a: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 171

Table 34: Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of

John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics 173

Table 35: Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 174

Table 35a: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 174

Table 36: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Log Transformed Obama Presidential Legitimacy versus McCain Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics 177

Table 37: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Log Transformed Obama Presidential Legitimacy versus McCain Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics 177

Table 38: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics 183

Table 39: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 184

Table 40: Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics 192

Table 40a: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics 193

Table 41: Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics 195

Table 41a: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of

John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race,
Perceived Black Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms,
and Control Demographics 196

Table 42: Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of
Log Transformed Obama Presidential Legitimacy versus McCain Presidential
Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms,
and Control Demographics 199

ABSTRACT

MEDIA, RACE, AND PRESIDENTIAL LEGITIMACY: THE ROLE (AND NON-ROLE) OF MASS MEDIA IN THE ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENTIAL LEGITIMACY

Nicholle Zarkower

Kate Kenski, Advisor

That Barack Obama's race was a factor, for both blacks and whites, in the 2008 general election is well-documented. As the majority in this country, the white electorate's response to the nation's first successful African-American presidential contender is of particular interest because it revealed the persistent effects of racism. Scholars have suggested contemporary forms of racism (e.g., Ditonto et al., 2013) explained the reluctance of white citizens to cast their ballots for an African American. This dissertation approaches the topic from a different angle, arguing deep-seated beliefs about which individual characteristics define a legitimate president, race in this project, affected voting decisions, especially among whites. Such beliefs, or "status expectations" (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986), are evident every day in social interactions and are also reflected in the mass media, especially in the vivid medium of television, which was proposed to reinforce status beliefs about presidential legitimacy among white viewers.

African Americans, in contrast, were hypothesized be inured to status beliefs represented in television campaign coverage because of a protective, ingroup orientation called "linked fate," (Dawson, 2004), the belief that life chances of the individual are inextricably intertwined with life chances of the black race as a whole. Therefore, while mass media would affect whites' assessments of presidential legitimacy, linked fate would lead African Americans to reject the status beliefs about presidential legitimacy embedded in televised content because this medium has historically derogated their "ingroup."

Findings, however, did not support this proposed insulating effect of linked fate, which was operationalized as perceived black racial group favoritism. In fact, moderating relationships, even when statistically significant, typically added little explanatory value to or confounded interpretation of the presidential legitimacy models. Thus, baseline models with main effects were the clearest and most statistically powerful in discerning which variables had the greatest impact on Obama and McCain presidential legitimacy assessments.

For both candidates, party identification and race were consistently the most influential predictors. But, for McCain, the effect of conservative partisanship was particularly acute, with an effect size more than three times the effect size of race and four times the size of the most powerful media effect, Fox News believability. In contrast, multiple predictors of comparable effect size factored into Obama legitimacy assessments. Measured by both number of statistically significant media variables and magnitude of effect sizes, Obama's legitimacy assessments were more affected by media predictors than were McCain's.

For Obama presidential legitimacy, the most influential variables were Democratic partisan identification, black race, Fox News believability (negatively related), and perceived black racial group favoritism. The next most influential predictors were CNN believability, MSNBC believability, and a status expectation measure of Obama's legitimacy. A third grouping of influential predictors consisted of broadcast believability, an education control variable, and

a status expectation measure of McCain's legitimacy (negatively related). These predictors yielded a model that explained 43% of the variance in Obama legitimacy assessments, in contrast to the 28% of variance explained by the model without media variables.

Though McCain's presidential legitimacy evaluations were driven primarily by Republican partisan identification and, to a lesser extent, race, several media variables attained statistical significance in the McCain model: the number of days respondents watched television for campaign news, CNN believability, and Fox News believability, all of which augmented McCain's legitimacy assessments. The proportion of variance in McCain legitimacy assessments explained by the model with media effects was 20%, compared to 16% in the model without media predictors, figures substantially lower than the 43% and 28% in the respective Obama models.

The range of predictors in the Obama legitimacy model implied myriad perspectives notably absent in the McCain legitimacy model, a pattern that mirrored the diverse coalition that ultimately supported him. Therefore, despite only partial support for this dissertation's hypotheses, the results were consistent with the current partisan and racial divisions in this country, divisions that were affected by the media in the 2008 election.

Chapter I. Introduction: The 2008 United States Presidential Election

On the surface, the 2008 election and 2012 re-election of Barack Obama appear to confirm acceptance of the heterogeneous mosaic that characterizes the United States. Headlines heralding the historic nature of the 2008 presidential election dotted the media landscape at the time:

5 Reasons Why the 2008 Election Is Historic

> Barack Obama's victory and the 2008 presidential election in general is one for the history books. (News staff*, U.S. News & World Report*, November 5, 2008)

Obama Elected President as Racial Barrier Falls

> Barack Hussein Obama was elected the 44th president of the United States on Tuesday, sweeping away the last racial barrier in American politics with ease as the country chose him as its first black chief executive. . . (Nagourney, *The New York Times*, November 4, 2008)

Barack Obama Wins Presidency

> In an extraordinary moment in America's history, Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama has won the 2008 presidential election and will become the 44th president of the United States and the country's first African-American leader. (*CBSNews*, November 4, 2008)

The election of the nation's first African-American president was, indeed, historic, but the definitive tone of these headlines was premature given the reality of racial politics in the country. In fact, in research that will be described in this introductory section,

social scientists have documented that race did affect white voters' attitudes toward Barack Obama.

This effect of race on attitudes toward the two 2008 presidential finalists, Senators John McCain and Barack Obama, is the focus of this project, with an emphasis on the latter of the two candidates because of the groundbreaking nature of his electoral success. As a political communication project, the focus is distilled to the following goal: to show that race, specifically black[1] and white race, affects assessments of media believability, which, in turn, influence judgments about whether an individual is a legitimate presidential candidate. The relationship between race, the media, and perceptions of presidential legitimacy is the distinguishing factor in this study given that, as noted in the preceding paragraph, extant literature has illustrated that race mattered in the 2008 presidential election. For the purposes of this study, media believability is a broad concept that includes but also extends beyond whether a news anchor is viewed as a reliable narrator. Embedded in this broad concept of media believability is the notion that the mass media are an important socialization vehicle that transmits widely-held societal beliefs (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Lasswell, 1948). Media believability was, therefore, treated as a measure of "buying into" ubiquitous social values and beliefs infused in media messages.

This study began with the underlying premise that African Americans and whites have dissimilar social experiences and, consequently, different levels of

[1] The terms "black" and "African American" are used interchangeably throughout this manuscript; the author acknowledges that not all those who identify as "black" in the United States are "African American."

acceptance of the social narrative as told by the mass media. That is, African Americans and whites differ in their assessments of media believability, a difference that is argued to be manifest in the different usage patterns of mass media and contrasting interpretations of media messages by African Americans and whites about presidential legitimacy.

To develop this argument, the importance of race effects in electoral politics is first discussed. This discussion is followed by a sampling of political science literature describing the effects of persistent racism on the white vote in the 2008 presidential election and, then, by an explication of the concept of presidential legitimacy. Next, the theoretical framework for this study is established, with literature overviews of the theories employed to build the argument's framework and related hypotheses. The dissertation then details the manner in which each hypothesis was approached, describes the results of hypothesis testing and the implications of these results, outlines study limitations, and closes with remarks on the larger meaning of this project's research outcomes.

Why Race Matters

Race effects in elections, mediated and non-mediated, are important because existing racial divisions are likely to become more pronounced as the demographic transformation of the national complexion marches on. In March 2015, researchers from the U.S. Census Bureau projected an increasingly diverse country in which non-whites will comprise a majority of the population by 2044:

By 2044, more than half of all Americans are projected to belong to a minority

> group (any group other than non-Hispanic White alone); and by 2060, nearly one in five of the nation's total population is projected to be foreign born. (Colby & Ortman, 2015, p.25)

The election of an African-American president is a concrete manifestation of this trend, with Barack Obama largely owing his electoral successes to a strong showing at the polls of non-white voters relative to white voters (Piston, 2010), who constituted 73% of the electorate in 2008 and 71% of the electorate in 2012 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). In contrast, white voters accounted for 78% and 75% of the electorate in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, respectively (File, 2013). These small differences in percentage turnout can decide close elections.

White voters still comprise the largest portion of the American electorate, and the majority of this group cast ballots for the Republican candidates in the 2000 (Kenski & Kenski, 2005), 2004 (Kenski & Kenski, 2005), 2008 (Kenski & Kenski, 2009), and 2012 (Kenski & Kenski, 2013) presidential elections. According to national exit polls, white voters opted for Romney in 2012 by an 18 percentage point margin and for McCain in 2008 by a 14 percentage point margin (*The New York Times*, 2012). Tellingly, Obama's share of the white vote in 2008 was only two percentage points higher than Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry's in 2004, 43% versus 41%, (Pew Research Center, 2008), despite the nation's worst and most far reaching recession since the Great Depression and other factors that favored a Democrat's candidacy (e.g., lack of a running incumbent, war fatigue). White voters, however, tend to vote

Republican in presidential elections[2], so the question is whether this tendency was magnified by the presence of an African American on the Democratic ticket.

Research does, in fact, suggest Barack Obama's race affected white voting decisions. In an analysis of state-level support for Obama in 2008, Highton (2011) ran simulations of reduced racial prejudice in the 22 states Obama lost and found that, under the reduced prejudice circumstances, Obama's share of the white vote increased in all 22 states and, further, that he won the white vote in more than half the simulations in nine of the modeled states[3]. Kam and Kinder (2012) and Kinder and Dale-Riddle (2012) similarly conclude, in light of the dire economic conditions and widespread war fatigue permeating the political climate during the 2008 election campaign, Obama should have won approximately 60% of the popular vote in contrast to the 53.7% he actually won. Kinder and Dale-Riddle (2012) largely attribute his diminished margin of victory to racism-fueled ethnocentrism.

> Instead of a clear victory in the popular vote, 2008 should have been a landslide. Absent the race penalty, Obama should have won about 60.7 percent of the two-party vote. Obama's win over McCain should have exceeded Ronald Reagan's thrashing of Walter Mondale in 1984, when

[2] Except for the 1964 Johnson versus Goldwater contest and the 1996 three-way contest among Clinton, Dole, and Perot, whites who are "likely to vote" have favored the Republican over Democratic presidential candidate in every presidential election since 1952 (Gallup, 2012).

[3] Highton (2011) uses the social distance measure in the Pew Research Center 2010 Values Study to model reduced racial prejudice, with 0 on a 0 to 1 scale representing the 10th percentile of reduced racial prejudice. The nine states in which Obama "won" in more than half the simulations under reduced racial prejudice are (state name followed by proportion of 10,000 simulations Obama won with reduced racial prejudice): Missouri (.87), South Carolina (.83), West Virginia (.77), Georgia (.73), Tennessee (.72), Mississippi (.71), Kentucky (.67), Montana (.60), South Dakota (.51) (Highton, 2011).

> Reagan took 59.2 percent of the vote. It did not, and the principal reason for this is . . . race. (Kinder & Dale-Riddle, 2012, p. 106)

In the same vein, Lewis-Beck et al. (2010) model racial prejudice cost Obama what would have otherwise been a landslide victory given economic conditions, and Stephens-Davidowitz (2012) estimates racial animus, as measured by use of racially charged language in Google searches, cost Obama between three to five percentage points in the 2008 national popular vote. Pasek et al. (2009), using both symbolic racism scales and implicit measures to estimate pro-, anti-, and neutral affect toward African Americans, find the net valence toward blacks cost Obama anywhere from 1.48 to 4.58 percentage points in the 2008 general election.[4] Knuckey (2011) shows racial resentment was the second most important factor after partisanship in vote choice, particularly among white Independents and moderates, and that the effect of racial resentment was higher in the 2008 election than in any previous presidential election. Piston (2010) finds explicit racial prejudice, as measured by beliefs in negative racial stereotypes, reduced the probability of an Obama vote among both white Independents and Democrats by 22% and 9%, respectively. Hehman et al. (2011) find racial prejudice predicted negative evaluations of President Obama among white voters, but did not affect white voters' evaluations of Vice President Biden. Finally, Ditonto et al. (2013) find racism affected white voters' attitudes about Barack Obama's

[4] Measures of implicit racism are not without critics. Kalmoe and Piston (2013) re-analyze Pasek et al.'s (2009) data by parsing vote choices into different categories and find no statistically reliable relationship between the affect misattribution procedure (AMP) measure of implicit racism and a non-Obama vote choice. Kalmoe and Piston's (2013) own analyses, however, still support the conclusion that explicit racism dampened support for Obama. And, as cited in the text above, Piston (2010) uncovers effects of explicit racial prejudice on the white vote.

candidacy and his electoral victory, with symbolic racism, the belief that African Americans fail to adhere to core American values, as the strongest predictor of these attitudes.

2008 and 2012 voting patterns among minorities contrast sharply with those of whites. In both elections, Obama soundly defeated the Republican candidates among African-American, Hispanic, and Asian voters, increasing his margin of victory with Hispanics and Asians by four percentage and 11 percentage points, respectively, from 2008 to 2012 (*The New York Times*, 2012). Focusing on African Americans, this constituency has been nearly monolithically loyal to the Democratic Party for decades, with national exit polls showing African-American support for the Democratic presidential candidate ranging from a low of 82% in the 1972 to a high of 95% in the 2008 presidential election (*The New York Times*, November 5, 2008).

These stark differences in attitudes and voting patterns between whites and African Americans coupled with the rapid pace of demographic change in the United States suggest race is likely to grow in importance in national elections (Abramowitz, 2010; Abramowitz & Saunders, 2008). As such, understanding the mechanisms that contribute to the perpetuation of race effects on electoral candidate assessments, particularly among white voters, who will continue to comprise a significant portion of the electorate despite losing majority status, is important to the goal of achieving and maintaining a cohesive and participatory democratic society.

Enter the mass media. Since the early- to mid-twentieth century, the mass media have been recognized as a potent agent of socialization and important value

transmission vehicle in contemporary society (Lasswell, 1948). Television, an ever-present mass medium, has been hypothesized to "cultivate" predominant societal values through consistent thematic messages delivered in a visually vivid narrative format (Gerbner & Gross, 1976)[5]. The role of mass media as a value transmission vehicle is a driving tenet in this project, which will explore the *specific* beliefs the media transmit that reinforce disparate judgments of presidential candidates among blacks and whites. The specific beliefs of interest are those about societal status and what kind of person should occupy which echelons of society, in this case, the position at the apex of the United States political hierarchy – the office of the presidency.

Presidential Legitimacy

Before proceeding, it is necessary to define the concept of legitimacy, as perception of presidential legitimacy is the crux of this project. According to Zelditch (2006):

> Legitimacy means that something is natural, right, proper, in accord with the ways things are or the ways things ought to be . . . The distinguishing feature of legitimacy is that if something is natural, right, proper, in accord with the way things are or ought to be, it is accepted not only by those who in some way gain from it but also those who do not. (p. 325)

A key element of Zeldtich's (2006) definition of legitimacy is the notion of universal acceptance across a society, among those who are advantaged *and* those who are not advantaged by the legitimated structure. Acceptance of legitimacy of social objects is a

[5] An example of a predominately accepted American value is the virtue of working hard, perhaps exemplified by the plethora of television shows that center on the workplace (e.g., *The Ground Floor, The Office, Gray's Anatomy, Law & Order*).

cohesive agent for societies. The notion that a social object is "right and proper" will be used in this dissertation to denote legitimacy.

Dissertation Overview

For presidential legitimacy, this study will explore which individual characteristics are associated with "presidential timber," which will serve as a proxy for a right and proper president. Presidential timber is the combination of individual characteristics and qualities deemed essential in presidents, traits such as strength and masculinity (Duerst-Lahti, 2006). To paint a fuller picture of what constitutes a legitimate presidential candidate and president, Kinder's (1986) candidate qualities (leadership, competence, integrity, and empathy) will be employed to measure perceived presidential legitimacy. What the research results will elucidate is *not* that whites and blacks necessarily differ in the esteem with which they hold these ideal candidate qualities, but that they differ in belief about who possesses them.

Barack Obama, the country's first African-American president, is the centerpiece political candidate of interest used to explore how race[6] and the mass media affect judgments about presidential legitimacy. The experiences of whites and African Americans are divergent, and the consequences of this divergence are evident

[6] For this project, African Americans are the "non-white" population of study because of the unique experience this group has had in this country, a concept that is further developed in the discussion of linked fate (Dawson, 1994) in Chapter IV. As a caveat, "whites" and "African Americans" are large, coarse categorizations of people, so any conclusions are generalizations that hold on a macrolevel, but that will have exceptions, perhaps many exceptions. This study does not consider the political beliefs of the two fastest growing demographic segments in the United States, Hispanics and Asians, whose political proclivities may hew more closely to either whites or blacks. Electoral results from the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections suggest that Hispanic and Asian-American political patterns resemble those of African Americans, at least in the short-term. Some research has shown, however, that minority groups comprised of multiple nationalities, such as Hispanics, are not as affected by "linked fate" constructs as are African Americans, particularly as they attain economic success (e.g., Sanchez & Morin, 2011), underscoring the unique history blacks have experienced in the United States.

in phenomena ranging from media usage to media effects to candidate evaluations. This divergence means different intellectual paradigms are required to explain the source of these dissimilarities.

The theoretical framework used to explain these differences and the dissertation hypotheses will be laid out in Chapter II. Then, Chapter III will describe study variables and analytical methods used to test predictions. Chapter IV presents the analysis for *Hypothesis 1* testing. Chapter V introduces media effects into the equation and presents analytical results for the second, third, and fourth hypotheses. Chapter VI steps back from media effects to examine the effects of race on perceptions of presidential legitimacy, the focus of *Hypothesis 5*. Chapter VII reintroduces the media effects into the equation and presents results for the sixth and final hypothesis. Chapter VIII discusses findings and study limitations and suggests future directions for research.

Chapter II. Whites and Blacks: Separate and Parallel American Experiences

Socialization is the primary mechanism through which a society's members learn values and norms (Bandura, 2009), and, since the early- to mid-twentieth century, mass media have played a significant role in the socialization process (Bandura, 2009; Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Lasswell, 1948; Morgan, 2009). In the twentieth century, the mass media, specifically television, were conceptualized as enculturating, or inculcating, society's members with prevailing values and beliefs over the long term (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Jamieson & Romer, 2015) and as exerting an "influential role . . . in the cultivation of social perceptions" (Gandy et al., 1997). Prevailing values and beliefs are inherently determined by dominant societal groups, which in Western culture are "white" and "male," two traits that characterize historical and current societal power holders in the United States (Ridgeway, 2011). Cultivation theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976) is predicted to offer insight as to how this one medium, television, influenced *whites'* judgments about presidential legitimacy in the 2008 election.

African-American viewers, on the other hand, were believed to be less enculturated by televised media than were white audiences because the dominant media messages were inconsistent with the black social experience. That is, the prevailing values and beliefs ingrained in televised media coverage of the 2008 presidential election did not resonate with African Americans. Social identity gratifications theory (Harwood & Roy, 2005) and ethnic identity gratifications theory (Abrams, 2010; Abrams & Giles, 2007, 2009), both veins of mass media-based research

rooted in social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), serve as the counterpoint to cultivation theory to understand media use by and media effects on African Americans. Unlike cultivation theory, the social and ethnic identity gratifications schools of thought adopt the perspective of marginalized groups and make the case that social identity can fundamentally affect media use and media content interpretation. The proposed social identity-based mechanism in these theories is more explicit than cultivation theory's somewhat similar "resonance" mechanism (Gerbner, 1988; Gerbner et al., 1980; Hawkins & Pingree, 1981; Shrum, 2004), which proposes televised messages are more impactful on viewers when the message is consistent with an individual's own experience (i.e., the message resonates). Another respect in which social and ethnic identity gratifications theories differ from cultivation theory is scope: the first two theories speak to both media usage and media effects, but cultivation theory is solely a media effects theory.

Ultimately, the goal of this dissertation is to illustrate the real world effects and consequences of the intersection of race, mass media, and societal beliefs in the realm of politics. The relevant social beliefs are political – they are beliefs about the kind of individual who belongs in the Oval Office. With Barack Obama as the political object of interest in this project, the key question is whether and how whites and blacks differed in their assessments of the appropriateness, or legitimacy, of Barack Obama as president. To better understand the nature and source of political legitimacy for each group, this study uses the expectation states theory of legitimation (Ridgeway &

Berger, 1986) and linked fate (Dawson, 1994) to explore white and black perspectives on societal power, respectively.

Expectation states theory of legitimation (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986) is based on the understanding that the values and beliefs of dominant societal groups drive evaluations of who should occupy positions of power, and, given this theory's grounding in dominant social beliefs (i.e., those of whites), is employed to understand whites' conception of legitimate political authority. The expectation states school of thought proposes immutable characteristics, such as race, affect the ability of individuals to attain legitimacy in positions of power in social hierarchies (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986; Ridgeway, Johnson, & Diekema, 1994). Universal (societal) acceptance of the dominant group's values, regardless of group membership, is another important expectation states assumption (Ridgeway, Johnson, & Diekema, 1994). This dissertation, however, challenges this assumption of universal acceptance and argues, at least in the political sphere, expectation states theory of legitimation is applicable to whites and is used to understand white, and only white, assessments of presidential candidates.

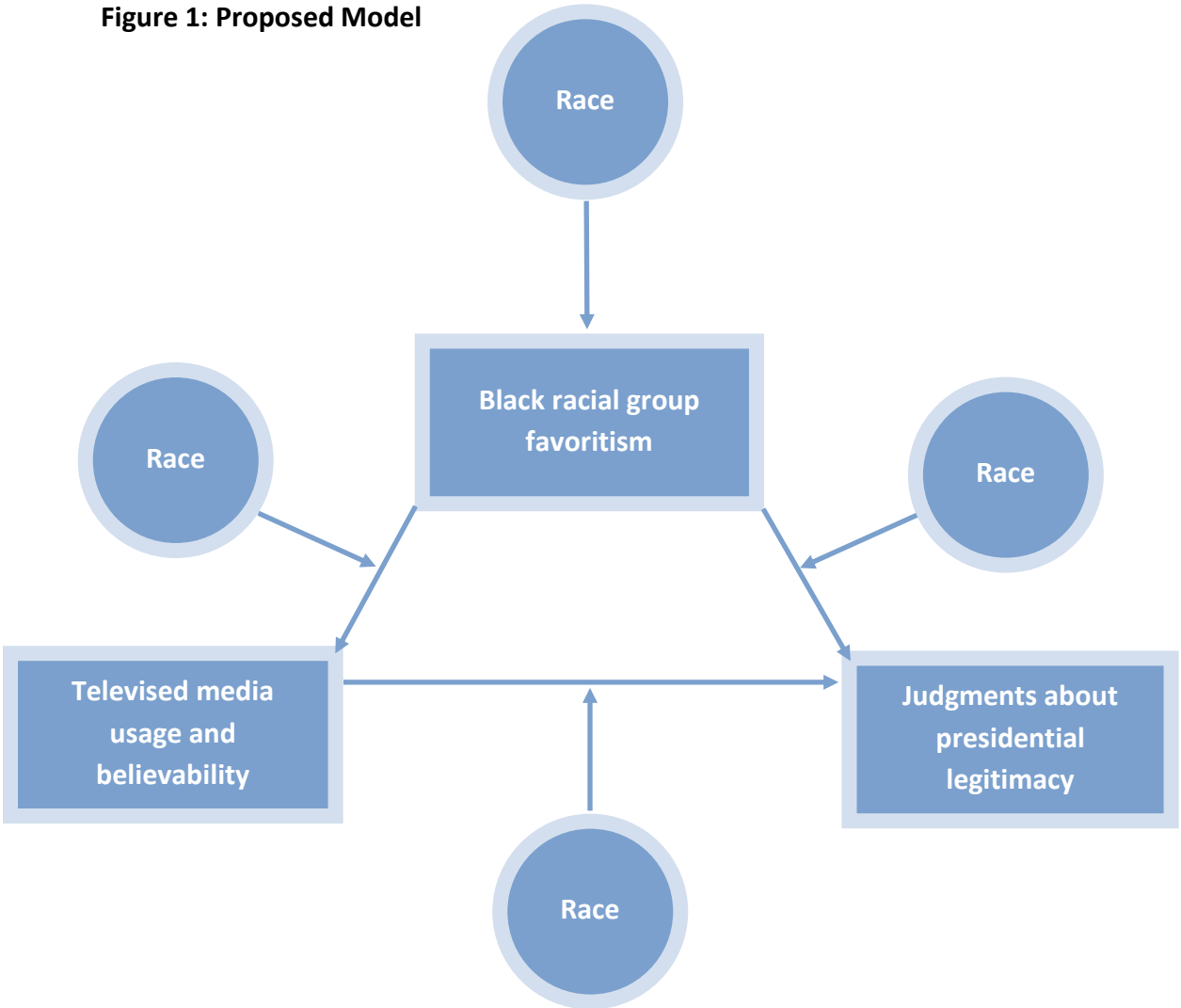
In contrast, this dissertation argues African Americans are an exception to the universalistic expectation states hypothesis because of their unique experience in this country, which is touched by the institution of slavery and its legacy of inequity. Linked fate (Dawson, 1994), the belief among African Americans "that their own self-interests are linked to the interests of the race" (p. 77) regardless of individual circumstances, better explains African-American political attitudes toward legitimately attained power

than the expectation states hypothesis, and helps clarify the reason African Americans would take exception to a belief paradigm that devalues black vis a vis white electoral candidates. Linked fate is, at its core, a social identity-based theory. It is used to understand African-American political attitudes, similar to the way in which social and ethnic identity gratifications theories are used to understand African Americans' relationship with mass media, and, thus, constitutes the theoretical underpinning of the argument that African Americans' political attitudes are not informed by the same beliefs as those of whites.

Differential media usage and differential media cultivation, the latter of which this dissertation operationalized as degree of media believability, generated differential media effects that reinforced each racial group's beliefs about legitimate political power. Ultimately, these differential media effects were manifest in opinions about presidential legitimacy. For whites, expectation states theory assumptions about legitimate power holders imbued the televised news media to which they attended, and these mediated messages reinforced their existing expectation states-based beliefs about rightful power holders, ultimately influencing their judgments about who *should* be president. For African Americans, social identity-based theories, social and ethnic identity gratifications theories, shed light on the way in which this historically marginalized group approached and responded to televised media, patterns that differed from those of white audiences. Social and ethnic identity gratifications considerations affected black use and interpretation of political media messages, and linked fate considerations affected judgments about presidential legitimacy.

The model in Figure 1 summarizes the initially proposed relationships among race, perceived racial group favoritism (linked fate), televised media, and the primary outcome variable: judgments about presidential legitimacy. Race was hypothesized to moderate feelings of perceived black racial group favoritism, this study's proxy for linked fate effects, in ways that directly affected televised news media use and perceived believability of televised news sources, as well as, assessments of what constitutes a "right and proper" president.

Figure 1: Proposed Model



This model is represented formulaically as follows:

Judgments about presidential legitimacy = Race + Racial ingroup favoritism + TV usage + TV believability + TV messages about presidential legitimacy + Race * Racial group favoritism + Race * TV usage + Race * TV believability + Race*TV messages about presidential legitimacy +

The next sections of this chapter explore in greater depth the theories that form the foundation of this project's core premise that the mass media differentially affected whites and African Americans in the domain of presidential politics in the 2008 election. The following theories are explicated:

- Linked fate (Dawson, 1994) to understand the source of the racial group identification that affects African Americans' political beliefs and ingroup proclivities;
- Cultivation theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976) to understand the effects of predominant televised messaging on whites, the dominant societal group;
- Social identity gratifications (Harwood & Roy, 2005) and ethnic identity gratifications (Abrams & Giles, 2007) theories as counterpoints to cultivation theory to understand media use by and media effects on African Americans, a non-dominant group; and
- Expectation states theory of legitimacy (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986), the counterpoint to black linked fate, to understand the source of whites'

beliefs that permeate televised media and affect judgments about presidential legitimacy.

The Linked Fate of African Americans

For African Americans, race is unavoidably salient because it is inextricably intertwined with the group's existence in this country, an idea expressed in the concept of linked fate (Dawson, 1994), the summative effect of the shared African-American experience. Linked fate is a social identity concept that is grounded in a socio-*political* sphere, in that the theory seeks to understand the political behavior necessary for the progression of African Americans as a group.

Indeed, much progress has occurred in the decades since the Civil Rights Movement. Federal and state actions, for example, have reduced inequality between blacks and whites to some degree in employment, housing, credit, and consumer markets (Pager & Shepherd, 2008). Pager and Shepherd (2008) cite Heckman and Payner's (1989) study showing federal antidiscrimination policy markedly improved black economic status between 1965 and 1975, and they note that "there have been some remarkable gains in the labor force status of racial minorities" (Pager & Shepherd, 2008, p. 6). Pager and Shepherd (2008), however, argue discrimination and its effects persist. They cite Bertrand and Mullainathan's (2004) field study on callback rates for fictitious applicants with equivalent resumes, except for racially identifiably names: the callback rate for "white" names was 50% higher than the callback rate for "black" names. They also cite the prevalence of preference for white job applicants and the relative degree to which blacks are likely to experience predatory lending

practices. Racial gaps similarly continue in social service provision. Hoffman (1992) finds disparities in the effects of AFDC on white and black women, with AFDC only having statistically significant, positive effects on white women's real income, a difference suggestive of the challenges African Americans face compared to whites in apparently similar circumstances. Further, Moller (2002) finds that AFDC payments are *less* generous in states where the proportion of black single mothers is larger than the proportion of white single mothers.

Statistics similarly bear out that, though racism and its effects have attenuated drastically over the past several decades, African Americans have yet to achieve political and socioeconomic parity with the white majority. Since 1954, the unemployment rate for African Americans has consistently run approximately 2.2 times higher than that of whites (Desilver, 2013). White Americans have, on average, accumulated six times as much wealth as African Americans and Hispanics have, a disparity that grew between 1983 and 2010 (McKernan et al., 2013). In 2011, the most recent year for which national data are available, the percentage of African Africans 25 and older who had completed a four-year college degree was 20% compared to 34% of white Americans 25 and older (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Though African Americans are just over 13% of the total US population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013), they account for 38% of the nation's federally incarcerated population (The Sentencing Project, 2013), which affects the number of blacks eligible to vote. Nationally, one of every 13 black adults, or 2.2 million citizens, is disenfranchised, and more than one-fifth of African Americans do not have the right to vote in Florida (23%),

Kentucky (22%), and Virginia (20%) (The Sentencing Project, 2014). "Disenfranchisement policies likely affected the results of **7 U.S. Senate races** from 1970 to 1998 as well as the **2000 Bush-Gore presidential election**" [bold in original] (The Sentencing Project, 2014, p. 5).

These persistent inequities are the catalyst for linked fate, the linchpin of which is the black utility heuristic (Dawson, 1994), the belief that an individual's chances in life are irrevocably tied to the group's societal status (Allen et al., 1989; Bobo & Gilliam, 1990; Dawson, 1994; Harris-Lacewell & Anderson, 2005; Harris-Lacewell & Junn, 2007; Hutchings & Valentino, 2004; McClain et al., 2009; Simien, 2005). This belief is encapsulated in the response to the question whether African Americans believe their individual life circumstances improve as "things get better for blacks, in general" (Harris-Lacewell & Junn, 2007, p. 33). In Harris-Lacewell and Junn's (2007) study of the 2004 Illinois U.S. Senate election, 71% of African-American respondents agreed with that statement.

Before Dawson (1994) enunciated the term "linked fate," social scientists proposed that a highly specific group consciousness informed black political beliefs and behaviors. Allen, Dawson, and Brown (1989) describe three schemata that, together, generate racial consciousness among African Americans: black autonomy, closeness to the black masses and the black elite, and propensity to adopt positive and discard negative stereotypical beliefs about African Americans. Black autonomy is awareness of one's own group interest and opposition to the interests of other groups and is, as such, a "low cost proxy for individual utility" (Allen et al., 1989, p. 423). Black

autonomy assumes ingroup members are aware, and need to be aware, of their overall group situation, and that this group awareness leads to the construction of societal institutions that further the interests of the group rather than those of the individual. Closeness to the black masses and closeness to the black elite are the extent to which an individual African American identifies with the African-American group, as a whole, and the extent to which that individual believes black community leaders, such as politicians, espouse and act on beliefs consistent with his or her own.

Finally, tendency to adopt positive and reject negative stereotypes about African Americans, the last component of Allen et al.'s (1989) race consciousness measure, is viewed as a gauge of black consciousness when contrasted with the opposite tendency to accept and believe negative stereotypes. This principle is also a tenet in social and ethnic identity gratifications theories and has been shown to operate for African Americans in media usage (Abrams, 2008; Abrams & Giles, 2007; Appiah et al., 2013; Knobloch et al., 2008) and media effects (Abrams & Giles, 2007; Beaudoin & Thorson, 2005; Davis & Gandy, 1999; Fujioka, 2005; Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000), a phenomenon that will be further elaborated later in this dissertation.

Salience of identity is an important scope condition in social identity theory-related research (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), an umbrella that includes linked fate (Dawson, 2004). In contrast to African Americans, whites are generally viewed as less aware of "groupness" by virtue of their hegemonic societal position (Giles & Evans, 1985) and as representing a "very large, heterogeneous, and socially dominant stratum that has not been systematically mobilized en masse against any competing group's interests, racial

problems notwithstanding" (Miller et al., 1981). Further, whites tend to be constrained by the propensity to exhibit socially desirable (e.g., non-racist) attitudes (Entman, 1992) and to behave in a manner consistent with American egalitarian norms (Mendelberg, 2001). Thus, there is no counterpart to linked fate for whites. The absence of "white linked fate" means that the perceived black racial group favoritism predictor variable used as a proxy for African-American linked fate signifies something different for whites, a contrast explored later in this section.

Some scholars debate, however, the continued importance of black linked fate in light of the substantial improvement in the lives of most African Americans in the decades since the Civil Rights Movement. Some researchers argue unequivocally that race continues to be the single most important unifying trait among African Americans, eclipsing any intra-group social class differential-driven rifts that have arisen from this progress. Gilliam and Whitby (1989) contend higher socioeconomic status blacks constitute an "ethclass" with a "dual consciousness" that manifests itself as an overall greater support for redistributive policies among all well-off blacks than among their well-off white counterparts. They find "higher class status has a relatively mild conservative effect on black political attitudes and a relatively strong conservative effect on white views about government spending on social programs" (pp. 96-7). This liberal viewpoint holds for both race-specific and race-neutral policies given that relatively affluent African Americans understand poverty disproportionately affects blacks compared to whites (Gilliam & Whitby, 1989). Wilson (2001) similarly finds working and middle class African Americans adopt more liberal positions on race-

specific and race-neutral policies than do their same-class white peers, signaling a cognizance of linked fate, but middle class blacks are slightly more conservative than working class blacks on both policy types. Allen et al. (1989) find that a "moderately loose African-American racial belief system exists and that it helps structure information about political and social reality" (p. 435), but they also find that higher socioeconomic status blacks are "less likely to adopt a view of black identity centered on separation from white society . . . [and] are affectively more remote from the black community, including their own status peers" (Allen et al., 1989, p. 435). However, higher status African-Americans are more likely than their lower status counterparts to identify with positive stereotypes of the race, a finding that suggests a modicum of racial consciousness among privileged African-Americans.

Simien's (2005) results are strongly supportive of the continued importance of race. Her findings show for the vast majority of African Americans, including members of the middle class, racism is the "primary factor affecting their everyday life experiences in traditionally white workplaces, business arenas, residential complexes, neighborhoods, schools, and colleges" (pp. 545-46) and, thus, concludes class fails to trump the shared experience of racism that forms the foundation of linked fate. As a nod to the existence of potentially cross-cutting influences on political and social beliefs, Simien (2005) acknowledges that African-American unity, where group interest is a proxy for individual self-interest, is not synonymous with homogeneity, an observation that supports her argument that the importance ascribed to an intra-group socioeconomic rift is misattributed. Hutchings and Valentino (2004) similarly argue

that racial identification is more important than socioeconomic status for policy preferences, especially for race-specific and redistributive policies.

In contrast to the viewpoint of predominant linked fate, other recent research builds on the nuances in Allen et al. (1989) about the effects of socioeconomic status on allegiance to linked fate. Using neighborhood quality as a proxy for socioeconomic status, Gay (2004) finds that African Americans, irrespective of educational attainment, living in higher-quality neighborhoods were less likely to believe "race remains the defining interest in their lives" (p. 554), with the Atlanta metropolitan area as an exception to this finding.

> For African Americans who reside in the lowest-quality neighborhood, the models predict that they are 66% likely to express a strong belief in linked fate . . . and 67% likely to view racial discrimination as a significant barrier to black socioeconomic attainment. . . . When neighborhood quality is at its highest, the probability of holding such racially deterministic views declines considerably, to 40% and 39%, respectively. Conversely, between low- and high-quality neighborhoods, the likelihood of believing that one's life chances are not linked to the status of blacks as a group . . . increases by 18 percentage points, from 13% to 31%; that discrimination does not limit black employment opportunities . . . by 17 percentage points, from 11% to 28%. (Gay, 2004, pp. 554-55)

Though comparatively diminished among more affluent African Americans, the perception that race matters is still significant given the converse of the statistics Gay

(2004) presents in the above passage. African Americans are still 39% likely to identify racial discrimination as a socioeconomic barrier; 40% likely to express a strong belief in linked fate; 69% likely to believe the individual's life chances were directly related to the status of the group as a whole; and 72% likely to believe racial discrimination limited black employment opportunities. Whites in any given neighborhood are unlikely to identify their race as barrier to material success to such a degree. Nonetheless, quality of neighborhood is a concrete manifestation of social mobility and economic opportunity, the dearth of which historically nurtured the "material roots of black racial identity" (Gay, 2004. P. 559).

Shelton and Wilson (2009) further refine research on the race-class nexus by granulating socioeconomic status into five income levels plus educational attainment, with "privileged" defined as those with college degrees whose income falls in the top two categories – a level of detail that improves on Wilson's 2001 study of broad dichotomous working and middle class categories. They find no difference in support for race-neutral policies to assist the poor among the white and black privileged and note that affluent whites and blacks "systematically favor and oppose certain formulations of racially-specific policy" (Shelton & Wilson, 2009, p. 403). The complexity of relationship between race and status, however, is illustrated by findings that appear contradictory at first glance. For example, members of both privileged racial groups were equally likely to oppose redistributionist policies benefitting lower socioeconomic status groups, but, though the black privileged were more likely to support race-based policies for the black disadvantaged than their white counterparts,

college-educated whites were more supportive of racially specific "opportunity enhancing" policies than are college-educated African Americans. Shelton and Wilson (2009) suggest this seemingly paradoxical finding is rooted in the "dilemma of the qualified" (p. 403), wherein higher status blacks simultaneously want whites to recognize the persistence of racial discrimination and to judge them as individuals whose accomplishments derive from merit. Increased affluence thus appears to temper the pull of linked fate, as this "conservatization finding suggest the effects of socioeconomic differentiation are becoming an increasingly critical determinant of attitudinal dissimilarity among African Americans" (Shelton & Wilson, 2009, p. 403), but affluence does not fully eliminate the role of linked fate as a socio-political compass.

A nuanced perspective about the effect linked fate is that its impact "waxes and wanes over time" (McClain et al., 2009, p. 478), or, simply put, linked fate is contextual and may tend to recede in importance when, for example, macro-economic conditions appear more relevant than race to African Americans' life chances. Though they describe an "ebb and flow" pattern in the strength of linked fate, McClain et al. (2009) still argue the power of linked fate is real and persistent. In the context of incomplete information, group consciousness and the relative social status of one's group are key drivers of political dispositions (McClain et al., 2009). According to this vein of thought, the opportunity to elect the first African-American president should have generated attitudinal *similarity* among African Americans across socioeconomic lines. This historically anomalous event would qualify as a catalyst for the "ebb" component of the "ebb and flow" cycle (McCain et al., 2009) of linked fate consciousness.

Linked fate's fundamental proposition is that African Americans tend to act as a politically unified force to improve the group's position in society, which, despite improvement, continues to be subordinate to that of the white majority. While such political attitudes and behavior can certainly cross racial lines and affect non-African Americans who seek to remedy continuing inequities, linked fate's particular brand of black racial group consciousness is the province of African Americans. One would expect, therefore, linked fate to be a strong force among African Americans in the 2008 presidential election and blacks to rally behind the first African American who successfully advanced to the final round of the United States presidential electoral process.

Linked fate (Dawson, 1994) is clearly not a white construct. Whites, however, have been characterized as exhibiting "pro-black" or "anti-black" attitudes and beliefs (Ditonto et al., 2013). Ditonto et al. (2013), for example, argue disagreement that African Americans' past experiences, such as slavery, affect blacks' ability to attain success, is indicative of an anti-black attitude among whites. Whites with pro-black attitudes, in contrast, should evince similar attitudes and beliefs as do blacks affected by linked fate. The distinction between black and white perceptions of linked fate effects is one of valence: coalescing to move the race forward is a positive among blacks and among whites with pro-black attitudes, favoring the black race over other races is a negative among whites with anti-black attitudes. Another distinction centers on beliefs about the relative success of blacks' ability to use the political system in their favor: blacks (and whites with pro-black attitudes) see continued inferior status for

members of the African-American race, despite linked fate efforts, and whites with anti-black attitudes see a group that has successfully advocated in the public policy realm for members of its group. This dissertation assumes whites' attitudes tended to align more with anti-black than with pro-black positions, though whites included in the study sample may not have been conscious of such characterizations.

To ascertain the extent to which linked fate tenets operated for African Americans *and* the extent to which perceptions of black racial group favoritism affected whites during the 2008 presidential election campaign, the following hypothesis is proposed:

> *Hypothesis 1:* African Americans expressed public policy opinions on racial matters that reflected awareness of the group's continued subordinate position in U.S. society. Whites, in contrast, expressed opinions on racial matters that suggested African Americans have benefitted from the ability to affect public policy decisions.

This first hypothesis tests two sides of the perceived black racial group favoritism coin, with the African-American side informed by the belief that blacks still lag behind whites and the white side informed by the belief that blacks have benefitted from policy largesse. In short, this hypothesis tests a perception gap between blacks and whites, a gap that is also argued to exist in the realm of media usage, effects, and interpretation. The next section contends that linked fate-influenced beliefs affect the relationship between the mass media and African Americans, who approach and understand media content, largely created by whites for whites, from the perspective of a marginalized group. Cultivation theory and social and ethnic identity gratifications theories are used to explore the differential black-white media experience.

Cultivation Theory

This section will lay out the fundamental tenets of cultivation theory and show how derogatory televised portrayals of African Americans are related to expectation states-derived beliefs that one particular African American, Barack Obama, lacks the qualities of a legitimate president. Then, it will explain why African Americans eschew the cultivation paradigm in favor of a social and ethnic identity gratifications paradigm.

Underlying values and beliefs, interwoven in the social fabric, are learned and relearned through socialization processes, including through the mass media, whose content is expected to be suffused with signals about the relative societal standing of individuals and the groups to which they belong (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Morgan, 2009). Cultivation theory offers an explanation as to how such beliefs are inculcated in media audiences, particularly in white audiences, over time through the medium of television, and its premises are consistent with Lasswell's (1948) pioneering contention that mass media act as a correlator to bring people together as members of society unified by shared norms and serve as a transmitter to hand down values for continuity of society. Both positive and negative beliefs are correlated and transmitted, and, in the case of African Americans' relative position in this country, those beliefs have largely skewed negative.

The creators of the cultivation hypothesis, Gerbner and Gross (1976), argue television is a powerful message system because of its ubiquity – nearly all Americans own and watch television – and because of the consistency of its narrative – though the three major networks, ABC, CBS, and NBC, no longer dominate the television medium

and the number of program options has exploded since 1976, increased quantity has not translated into a proportional increase in diversity (Morgan, 2009). According to Gerbner and Gross (1976), the nearly universal, frequent exposure to TV and the consistency and repetition of themes in televised narrative, make television a powerful tool of social enculturation. That is, they argue television cultivates its audience to accept dominant societal values and beliefs over time, thereby contributing to social cohesion and stability.

Even if now delivered via new modalities (e.g., the internet), televised media content, continues to be ubiquitous and, as such, remains an important enculturation tool in modern society, making Gerbner and Gross' (1976) understanding of the power of television still relevant during the 2008 presidential election. People are naturally inclined to recall vivid images, a hallmark of televised media (Zillmann, 2002), and the narrative format of television continues to make the medium a powerful communication tool, as humans naturally think in terms of story-telling (Zillmann, 2006). The combination of rich imagery and narrative format make television and other similar visually rich, narrative media, such as film, powerful conveyors of a symbolic world that either reflects or is perceived to reflect reality (Mastro, 2003).

Perceived believability of television content is a distillation of the primary response variable in cultivation theory-related studies, which Gerbner and Gross (1976) define as the belief that television content mirrors the real world. They originally describe a somewhat unrefined independent variable, total amount of television viewing, not accounting for elements such as genre of programming (drama versus

comedy), levels of viewing (4 hours/day versus 8 hours/day), and individual moderators (demographic differences, strength of prior beliefs about aspects of the real world). Nonetheless, they consistently identify a small but statistically significant difference between heavy and light viewers, wherein the predictor variable of television viewing, measured by total number of viewing hours, was associated with the outcome variable of believing the TV world reflected the real world (Gerbner, 1988; Gerbner et al., 1980), a difference they define as the "cultivation differential." They find, for example, that heavy viewers were more likely than light viewers to overestimate the percentage of the working population employed in law enforcement and the likelihood of being victimized, believe the world was a "mean and scary" place, and be mistrustful of others (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).

Subsequent to Gerbner and Gross's (1976) work, Potter (1991b) fine tunes demographic assumptions to address criticisms that the original incarnation of cultivation theory was insufficiently refined, and his use of demographic moderators provides an important insight on race. Dividing study participants into "white" and "non-white" categories, he finds statistically significant cultivation effects only for white participants. The coefficients for non-whites not only failed to attain statistical significance, their values were lower than the coefficients for whites (Potter, 1991b). This discrepancy in findings provides support for this dissertation's contention that non-whites are not cultivated by television to the extent that whites are and that, while the mass media may be powerful socialization force for the dominant group, mass

media messages do not function the same way for marginalized groups (Abrams & Giles, 2007; Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Harwood & Roy 2005).

Given the narrative and vivid nature of this medium, the themes transmitted through televised content should resonate with the group that is most likely to identify with the content (Gerbner, 1988; Gerbner et al., 1980; Hawkins & Pingree, 1981; Jamieson & Romer, 2015; Shrum, 2004): white viewers. The next section surveys negative portrayals of African Americans to underscore the chasm between traits and characteristics often ascribed to blacks in televised content and the qualities associated with presidential legitimacy.

Portrayals of African Americans in the Mass Media

> With the possible exception of family and friends, the media are probably the most powerful transmitters of cultural stereotypes, at least in Western societies. The expressions of group norms in art, literature, drama, and film both reflect and transmit the stereotypes deeply ingrained in a culture. (Mackie et al., 1996, p. 61)

Before progressing further into the discussion on negative stereotyping, it is important to acknowledge that media portrayals of most minorities have improved over the years. For example, Obama's 2008 televised advertisement campaign during the presidential race may have had positive effects on white, particularly conservative white, racial prejudice. Using the 2008 National Annenberg Election Surveys (NAES) panel component administered through the internet, Goldman (2012) shows that, among McCain supporters, Republicans, and conservatives in states that were highly

saturated with Obama campaign ads, racial prejudice decreased, a finding he attributes to Obama and his family representing a counter-stereotypical exemplar of African Americans to whites who saw his campaign ads. These results are consistent with previous findings that counter-stereotypical portrayals of minorities positively affected racial attitudes among whites (Mastro & Tukachinsky, 2011; Ramasubramanian, 2011) and even impacted support for public policy directed toward minorities (Ramasubramanian, 2011).

Positive portrayals of blacks in the mass media, particularly visual media such as television, have the potential to reduce white racial prejudice, but positive media portrayals are still considered *counter*-stereotypical, which signifies negative stereotypes are the norm in mass media. African Americans are, for example, overrepresented as associated with violent crime compared to whites in television news (Dixon & Maddox, 2005; Entman, 1992; Peffley, et al., 1996). As stories about crime, particularly violent crime, are favored narratives in the local news, the negative stereotype of African-American men as prone to violent, criminal behavior is common (Entman, 1992). This association is repeated frequently in the news media and is bolstered by the presence of African Americans on criminal justice TV dramas, where they are overrepresented as criminals and underrepresented as law enforcement officers (Oliver, 1994). This repeated linkage between black men and violent crime fosters disparaging stereotypes about African Americans that reinforce negative beliefs and contribute to white prejudice (Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000).

Further, African Americans are generally associated with negative societal circumstances in the mass media. Gilens (1996) shows that news magazines overrepresented the number of poor African Americans relative to the actual number:

> If 560 people were selected at random from America's poor, we would expect 162 to be black. But of the 560 poor people of determinable race pictured in news magazines between 1988 and 1992, 345 were African American. In reality, two out of three poor Americans are non-black, but the reader of these magazines would likely come to exactly the opposite conclusion. (p. 536)

Television performed no better in Gilens's (1996) analysis, which underscores the power of media to influence perceptions and reveals compelling correlative statistics that illustrate the disconnect between perception and reality:

- Michigan and Pennsylvania residents believed African Americans comprised 50% of the poor in their states, while the actual figure was 31%.
- Washington and Oregon residents reported blacks comprised 47% of their states' poor, but, in reality, African Americans account for 6% of these states' impoverished population. (Gilens, 1996)

In the face of tragedy that disproportionately affected African Americans, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, media coverage skewed against their favor. In a comprehensive content analysis of newspaper media coverage of this disaster, Kahle, Yu, and Whiteside (2007) find negative stereotyping characterized the photograph

selection used in the Katrina stories across news outlets. Some of their key findings include:

> The depiction of passive African-Americans receiving handouts reinforces the stereotype that African-Americans lack self-reliance. The overwhelming representation of White military and social service personnel "saving" the African-American "refugees" may be one of the most significant themes in images of people in the coverage.
>
> The trend of showing African-Americans as looters and Anglos as standing guard against looting reinforces stereotypes of African-Americans as violent and dangerous. . . Moreover, it sets up a stereotypical opposition of dangerous, opportunistic, threatening African-Americans against the responsible, law abiding, and threatened Anglos. This particular opposition has been part of racist portrayals for a significant portion of American history.
>
> Finally, even though the racial distribution of New Orleans City is predominantly African-American, Anglos were more likely to be pictured in the coverage. (Kahle et al., 2007, p.86)

K.A. Johnson et al.'s (2011) content analysis of five evening news television programs on ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox News, and CNN about Hurricane Katrina's devastation in New Orleans show results similar to those in Kahle, Yu, and Whiteside's (2007) study: though the majority of New Orleans victims were African-American, whites were featured disproportionately in "speaking roles" during the news casts (87% of the

time), and, African Americans were portrayed as "looters" more often than were whites (79% of looting scenes showed African Americans as the perpetrators).

Some studies on the effects of media stereotypes on white audiences explicitly adopt a cultivation frame by evaluating differences between light and heavy television viewers. In the Gilliam and Iyengar (2000) study cited above, hours of exposure to local television news predicted whites' support for punitive measures for African-American crime suspects. Dixon and Maddox (2005) find heavy news viewers exposed to photos of black male perpetrators expressed more concern for and held more positive views of crime victims than viewers exposed to photos of white male perpetrators. Dixon (2007) finds white heavy television viewers were more likely than light viewers to assume race-unidentified perpetrators were black and that race-unidentified police officers were white and benevolent. Busselle and Crandall (2002) show heavy news viewers more often attributed the socioeconomic disparity between blacks and whites as stemming from blacks' lack of motivation than from a dearth of job opportunities. Tan et al. (2000), employing a novel cultivation angle, ask study participants to recall the nature of television depictions of African Americans and find recall of negative portrayals was associated with negative black stereotypes, which, in turn, were associated with opposition to affirmative action; the converse hypotheses that positive depictions would engender positive stereotypes and, then, support for affirmative action were not supported. Dixon (2008) finds network news exposure was associated with depressed estimates of African-American income and an increase in negative

African-American stereotypes, correlations that he attributes to episodic framing[7] and a cultivation effect.

Other studies on race and the media focus more generally on priming effects, where media priming is defined as exposure to an object in the media affecting subsequent judgments about that object (Roskos-Ewoldsen & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2009). As noted earlier, whiteness is not an inherently salient identity (Giles & Evans, 1985; Miller et al., 1981), but it can be made salient through representations of blacks in TV news that prime negative racial stereotypes and perceptions of intergroup differences (Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000; Mastro, 2003; Peffley et al., 1996; Rabinowitz et al., 2009; Valentino et al., 2002). Oliver et al. (2004) find study participants, more than 90% of whom were white, used Afrocentric, rather than Eurocentric, facial features to reconstruct photographs of crime suspects in an experiment testing the effect of news coverage. Abraham and Appiah (2006) find, even in conditions with no black or white racial visual cues, white study participants judged that blacks were most affected by the two experimental public policies (school vouchers and the "three strikes" law) in their study, suggesting whites hold negative cultural stereotypes about the societal status of African Americans that are readily cued by the news media. J.D. Johnson et al. (2008) illustrate whites exposed to photographs of African Americans looting in the

[7] Iyengar (1996) has shown that framing news stories as episodic tends to cause audiences to attribute responsibility for life circumstances to the individual by focusing on the anecdote. In contrast, thematic framing tends to emphasize that the macrolevel environment, such as economic conditions or public policies, contributes to an individual's circumstances. Therefore, episodically framed news stories influence media audiences to view the affected individuals as personally responsible for their situations, frames consistent with the notion, for example, that socioeconomic disparities between whites and blacks result from the white work ethic and black "laziness." The Busselle and Crandall (2002) study, cited above, is an example of an episodic interpretation.

aftermath of Hurricane Katrina were more likely to support harmful treatment of African-American Katrina victims (e.g., firing gunshots above the heads of evacuees) than of white Katrina victims.

This sample of studies offers insight into one source of the beliefs that inform white judgments about African Americans, judgments that affect social phenomena from perceived culpability in the criminal justice sphere to perceived responsibility in the socioeconomic sphere to, this study contends, perceived legitimacy in the political sphere. The media portrayals described in these studies suggest an inherent association between African Americans and negative characteristics, characteristics that decidedly deviate from those associated with presidential legitimacy: leadership, competence, integrity, and empathy.

Though African Americans cannot escape the consequences of derogatory mass media representations because of the effects these representations have on white audiences, which by virtue of their societal status exert a greater effect on public policy than do minority groups, they can choose to use and interpret media differently, choices social and ethnic identity gratifications theories suggest are common responses.

Social and Ethnic Identity Gratifications Theories

The studies cited in the cultivation theory section largely view media effects through a white racial lens. Social identity gratifications and ethnic identity gratifications theories, in contrast, build a foundation on which to examine media usage and effects from a non-dominant perspective. Social identify gratifications

(Harwood & Roy, 2005) and ethnic identity gratifications (Abrams & Giles, 2007) hypotheses merge social identity concepts (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) with the uses and gratifications tradition (Katz et al., 1973) to explain media choices and interpretations among individuals who identify strongly with social ingroups, particularly those that have been traditionally marginalized (Harwood & Roy, 2005). Social identity gratifications theory will first be discussed, followed by ethnic identity gratifications theory, which together form the basis for this dissertation's media-related hypotheses about African-American audiences.

Harwood and Roy (2005) identify a theoretical void in the scholarship on the relationship between social identity concepts and mass media, and to fill this void propose five tenets of social identity gratifications theory:

1. Media ownership and content are important elements of the intergroup environment
2. Individuals' group identification levels influence their relationships with the media
3. Media content influences intergroup cognitions
4. Group processes driven by identification influence the media environment
5. Media serve as the locus for group identifications. (Harwood & Roy, 2005)

The first tenet is heavily imbued with cultivation theory assumptions, namely that the hegemonic group owns and controls most mass media outlets, despite the apparent – but, Harwood and Roy (2005) would argue, spurious – variety of options available to mass media audiences today, a concentration of control they describe as

"ethnically homogeneous ownership" (p. 191). Control of production and dissemination affords control over content, which, in turn, reflects the perspective of the dominant group; consequently, opposing viewpoints tend to appear only in low budget, alternative media. While the existence of non-white outlets, such as Black Entertainment Television (BET) and Spanish-language channels, indicates a nod to and respect for diversity, creation of alternative outlets also underscores the locus of media control continues to reside with the dominant group.

The second principle proposes an individual's group identification can influence the way in which groups interact with the media, from selection to interpretation processes (Harwood & Roy, 2005). With uses and gratifications theory (Katz et al., 1973-74) informing the selection aspect of this tenet, Harwood and Roy (2005) propose group members tend to select media supportive of their group identification, a use they argue is empirically distinct from other well-understood gratifications, such escapism and information gathering.

Ingroup identification also affects processing and understanding of media content, with marginalized groups employing three primary lenses through which to interpret media messages (Harwood & Roy, 2005). In a "dominant" reading, the individual accepts the hegemonic ideology and interprets the content in the manner intended by the creators. In a "negotiated" reading, the individual accepts the dominant message with caution, in that, he or she recognizes the dominant group's message, but weighs whether and how this message applies to his or her life circumstances. In an "oppositional" reading, the individual understands but explicitly

rejects the content creator's message. The order of these three interpretative perspectives, from dominant to oppositional, corresponds to heightened effects of increasing social identity salience. African Americans are argued to adopt a negotiated or oppositional perspective toward mainstream media (i.e., most media), resulting in less penetration and acceptance of the dominant messages and, ultimately, a relatively smaller cultivation effect compared to whites. In the case of the 2008 presidential election, the presence of an African American on the ticket should have augmented social identity among African Americans, influencing them to distance themselves, or reject, any media messaging perceived as derogating Barack Obama.

Harwood and Roy's (2005) third social identity gratifications principle is related to the second tenet but assumes the converse perspective, casting the media, rather than social identity, as the predictor: media content influences *inter*group cognitions. As discussed earlier, media contribute to the transmission and perpetuation of stereotypes about majority and minority groups (Harwood & Roy, 2005), a phenomenon that engenders contrasting effects in whites – priming, instilling, and reinforcing negative cultural beliefs about blacks that distance this outgroup from whites – and in blacks – fostering an ingroup solidarity that prompts African Americans to reject negative media portrayals of their ingroup.[8]

The fourth principle is social identity-informed group processes can affect the media environment (Harwood & Roy, 2005), with both the dominant and non-

[8] Influence of intergroup cognitions can occur on other macrolevels, too. Media coverage of international conflict, for example, can prime ethnocentrism (Harwood & Roy, 2005). Along these lines, Althaus and Coe (2011) argue that media priming of social identity explained the waxing and waning of the American public's support for the Iraq war.

dominant groups able to exert influence. The dominant group can, for example, communicate a narrative that becomes widely accepted, such as framing African-American Katrina victims as passive and criminal and white Katrina victims as active and heroic (e.g., Kahle et al., 2007). Marginalized groups can assume control of media production and create alternative media outlets, such as BET (Harwood & Roy, 2005).

Harwood and Roy's (2005) final social identity gratifications premise is media can provide a "venue," of sorts, for group identifications. "Media can become central to the development of group identities and, indeed, group identity can derive from a shared connection with specific media messages" (Harwood & Roy, 2005, p. 202), a phenomenon enhanced by the advent of specialized media outlets, such as BET. This last tenet underscores the importance of mass media as a socialization force in society and for society's constituent groups.

Social identity gratifications theory has given rise to the ethnic identity gratifications hypothesis, which looks at media effects on specific, marginalized groups, such as African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans (Abrams, 2010; Abrams & Giles, 2007; Abrams & Giles, 2010). Ethnic identity gratifications theory retains the assumptions of social identity gratifications, but emphasizes the avoidance element of media use (Abrams & Giles, 2007). In the ethnic identity gratifications paradigm, Abrams and Giles (2007) propose that the strength of ingroup identification among members of marginalized groups influences group members to select media that present positive portrayals of their ingroups *and* intentionally avoid media that present derogatory portrayals of their ingroups.

For the ethnic identity gratifications hypothesis to hold, the individual must have a strong ingroup identification; that is, group membership must be important to self-concept. African Americans generally satisfy this requisite condition. Though by no means a monolithic population, African Americans are viewed as having a strong sense of racial identity, with racial identity denoting the feeling of belonging to a distinct racial group. As expressed by Davis and Gandy (1999), "[R]ace as a demographic feature is used as a proxy for racial identity" (p. 378). A body of research pre-dating the articulation of the social and ethnic identity gratifications hypotheses illustrates African Americans are loyal to black-oriented programming featuring black actors (e.g., BET) and that African Americans with strong racial identities are critical of portrayals of blacks in the dominant media outlets (Davis & Gandy, 1999). In a study of African Americans' perceptions of representations of black men in the media and domestic violence, Davis and Gandy (1999) find strong racial identification, particularly the sentiment of linked fate (Dawson, 1994), predicted critical evaluations of media portrayals of black men, whom the respondents reported were characterized stereotypically as violent and threatening.

Consistent with Davis and Gandy's (1999) argument that the nature of portrayals of ingroup members affects African Americans' media behavior and interpretation, Abrams and Giles (2007) show African Americans with strong ingroup identity tended to avoid mainstream television because the programming was rife with negative portrayals of their ingroup. Along those same lines, Abrams (2008) concludes African Americans engage in selective avoidance in their television use "based on their

perceptions that television continues to stereotype African Americans, as well as not being able to identify or resonate with the characters" (p.11). This research showing a black preference for positive media content about African Americans points to a specific hypothesis on media usage related to the 2008 presidential campaign:

> *Hypothesis 2:* African Americans preferred televised media news outlets that presented positive portrayals of Barack Obama, an "ingroup" member, *relative to* John McCain. Black-preferred outlets were liberal
> And, whites preferred televised media news outlets that presented negative portrayals of Barack Obama *relative to* John McCain and positive portrayals of John McCain *relative to* Barack Obama. White-preferred outlets were conservative.

Strong identification with the ingroup and salience of identity, as noted earlier, are important scope conditions in social identity theory-related research; a person's social identify has to be both salient for and important to the individual for social identification processes to activate (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Black identity is inherently salient, a proposition underlying in the relationships tested in *Hypothesis 1*. Consistent with ethnic identity gratifications research findings, it is expected that strong African-American ingroup identification, encapsulated by linked fate and operationalized as perceived black racial group favoritism (from the first hypothesis) in this study, will augment African-American preference for televised news media with congenial representations of Barack Obama, as stated in the third hypothesis.

> *Hypothesis 3:* Race interacted with perceived black racial group favoritism to predict preferred news outlets for presidential campaign information, with black preference for non-conservative outlets that portrayed Obama positively *relative to* McCain increasing with perceived black racial group favoritism.

Research consistently shows African Americans watch more television than other racial and ethnic groups (e.g., whites, Hispanics, etc.), both overall (Abrams,

2008; Abrams & Giles, 2007; Albert & Jacobs, 2008) and for news (Guskin, Mitchell, & Jurkowitz, 2013; Guskin, Moore, & Mitchell, 2011; Pew Research Journalism Project, 2012), a fact that appears to belie the contention blacks avoid, and are relatively unaffected by, mainstream media. This apparent paradox reflects the complicated relationship African Americans have with a predominately white society: on one hand, blacks question and avoid white media messages about their group (Abrams, 2008; Davis & Gandy, 1999; Harwood & Roy, 2005); on the other, blacks have limited ability to avoid media dominated by white characters, white ownership, and white perspectives.

An explanation for this contradiction may lie in the distinction between entertainment media and news media, which represent different kinds of television activities that serve different purposes (Katz et al., 1973-74). For black viewers, entertainment is the primary purpose of watching television. Abrams (2008), for example, finds African Americans cited entertainment as their most important use for television, a finding consistent with previous research (e.g., Albarran & Umphrey, 1993); that same Abrams (2008)study shows African Americans engaged in selective avoidance of specific television programs because of derogating ingroup content. The programs mentioned by study participants included shows that featured both predominately African-American characters (e.g., *106 & Park, Steve Harvey, Moesha, Martin, Bernie Mac*) and predominately white characters (e.g., *The Simpsons, Friends, Seinfeld*) (Abrams, 2008). The programs with prominent black characters, such as *106 & Park* (BET), *Steve Harvey* (WB), *Moesha* (UPN), *Martin* (Fox), and *Bernie Mac* (Fox),

aired on cable channels rather than on broadcast television – unlike *Friends* and *Seinfeld*, which were part of NBC's "Must See TV" Thursday evening line-up in their heyday and, consistent with what one might expect from a mainstream broadcast station, largely featured white characters. For entertainment, African Americans have viewing options: they can watch shows that positively feature ingroup members and avoid programs that derogate their ingroup by tuning into networks dedicated to their audience, such as Black Entertainment Television (BET*)* and TV One, which generally offer entertainment programming.

Blacks also report a heavier use of television for news than whites or Hispanics report (Guskin, Mitchell, & Jurkowitz, 2013; Guskin, Moore, & Mitchell, 2011; Pew Research Journalism Project, 2012). But they generally rely on the mainstream programs because black channels offer little news programming (Guskin, Mitchell, & Jurkowitz, 2013; Guskin, Moore, & Mitchell, 2011). In fact, there was no news programming on African-American networks in 2008 until August of that year, when BET launched its first political news show to focus on the general election campaign. The show, *Truth with Jeff Johnson*, aired weekly, but was short-lived: BET discontinued the program after the November 2008 election (Guskin, Moore, & Mitchell, 2011).

> Despite [African-American reliance on TV for news], black-oriented television news programs are rare and few last more than a few seasons. Instead, African American programming tends to center on music, culture and other subject areas that have had more lasting power. This trend continued in 2012, though there were some signs of dedication to

> news. The most popular channel, BET, launched a new news program in 2012. (Guskin, Mitchell, & Jurkowitz, 2013)

African-American viewers have more options to select positive and avoid negative portrayals of ingroup members in entertainment media than they do in news media and, thus, are default heavy users of *mainstream* televised news. But they are believed to derive a lesser social capital benefit (e.g., civic engagement) from televised media news sources than do whites (Beaudoin, 2011; Beaudoin & Thorson, 2006; Mastin, 2000), an outcome associated with the negative depictions of blacks in the news media.

When given the choice of news content in experimental settings, studies show African Americans engage in television news media use in a manner consonant with the social identity tenets of ethnic identity gratifications theory. Knobloch-Westerwick, Appiah, and Alter (2008) find African Americans preferred to read and spent more time reading news stories featuring black individuals than stories with white individuals; the converse findings for white readers were not statistically significant. The authors conclude, "Race will be salient among ethnic minority members but not among majority members," (Knobloch-Westerwick, et al., 2008, p. 412), an observation consistent with the notion that whites tend to have weak racial identities (Giles & Evans, 1985; Miller et al., 1981).

Later in a similar study using simulated news stories, Appiah, Knobloch-Westerwick, and Alter (2013) include valence of coverage of characters in the equation and emerge with findings largely consistent with those in the Knobloch-Westerwick et

al. (2008) study. First, there was no difference in amount of time African Americans spent reading positive versus negative coverage of African-American featured individuals; that is, they find no selective avoidance of negative news about blacks and no selective exposure to solely positive exposure about blacks. The absence of a selective avoidance in this study appears to contradict a key ethnic identity gratifications premise, but viewing this finding in a nuanced manner helps to fit it into the social identify gratifications theoretical paradigm: blacks may not have avoided reading negative-valence coverage in the Appiah et al. (2013) experiment, but they may have been skeptical of – or adopted a negotiated reading of – the message. Second, black readers did, however, spend more time on positive news stories featuring African Americans than they did on any news stories, positive or negative, featuring whites, and they devoted more time to negative articles about whites compared to positive articles about whites. White readers showed no statistical differences in their article preferences. In sum, blacks exhibited preferential readership for articles about ingroup members, regardless of valence, and opted to read negative over positive coverage of their outgroup (whites) – findings that largely adhere to ethnic identity gratifications predictions.

As proposed in *Hypothesis 3*, seeking out congenial media content about ingroup members is one coping mechanism for members of a marginalized, non-dominant social group. Opting out of the dominant media landscape is another strategy. African Americans appear, to some degree, to embrace the opting out approach, particularly for entertainment media where more opportunities exist to

select positive depictions of the ingroup (Guskin, Mitchell, & Jurkowitz, 2013). Opting out is an active media use decision that would engender differential exposure to beliefs embedded in this type of media content. Additionally, in lieu of opting out, African Americans appear to view mainstream mass media, particularly news media where less black-oriented programming is present relative to entertainment media, through a negotiated or oppositional lens and, in doing so, effectively challenge the veracity of the dominant messages (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2005; Davis & Gandy, 1999). African-American news users in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, for example, judged the news media's portrayals of blacks as less credible than did white respondents (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2005).

Opting out or adopting an adversarial viewpoint suggests that subordinate groups are not as prone to the cultivating effects of televised media because they either have minimal exposure to (e.g., to entertainment media) or openly challenge the dominant messaging (e.g., in news media). In contrast, mainstream media are expected to resonate with white audiences because the messaging tends to be consistent with their experiences or perceptions of reality (Abrams, 2008; Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Jamieson & Romer, 2015). The following hypothesis summarizes the proposed contrasting cultivating experiences for black and white television news viewers.

> *Hypothesis 4:* African Americans rated the believability of mainstream television news lower than did whites who reported similar viewing levels, with perceived black racial group favoritism interacting with black race to intensify the negative effect on reported media believability.

As noted in the introduction, media believability is a proxy for buying into predominant societal beliefs. For this study, the relevant societal beliefs are those governing who is a "right and proper" president. The origin of these predominant beliefs can be explained by the expectations states theory of legitimation, which speaks to individual characteristics associated with the *legitimate* attainment of high-status, powerful positions in goal-oriented collectivities (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986), with the United States as the goal-oriented collectivity germane to this dissertation. The unit of analysis in the expectation states school of thought is the individual, a microlevel focus that makes this theory particularly appropriate for the study of the perceived presidential qualities, or lack thereof, of Barack Obama and John McCain.

The Expectation States Theory Paradigm

A fundamental premise of expectation states theory is status beliefs – beliefs about abilities of different social groups and the societal echelons each group should rightfully occupy – trump the human tendency to favor the ingroup over the outgroup (Ridgeway, Boyle, Kuipers & Robinson, 1998), an ingroup favoritism that is a defining concept in social identity-based theories. This theory proposes that the force of an individual's status characteristics, the concept of which is explored at length in the following paragraphs, supersede the pull of the individual's group membership. The expectation states paradigm is, however, explicitly derived from the perspective of dominant societal groups (e.g., white men in the United States) and thus is argued to have limited applicability to African-American experience.

The Role of Status Characteristics in Determining Societal Position

The concept of status characteristics is the foundation of expectation states theory of legitimation (Berger at al., 1998; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986). Status characteristics are individual traits infused with cultural beliefs that help define an individual's expected *contributions to* and expected *positions in* social groups. Status characteristics differentiate group members based on two types of expectations that inform expected societal contributions and expected societal position: "performance expectations" for societal contributions and "status expectations" for relative societal position. Status characteristics are categorized as either diffuse or specific (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986) and as either low status (disadvantaged) or high status (advantaged) (Ridgeway, 1991). Diffuse and specific and advantaged and disadvantaged status characteristics will first be considered in the context of performance expectations and, then, in the context of status expectations.

Diffuse status characteristics are general traits, such as race or sex, that are readily apparent and (generally) immutable. They are freighted with pervasive, culturally ingrained expectations for competence and are thus imbued with a tacitly understood value that "affect[s] performance expectations across a wide range of settings" (Correll & Ridgeway, 2003, p. 32). Race is an example of a diffuse status characteristic, where white race is viewed as an advantaged and non-white race as a disadvantaged characteristic (Berger et al., 1998; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986). As a disadvantaged diffuse status characteristic, non-white race is associated with low performance expectations, a prediction borne out by research showing whites were

consistently viewed as more capable than African Americans at most tasks across domains (Cohen, 1982; Johnson et al., 2006; Webster & Driskell, 1978).

Specific status characteristics are knowledge or skills, such as information technology expertise or legal training, that pertain directly to competence in a discrete sphere. In contrast to diffuse status characteristics, specific status characteristics tend to be context-bound (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986) and, thus, do not hold across a wide range of settings, making their categorization as advantaged or disadvantaged a variable phenomenon with variable outcomes. An attorney, a nurse, an electrician have expertise that is pertinent, and advantaged, in some, but not all, situations. These contextual parameters suggest the effects of specific status characteristics are less powerful and less enduring than those of diffuse status characteristics, which serve as both alternative and additive competency evaluation tools for group members to assess other members. For example, in situations where an individual's law degree is unimportant, gender could be a salient characteristic with which to assess performance expectations, but even when legal expertise is relevant to the task at hand, an attorney's gender can still factor into performance expectations: a female attorney will generally be presumed less competent than a male attorney (Correll et al., 2007; Ridgeway, 1997, 2011). Diffuse status characteristics, which are baseline traits, often trump specific status characteristics because they are more firmly embedded in and more frequently bolstered by social beliefs (Correll & Ridgeway, 2003).

Disadvantaged (or low status) diffuse status characteristics are difficult to overcome precisely because they tend to self-perpetuate through human interaction

patterns, the repetition of which ensures the longevity of the cultural truisms associated with status characteristics, even in the face of altered assumptions (Ridgeway, 2011). For example, the belief in gender and racial equality has eradicated neither sexism nor racism. Considering the example of gender equality, men and women interact on a daily basis in myriad social contexts, from the workplace to the home, which creates many opportunities for interactions influenced by performance expectations to occur.

Even in a workplace as unconventional as reality television, women were deemed less competent than men: in the *Survivor* series, women were consistently voted "off the island" more frequently than men early in the show when eliminating those perceived to be the weakest competitors was crucial to success, **but** less frequently than men late in the show when eliminating the most competent players created a strategic advantage! (Dilks et al., 2010). While non-whites followed the same pattern as women early in the show, gender trumped race late in the show: an African-American male was less likely than any woman to be voted off the island near the show's end (Dilks et al., 2010).

Having considered the effect of status characteristics on *performance* expectations (i.e., competence), this section now addresses the relationship between status characteristics and *status* expectations (i.e., societal position). Even if individuals with disadvantaged diffuse status characteristics overcome *low performance* expectations and engage in behavior associated with *high status* characteristics, such as directive behavior, successful execution of such behavior does not necessarily

translate into *legitimated high status* in a social hierarchy. Legitimated high status hinges on the *status* expectations associated with a diffuse or specific status characteristic.

Status expectations are supported by "referential structures," widely shared and accepted beliefs about which individual characteristics are of high and low value and which kinds of individuals should occupy high and low status positions (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986). Referential structures are, in essence, the foundation of what is right and proper in a societal hierarchy. Because of the pervasiveness of referential beliefs, expectation states theory of legitimation suggests the following scenario is likely: group members assume their peers share the same referential reality, have the same expectations about which status characteristics denote high and low value, and, ultimately, treat other group members in a manner consistent with their status characteristics, thereby creating a status order *legitimated* by the group's recognition that the order is consistent with societal beliefs. Ridgeway & Berger (1986) describe the process as follows:

> Assuming, as we do, that other actors in the group do share with the first actors generally similar referential beliefs, they will form similar expectations for valued status positions. As a consequence, they also will act in accord with these same expectations and behave as if the different power and prestige positions actually differ in status value. In doing so, these actors are effectively confirming and supporting the presumption of status differences implied by the behavior of the first

> actors. We assume that, as long as the behavior of the others either does not contradict the first actors' behavior or actually supports it, it provides validation for their own behavior. (p. 608)

Both diffuse and specific status characteristics are supported by referential structures that contribute to the formation of consensus about which members are worth more in and to the group and to the legitimation of the power hierarchy in the group. Revisiting the common status belief about gender, male gender is a high or advantaged status characteristic, while female gender is a low or disadvantaged status characteristic (Berger et al., 1998; Correll & Ridgeway, 2003; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986). That men hold higher status than women is expected to be manifest in task-oriented, group activities when women attempt to engage in directive behavior, and studies show that women's attempts at exerting authority are often resisted because this behavior contradicts expectations of male and female social roles (Correll & Ridgeway, 2003; Ridgeway, 2001; Ridgway, 2011).

Studies of mixed race groups have shown similar results, with both white and black members derogating the competence and authority of African Americans (Webster & Driskell, 1978; Cohen, 1982; Goar & Sell, 2005). There are, however, far fewer expectation states studies on race than on gender, and existing studies typically focus on group work in small settings. Further, the *Survivor* study (Dilks, et al., 2010) cited above shows that non-white men fared better than all women, which raises the question as to whether the expectation states hypothesis is an appropriate explanation for racial differences in beliefs about presidential legitimacy.

In response to this criticism, this dissertation proposes expectation states theory is conditionally applicable to the 2008 presidential election because race supplanted gender as the distinguishing trait of the two candidates for both white and black voters. Expectation states theory would have been applied in a more straightforward manner with Hillary Clinton as the Democratic nominee. Had Clinton emerged victorious, men *and* women across all races and ethnicities would have likely evaluated her competence and status as less legitimate than that of a male opponent, because, even more so than race, gender is the most basic differentiator among individuals. Gender differences occur across all races and gender inequities occur across most societies (Kinder & Dale-Riddle, 2012; Ridgeway, 2011). Therefore, it stands to reason that beliefs about gender are more universal than are beliefs about race – and that expectation states predictions are more conditional for race than for gender. In fact, the 2007-2008 Democratic nomination contest between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama perhaps best illustrates that female gender is the more disadvantaged trait between the two diffuse status characteristics.

Another potential objection to the application of expectations states theory to this study could be scope: the expectation states hypothesis was originally conceptualized to explain the legitimation of hierarchies in small groups (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986), making it a poor model to explain Americans' beliefs about political legitimacy, a macrolevel phenomenon occurring in the large, national collective. Expectation states predictions, however, have been shown to hold in conditions that similarly differ from the small group setting. Correll, Benard, and Piak (2007) use both

a large, natural setting model and an experimental design in a study treating motherhood as a disadvantaged diffuse status characteristic and find that motherhood status was penalized in the professional job market compared to the statuses of nonmothers, fathers, and nonfathers. Given the relatively expansive definition of collectivity in this Correll et al. (2007) study, scope condition violations do not appear to explain the reason expectation states theory may not account for African Americans' political beliefs in a macrolevel context, even though the expectation states hypothesis has operated as predicted for African Americans in other settings.

Expectation states predictions, in contrast, are argued to occur for white voters as they would in any other setting, explaining their perception that Barack Obama is not a legitimate contender for the presidency – a perception that stems from the low status expectations associated with his non-white race.

> When diffuse status disadvantaged individuals become high-status members . . . they do not have the advantage of such added cultural support [i.e., referential structures] because it is not typical or usual that they occupy high-status positions. As a result, members' endorsement of their leadership is weaker, as are normative expectations for compliance with their directives. (Johnson et al., 2006, p. 70)

The above Johnson et al. (2006) citation describes what is called a heterogeneous, status inconsistent order. Heterogeneous, status inconsistent orders occur when group members have status characteristics that are not expected to co-exist, typically a mismatch of high and low status characteristics (Berger et al., 1998), such as low

educational attainment (low status) and subject matter expertise (high status) or African-American race (low status) and the U.S. presidency (high status). A group structure marked by incongruence among status characteristics creates an unstable status order that is less likely to become legitimate than a status structure where status characteristics produce consonant performance and status expectations.

Expressed another way, legitimated status depends on actual behavior conforming to expected behavior, and expected behavior is defined by beliefs about what is right and proper. When "what is" fails to correspond to "what should be," the condition lacks the grounding conducive to legitimation and longevity (Berger & Ridgeway, 1986; Ridgeway, et al., 1994). An African-American president's status among white Americans is analogous to women's status across many societies. For white members of the U.S. electorate, Barack Obama represents a paradox because the presidency of the United States and non-white race are not generally believed to go together and, thus, are not supported by cultural beliefs about how the world ought to be. Barack Obama's race is a classic disadvantaged status characteristic associated with low performance and low status expectations. Therefore, in the large collective of the United States, his candidacy and presidency are inconsistent with beliefs about the kind of individual who should occupy the highest office in the land.

For African Americans, in contrast, black linked fate is hypothesized to shield African Americans from the universalistic expectation states assumption that devalues black race. The conditionality of expectation states in the 2008 presidential election results from a divergent path of effects for the two racial groups: a predicted

expectations states effect for whites and predicted absence of expectations effect for African Americans. Thus follows this hypothesis:

> *Hypothesis 5*: Race and perceived black racial group favoritism influenced assessment of presidential legitimacy, with the following results:
> *a.* Blacks evaluated Barack Obama as more presidential than did whites.
> *b.* Whites evaluated John McCain as more presidential than did blacks.
> *c.* Blacks evaluated Barack Obama as more presidential than John McCain.
> *d.* Whites evaluated John McCain as more presidential than Barack Obama.
> *e.* Perceived black racial group favoritism augmented Obama's presidential legitimacy and reduced John McCain's presidential legitimacy among African Americans.

As illustrated in the cultivation theory discussion, the mass media, particularly the visually rich narrative of televised media, are rife with characterizations of African Americans that are diametrically opposed to the conceptualization of a rightful occupant of the office of the United States presidency. Such portrayals are imbued with expectation states of legitimacy-driven beliefs, which are expected to permeate the mass media, consistent with the cultivation theory proposition that televised media are informed by predominant societal beliefs across media content type. Therefore, status beliefs informing performance and status expectations for Barack Obama are argued to be embedded in the televised campaign news media to which whites attend. Given the dearth of black-oriented television news, African Americans also tend to rely on mainstream media – media not geared specifically toward their demographic group – for news and politics (Guskin, Mitchell, & Jurkowitz, 2013; Guskin, Moore, & Mitchell, 2011). Nevertheless, to the greatest extent possible, African Americans are expected to use televised news and political media that are favorable toward Barack Obama or

to avoid, or doubt, televised campaign news sources that are unequivocally unfavorable toward Obama, the prediction of *Hypothesis 3*.

Arriving at the primary contention of this dissertation, televised news and political programs are expected to affect whites' perceptions of Obama's legitimacy as a presidential candidate vis a vis McCain. And, as their amount of televised news watched for presidential campaign information increases, whites are expected to have relatively stronger expectation states-based beliefs about Barack Obama's non-legitimated presidential status. African Americans, on the other hand, are proposed to be significantly less affected by televised news media content about the presidential candidates. Perceived black racial group favoritism, grounded in linked fate, is expected to exert a protective effect and eclipse media effects on African Americans in their assessments of candidate legitimacy because this group largely rejects the mainstream news media's characterizations of African Americans. Thus, this final hypothesis brings media effects as an accompanying factor to race and black racial group favoritism effects into the presidential legitimacy assessment equation.

> *Hypothesis 6:* White viewers' judgments about presidential legitimacy were more affected than were black viewers' judgments by amount and content of television presidential campaign news. For African Americans, perceptions of presidential legitimacy were most impacted by race, perceived black racial group favoritism, and the interaction between these two variables, with Obama's perceived legitimacy increasing and McCain's perceived legitimacy decreasing at higher levels of perceived black racial group favoritism.

Considered together, the six hypotheses developed in this chapter argue that two distinctly separate processes account for how African Americans and whites assess presidential legitimacy –and arrive at different conclusions. The next chapter, Chapter

III, describes the measurement and analytical strategies employed to evaluate the extent to which the scenario of non-overlapping social realities held true in the 2008 presidential election.

Chapter III. Measurement and Analysis

This chapter will first provide a high level overview of the primary research methods in the context of this dissertation's two data sources and, then, address more specifically the analytical procedures used to investigate the relationships among the variables of interest in this study: race, perceived black racial group favoritism, televised media use, and assessments of Barack Obama's and John McCain's presidential legitimacy, the last of which are the principle outcome variables of interest.

Data

Two data sources are used to assess support for this project's hypotheses: [1] the National Rolling Cross-Section (RCS) of the 2008 National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) and [2] a textual semantic analysis of transcripts from televised news and political programs aired on CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, and the three major broadcast stations (i.e., ABC, CBS, and NBC). After a brief overview of the two data sources in the next sections, a section devoted to a more detailed explanation of the semantic textual analysis will follow. Then, in the next sections, use of the NAES dataset and variable creation will be described.

Data: 2008 National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES)

The Annenberg surveys are large sample, rolling cross-sectional surveys of randomly selected American adults conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania that commenced during the presidential primary season and continued until, or after for a selected subset, Election Day. The NAES survey consists of 30-minute telephone interviews on a wide array of topics, including

the presidential campaign, general politics, current policy issues, media use, campaign discourse, political participation, voting behavior, and racial and gender favoritism, as well as, questions specific to race to assess the impact of Barack Obama's candidacy (The Annenberg Public Policy Center, 2008).

In a rolling cross-sectional design, surveyors call telephone numbers that have not previously been dialed and re-call previously dialed numbers where no one was reached. This design creates a random sample by including respondents who are reached on the first call and respondents for whom multiple calls (up to 18) are required to contact. NAES telephone interviewers make 14 days of attempts to reach a respondent at each dialed number and were in the field every day of the year except December 24, December 25, and December 31 in 2007 and January 1, March 23, July 4, and October 7 in 2008 (the October day not in the field was due to a technical problem) (The Annenberg Public Policy Center, 2008). As of 2008, the NAES adopted an online surveying protocol, but this study will employ only the phone survey because it contains significantly more data, with 57,967 respondents, and includes a broader segment of the population by virtue of its size. Additionally, the phone survey contains a more extensive battery of candidate evaluation questions, which are an essential element of this study, than does the internet survey.

Data: Textual Semantic Analysis

CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, and the three major broadcast stations (ABC, CBS, and NBC) were selected to provide the units of textual analysis because the 2008 NAES asked respondents to rate believability of these networks for a period of time, from

February 21, 2008 through May 29, 2008, during the survey. In the NAES, ABC, CBS, and NBC were consolidated into one question about the believability of broadcast networks. The overarching purpose of the textual analysis was twofold: to evaluate the extent to which each TV news outlet presented Barack Obama and John McCain as possessing the qualities and traits of a legitimate president and, then, to test whether the news outlets' portrayals influenced audience members' legitimacy assessments of the two candidates.

More specifically, the semantic analysis generated a proportional metric, each candidate's count of legitimacy to non-legitimacy references, that was used in conjunction with existing research (e.g., Pew) to designate the six included news outlets as conservative, liberal, or neutral. Second, the legitimacy/non-legitimacy ratio derived from the semantic analysis was a media effects explanatory variable in the final hypothesis to assess whether television news sources' portrayals of the candidates influenced presidential legitimacy assessments. More detail on the textual semantic analysis and the construction and use of the legitimacy ratio is provided in the Textual Semantic Analysis section in this chapter. Before delving into the textual analysis process, the next section is devoted to describing candidate qualities, the building blocks of the concept of presidential legitimacy.

Candidate Qualities

An analysis of candidate qualities in the media necessitates defining which traits are associated with presidential legitimacy. Kinder (1986) conceptualized four principle categories of candidate traits: leadership, competence, integrity, and empathy –

categories that have been widely adopted by political scientists (Holian & Prysby, 2011-2012). Leadership includes perceptions of strength and ability to inspire; competence includes knowledge and intelligence; integrity includes honesty and morality; and empathy is conceptualized of as "understanding someone like me" (Holian & Prysby, 2011-2012). Kinder's (1986) rubric does not include an element that captures more precisely the effect of race in the first presidential election with a black finalist; therefore, the additional candidate quality of "otherness" was added to the legitimacy profile to home in on the characterizations of Barack Obama as different from most Americans. While the candidate quality of empathy contains connotations of similarity (e.g., shares my values), it does not extend to the particular characterizations of Obama as "un-American" or "Muslim" that were present in some media coverage (see Kenski, Hardy, & Jamieson, 2010 for a detailed discussion of terms used to describe both Obama and McCain during the 2008 campaign).

The definitional components of these five legitimacy traits were developed using elements from the 2008 NAES candidate evaluation questions, terms identified by Kenski, Hardy, and Jamieson (2010), and words and phrases from dictionaries in the semantic software employed in the textual analysis. A more extensive description of the development of the presidential legitimacy scenario, the measurement tool in the program used to conduct the semantic analysis, is provided in the following Textual Semantic Analysis section.

Textual Semantic Analysis

Sample

The goal of the textual analysis was to create quantifiable measures of presidential legitimacy by television network for each candidate, measures that were then used as determining criteria to classify the six included networks' overall partisan lean as conservative, liberal, or neutral, and as predictors in the final hypothesis. For the textual analysis, the time frame corresponded to the date on which NAES surveyors began asking media believability questions, February 21, 2008, through Election Day, November 3, 2008.

The unit of analysis was an "instance," which is a word or phrase denoting presidential legitimacy or non-legitimacy in the presidential legitimacy semantic, or word, tree (described later in this section). Six news and political commentary programs provided the instance units of analysis for this exercise, and each program was treated as representative of its airing network. For example, results for *The Today Show* were deemed to be representative of *NBC Nightly News* and *Meet the Press* for NBC. This assumption of representativeness allowed the inclusion of data from NAES respondents who identified news programs other than the six shows included in the sample that aired on same network or who identified only the television network and did not specify a program.

One point of distinction between the NAES and textual analysis sample should again be highlighted. While the 2008 national survey consolidated ABC, CBS, and NBC into a single category of "broadcast networks" for the media believability survey

question, the textual semantic analysis treated the three broadcast networks separately. That is, the textual analysis yielded six separate legitimacy metrics, one for McCain and one for Obama for each of the three networks, rather than two separate metrics, one combined broadcast measure for McCain and one for Obama. ABC, CBS, and NBC were treated independently because the textual semantic analysis revealed the broadcast networks' presentations of presidential legitimacy for the two candidates differed, making it inappropriate to collapse the ratios into two global broadcast TV metrics (one for McCain, one for Obama). The NAES measure of media believability, however, consisted of one metric for all three broadcast networks, a consolidation that presented analytical challenges, described in Chapter V.

The textual analysis sample consisted of 20 same-day airings of each of the six selected programs, for a total sample size of 120 episodes, and included one (1) airing per program per month from February 2008 through May 2008, three (3) airings per program per month from June 2008 through October 2008, and one (1) airing per program in November 2008. For September and October, some episodes were selected for inclusion based on their dates' proximity to the dates of the three presidential debates, September 26, October 2, and October 15. For all other months, episode dates were randomly selected. The shift from one to three airings occurred in June 2008 because this was the first month when both parties had narrowed their respective contender fields to one candidate (McCain became the Republican presumptive nominee in March; Obama did not become the presumptive Democratic

nominee until Clinton suspended her campaign in June 2008). Only one November airing is included because November 3 was Election Day.

Inclusion Criteria for Semantic Analysis Sample

The included programs, listed below in Table 1, were selected based on four criteria: [1] the percentage of 2008 NAES respondents who reported watching either the shows *or*, more often, the networks that aired these shows; [2] percentage of program content dedicated to the 2008 election (for broadcast networks); [3] Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism findings on viewership (for cable networks); and [4] inclusion of the airing network in the 2008 NAES question about media believability. Nexis Lexis at the University of Arizona Libraries was used to locate transcripts for same-day airings of each show.

Table 1: Semantic Textual Analysis News Programs

Program	Network	Type
O'Reilly Factor	Fox	Commentary – nightly, M-F
Countdown with Keith Olbermann	MSNBC	Commentary – nightly, M-F
Anderson Cooper 360	CNN	News – nightly, M-F
Good Morning America	ABC	News – morning, M-S
Early Show	CBS	News – morning, M-S
Today Show	NBC	News – morning, M-S

Criterion 1: Though most African-American and white respondents (87%) either [1] identified only television network without naming a specific program ("unspecified"), [2] reported "Don't know," or [3] replied "local news" or "other" when asked about their primary television sources for campaign news, the "unspecified"

program responses including ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox News Channel, or MSNBC accounted for 59% of the television sources for campaign news (NAES RCS 2008).[9]

Criterion 2: For the three broadcast channels (ABC, CBS, and NBC), morning news shows, in lieu of nightly news casts, were used for analysis because they devoted a larger percentage of their programs to the 2008 electoral campaign than did the nightly news casts (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2009).

Criterion 3: The programs from the three cable networks (CNN, Fox, and MSNBC) were selected because, in 2008, they occupied the same 8:00pm time slot on their respective networks and led their networks in audience size (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2008).

Criterion 4: Finally, during one wave of the survey, the 2008 NAES asked respondents to rate the believability of specific television networks: CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, and a combined group of broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC). The news and political programs selected for content analysis aired on one of these six networks.

Data Preparation: Cleaning the Texts

All text samples were subject to an initial round of data cleaning to reduce the transcript to text relevant McCain and Obama as candidates in the 2008 presidential

[9] Parsing all the NAES news media data by race revealed some interesting commonalities and differences. African Americans in the complete NAES dataset (of more than 57,000 observations) heavily used CNN for campaign news. Just under 39% reported watching "unspecified" programs on CNN to keep abreast of electoral news. Unspecified CNN programming was also the most frequently cited for whites, at nearly 21%, but approximately 18% of white respondents said unspecified Fox News Channel programming was their primary source campaign news. In contrast, about 6% of African-American respondents said Fox was their campaign news source. Both whites and African Americans reported watching "unspecified" local news for electoral coverage, a source that ranked third, after CNN and Fox, for whites and second for blacks, after CNN. For both black and white respondents, less than 6% reported watching "Other" television programs for campaign news; 9% of blacks and 11% of whites replied "Don't know" when asked about their primary televised program for campaign news.

election. Trimming the text reduced the likelihood of unrelated or marginally related text obscuring references to the presidential candidates. The deleted text blocks and reasons for the deletions were retained and cataloged in Word documents (one document with each program's deleted text) and a master Excel deletion tracker all programs. The Excel deletion tracker includes the following information:

1. Number of deleted text blocks; 1,038 total across the six shows
2. Network that was the source of the deletion (one of the six included networks)
3. Air date of program from which text was deleted
4. Reason for the deletion, designated either as "wrong show" or "non-pertinent topic"
5. Topic of deleted text

Examples of entries for excluded text blocks are: ABC's *Nightline* as the topic with a "wrong show" reason on the air date of April 28, 2008; meat recall as the topic with a "non-pertinent topic" reason on ABC's *Good Morning America* episode that aired on February 18, 2008. Any reference to John McCain or Barack Obama, no matter how trivial, that occurred on one of the six included programs was retained in the study sample. A second round of data cleaning, which is discussed below, was conducted after the semantic analysis software was applied to the cleaned program transcripts.

Semantic Analysis Method

A textual analysis software program, Tropes, was employed to analyze the transcripts from episodes of the six included news and political programs. Tropes,

available for download at no cost at http://www.semantic-knowledge.com, was developed through an academic partnership with the University of Paris VIII under the banner of Semantic-Knowledge, an entity dedicated to creating tools that facilitate natural language processing (NLP) (Avram et al., 2014). Tropes' semantic engine operates in six phases. First, the software parses, or hashes, the text into simple propositions – or sentences. Second, it resolves ambiguity; that is, it analyzes context to determine meaning of words that can have multiple meanings. An example relevant to this study is the word "veteran," which can either refer specifically to an individual who served in the military or more generally to a person with long experience in a field (both adjective and noun form). Tropes creators note:

> One of the functions of this software is to solve these ambiguities by means of a set of Artificial Intelligence problem-solving algorithms. Though a perfect result is impossible to achieve, the error rate is low enough to guarantee an accurate analysis of your text. (Acetic and Semantic Knowledge, June 2014)

To this point, "veteran" was a word that, in one case, Tropes mischaracterized as denoting military service rather than experience.

Third, Tropes identifies equivalent classes, or groups of closely related words and concepts. This process occurs through the application of multiple dictionary trees of semantic groups, which consist of related words (e.g., semantic group "citizen" includes the word "voter"), to the text. Tropes contains built-in semantic trees that capture concepts ranging from "famous people" to "physical properties," but also

allows users to construct their own concept trees, called scenarios, by incorporating semantic groups already present in Tropes and by adding new words and phrases associated with topics of interest. Semantic trees are further discussed in the next section.

Fourth, the software performs statistical analyses, identifying the frequency of occurrence of semantic groups, frequency of proximity and/or order of words from different semantic groups, and probability that such frequencies and proximity or order would occur. This process is enabled by comparing occurrence frequency in the text to patterns encoded in software-embedded tables, which represent "linguistic production norms [that] have been derived from the study of a great number of different texts" (Acetic and Semantic Knowledge, June 2014). The power of Tropes lies in its ability to uncover and visualize relationships between words and concepts that might be overlooked in a casual, or even careful, reading of the text:

> [F]inding two References several times in the same text in the same order is indeed unlikely to happen. When it does, it means that these two References are strongly connected, and this reveals the notions emphasized by the author of the text (but not necessarily what he intended to put into the text). (Acetic and Semantic Knowledge, June 2014)

Fifth, Tropes identifies the "most characteristic parts" of the text, or those words and phrases that constitute the primary themes or emphases of the text. Finally, the program creates graphical representations of the results,

generating visualizations to illustrate frequency and proximity of occurrence of words and phrases.

Textual Analysis Semantic Tree

A combination of pre-existing Tropes semantic groups, elaboration of these existing groups through synonym and antonym searches, and key 2008 campaign messaging terms identified by Kenski, Hardy, and Jamieson (2010) was used to create the presidential legitimacy semantic tree for content analysis in Tropes. One advantage of employing extant Tropes groupings is inclusiveness of word categories; for example, "ridicule" is included in the semantic group of "derision," obviating the need to add "ridicule" to the word tree. Tropes also has the ability to recognize words that share the same root (e.g., intelligent and intelligence).

The presidential legitimacy semantic tree consisted of the five candidate quality branches – leadership, competence, integrity, empathy, and otherness– and offshoot branches of words or terms associated with each quality and each quality's antithesis. For example, the competence branch contains the following off-shoot branches:

- Capable and incapable
- Composure and discomposure
- Experienced and inexperienced
- Intelligence and stupidity

Below is an example of some words and terms included in the capable and incapable sub-branches of competence:

Capable	***Incapable***
Capable	Incapable

Qualified	Unqualified
Wise	Unwise

This structure permitted the encapsulation of both traits and antithetical traits within each candidate quality and, then, comparison of frequency of positive and negative references for each candidate. The presidential legitimacy semantic tree can be found in Appendix A.

Data Preparation Part II: Cleaning the Texts Again

After Tropes was applied, a second round of data cleaning was completed to eliminate non-pertinent instances not removed during the first round of text cleaning (e.g., "leader" in Senate Majority Leader, "American" in American Broadcast Corporation, etc.). A total of 1,166 instances were removed, leaving 4,440 instances in the semantic analysis sample – an overall inclusion rate of 79%. Table 2, below, shows number of and percentage excluded and included by network.

Table 2

Semantic Textual Analysis: Unique Instances Excluded and Included by Network

Network	Excluded	Included	Grand Total	% Excluded	% Included
ABC	184	365	549	33.5%	66.5%
CBS	110	327	437	25.2%	74.8%
NBC	97	317	414	23.4%	76.6%
CNN	442	1,581	2,023	21.8%	78.2%
Fox	151	965	1,116	13.5%	86.5%
MSNBC	182	885	1,067	17.1%	82.9%
Grand Total	**1,166**	**4,440**	**5,606**	**21%**	**79%**

Both the excluded and included instances were retained in an Access database, with a "0" value and a "1" value designating the excluded and included references, respectively.

Reliability

Reliability of the semantic textual analysis method was assessed by evaluating the extent to which the author concurred with Tropes' placement of instances into one of the five legitimacy categories. Table 3 shows total number of instances whose categorizations changed and remained the same after review, and Table 4 shows the corresponding percentages. Overall, nearly 94% of the included instances remained in the Tropes-assigned categories. With the exception of reassignment of some instances originally in Otherness to Empathy, relatively few instances were reassigned. The Otherness-Empathy relationship was a notable exception, which typically occurred when instances such as "American" were juxtaposed with the notion that the candidate was out of touch with the average American. Because Empathy was the category with the fewest number of instances, the Otherness to Empathy recategorization had a limited effect on the overall percentage of category change.

Table 3

Number of Instances Recategorized to a Different Legitimacy Category

	Original Legitimacy Category						
Final Legitimacy Category	*Competence*	*Empathy*	*Integrity*	*Leadership*	*Otherness*	*Unchanged*	***Grand Total***
Competence		1	4	12	33	334	384
Empathy			2	21	84	133	240
Integrity	3		1	22	22	583	631
Leadership	9		2	1	23	822	857
Otherness	10	4	9	11		2,294	2,328
Grand Total	**22**	**5**	**18**	**67**	**162**	**4,166**	**4,440**

Table 4

Percentage of Instances Recategorized to a Different Legitimacy Category

	Original Legitimacy Category						
Final Legitimacy Category	*Competence*	*Empathy*	*Integrity*	*Leadership*	*Otherness*	*Unchanged*	***Grand Total***
Competence	0.0%	0.3%	1.0%	3.1%	8.6%	87.0%	100%
Empathy	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	8.8%	35.0%	55.4%	100%
Integrity	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%	3.5%	3.5%	92.4%	100%
Leadership	1.1%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	2.7%	95.9%	100%
Otherness	0.4%	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	0.0%	98.5%	100%
Grand Total	**0.5%**	**0.1%**	**0.4%**	**1.5%**	**3.6%**	**93.8%**	**100%**

A breakdown of recategorized instances by television network is also shown for informational purposes in Table 5.

Table 5

Percentage of Instances Recategorized by Network

	Number of Instances	% Changed Category
ABC	365	2.2%
CBS	327	4.6%
NBC	317	5.7%
CNN	1,581	6.5%
Fox	965	4.4%
MSNBC	885	9.9%
Grand Total	**4,440**	**6.2%**

Generally, networks with a greater number of instances had higher recategorization rates (MSNBC, CNN).

The included instances were also coded as having either a literal or opposite meaning to account for linguistic nuances Tropes did not capture. While Tropes reliably identified "judgment" as an instance that belonged in the Competence category, it did not always differentiate between positive and negative versions of this instance. For example, Senator McCain was quoted on CNN as saying the following about his opponent: "Such a statement portrays the depth of Senator Obama's inexperience and reckless judgment. These are very serious deficiencies for an

American president to process" (CNN *Anderson Cooper 360°*, May 19, 2008). A negative word often flagged an opposite meaning, such as the word "not" preceding "truthful" or "lack" preceding "credibility" or, in the example cited above, "reckless" preceding "judgment." Identifying opposite meaning instances required review of all instances and judgment on the part of the author, which was aided by categorization guidelines delineated in Appendix B. Table 6, below, shows the number and percentage of instances that were designated as literal and opposite by candidate and by legitimate or non-legitimate designation.

Table 6

Literal and Opposite Instance Meaning by Candidate by Legitimate (L) or Non-Legitimate (NL) Designation

	Literal Meaning	Opposite Meaning	% Literal Meaning	% Opposite Meaning
Both Candidates	**16**	**8**	**66.7%**	**33.3%**
L	8		100.0%	0.0%
NL	8	8	50.0%	50.0%
McCain	**1,123**	**572**	**66.3%**	**33.7%**
L	563	59	90.5%	9.5%
NL	560	513	52.2%	47.8%
Obama	**1,646**	**433**	**79.2%**	**20.8%**
L	868	151	85.2%	14.8%
NL	778	282	73.4%	26.6%
Grand Total	**2,785**	**1,013**	**73.3%**	**26.7%**

Overall, approximately 27% of the instance blocks were identified as having an opposite meaning than the literal word. Opposite meanings tended to occur more often with non-legitimate instances than with legitimate instances, an unsurprising finding given that negative words typically indicated a non-literal meaning.

Semantic Analysis Results

Upon completion of verifying the categorization of and assigning a literal or opposite meaning to the 4,440 unique instances per the categorization guidelines, the results were quantified to create the McCain and Obama presidential legitimacy ratios, the metrics that were the final product of the semantic analysis. The metric is a ratio of each candidate's number of legitimacy to number of non-legitimacy references by network, yielding two ratios – one for McCain and one for Obama – by network for a total of 12 ratios, shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Candidate Legitimacy Ratios by Network

	McCain Legitimacy to Non-Legitimacy	Obama Legitimacy to Non-Legitimacy
ABC	1.05	1.07
CBS	0.96	2.20
NBC	1.12	0.78
CNN	0.72	0.76
Fox	0.88	0.25
MSNBC	0.18	1.79
Overall	**0.56**	**0.70**

To account for differences in number of included instances across the six networks, the ratios shown in Table 7 were weighted by the proportion of the total number of included instances that occurred on each network. The weighted ratio was then multiplied by 10 to create a more interpretable scale. Table 7a shows the weighted ratios, which were used in all subsequent analyses. These metrics informed the designation of networks as conservative, neutral, or liberal, a process elaborated in the upcoming Study Variables section.

Table 7a

Standardized Candidate Legitimacy Ratios by Network: Weighted by Percentage of Total Included [A] and Multiplied by Ten [B]

			[A] Ratio Weighted by % of Total Included		[B] Weighted Ratio * 10	
	No. Included	% of Total Included	McCain L to NL	Obama L to NL	McCain L to NL * 10	Obama L to NL * 10
ABC	365	8.22%	0.09	0.09	0.86	0.88
CBS	327	7.36%	0.07	0.16	0.71	1.62
NBC	317	7.14%	0.08	0.06	0.80	0.56
CNN	1,581	35.61%	0.26	0.27	2.56	2.71
Fox	965	21.73%	0.19	0.05	1.91	0.54
MSNBC	885	19.93%	0.04	0.36	0.36	3.57
	4,440	**100%**				

The most striking result of the semantic textual analysis was the sheer frequency with which Obama was mentioned compared to McCain, a phenomenon that underscores the historic nature of Barack Obama's candidacy. Across all six news sources after the first round of data cleaning, there were 7,868 instances of the two candidates' names, and Barack Obama and John McCain respectively accounted for 5,849, or 74%, and 2,019, or 26%, of that total. The distribution at the network level differed somewhat from this global pattern. On the three broadcast networks, considered together, and CNN, Obama accounted for approximately 71% of the total candidate name instance count. On Fox, the news source most critical of Obama, the Democratic candidate accounted for more than 84% of the name instances total, the highest percentage among the six news sources. On MSNBC, Obama comprised almost 79% of the candidate name instances. The media attention, both positive and negative, showered on Barack Obama accentuates the novelty of his status as the first African American to persevere to the final rounds of the presidential contest in United

States history. Table 8, below, similarly illustrates the overall higher number of references to Obama relative to McCain in television campaign coverage.

Table 8

Semantic Textual Analysis Results: Legitimacy (L) and Non-legitimacy (NL) Instance Counts by Candidate, Network, and Legitimacy Category

	McCain		Obama		Totals	
	L	NL	L	NL	Total L	Total NL
ABC	**66**	**63**	**123**	**115**	**189**	**178**
Competence	11	20	4	10	15	30
Empathy	3	9	7	5	10	14
Integrity	13	5	17	10	30	15
Leadership	17	7	43	8	60	15
Otherness	22	22	52	82	74	104
CBS	**66**	**69**	**132**	**60**	**198**	**129**
Competence	4	6	9	5	13	11
Empathy	2	4	3	5	5	9
Integrity	11	13	11	1	22	14
Leadership	27	11	75	2	102	13
Otherness	22	35	34	47	56	82
NBC	**75**	**67**	**77**	**99**	**152**	**166**
Competence	6	2	6	7	12	9
Empathy	2	5	3	5	5	10
Integrity	8	11	10	7	18	18
Leadership	31	16	30	9	61	25
Otherness	28	33	28	71	56	104
CNN	**299**	**413**	**380**	**501**	**679**	**914**
Competence	10	77	17	23	27	100
Empathy	9	38	16	12	25	50
Integrity	49	89	61	46	110	135
Leadership	131	47	117	21	248	68
Otherness	100	162	169	399	269	561
Fox	**97**	**110**	**155**	**614**	**252**	**724**
Competence	3	24	17	43	20	67
Empathy	4	13	7	24	11	37
Integrity	20	14	33	69	53	83
Leadership	34	13	31	21	65	34
Otherness	36	46	67	457	103	503
MSNBC	**91**	**512**	**181**	**101**	**272**	**613**
Competence	6	52	20	4	26	56
Empathy	2	54	7	3	9	57
Integrity	8	102	33	1	41	103
Leadership	25	76	51	15	76	91
Otherness	50	228	70	78	120	306
Grand Total	**694**	**1,234**	**1,048**	**1,490**	**1,742**	**2,724**

In a small number of cases, instances applied to both McCain and Obama and, as such, were included in both candidates' legitimacy ratio calculations.[10] The rare situations in which an instance dually referred to both candidates resulted in a slight difference between the total unique number of instances, the 4,440 shown in Table 3, and the total number of legitimacy or non-legitimacy references by candidate, the 4,466 total (sum of 1,742 and 2,724) in Table 8, which displays the total number of instances by candidate, by network, by legitimacy or non-legitimacy, and by category. The Table 8 total of 4,466 is 26 instances higher than that of Table 3 because of dual counting.

The frequency of specific words or word groups for each candidate was also revealing.

Table 9

Textual Semantic Analysis Results: Top 20 Instance/Word Occurrences by Candidate

	Top 20 Instance Groups: McCain	Count	Top 20 Instance Groups: Obama	Count
1	American(s)	186	Wright	473
2	Joe the plumber	103	American(s)	171
3	strength/strong	101	lead/leader	128
4	lead/leader	72	strength/strong	76
5	truth/true	56	Ayers	68
6	Ayers	49	African American	60
7	hero	37	anti-American/unpatriotic	55
8	angry	39	terrorism	51
9	risk	43	Muslim	46
10	veteran	39	judgment	45
11	terrorism	38	truth/true	46

[10] An example of an instance counting toward both candidates' ratios is a complimentary comment by Bill O'Reilly during the 11/3/2008 airing of *The O'Reilly Factor* on Fox: "Both John McCain and Barack Obama will emerge with their **dignity** intact. Neither candidate did anything untoward despite a bitter partisan media egging them on." In this case, the instance "dignity" was included as indicating legitimacy in the Integrity category for both candidates.

12	judgment	34	celebrity	41
13	legitimate	27	middle class	36
14	racism	27	risk	40
15	same	27	Christian	35
16	African American	23	Ludacris	35
17	honor	23	angry	31
18	Paris Hilton	23	plagiarism	29
19	Wright	23	Oprah	26
20	enthusiasm	19	respect	25
Top 20 Total Instance Count		**989**		**1517**
% Top 20 of Instance Count by Candidate		*51%*		*60%*
Top 10 Total Instance Count		**725**		**1173**
% Top 10 of Instance Count by Candidate		*38%*		*46%*
Top 5 Total Instance Count		**518**		**916**
% Top 5 of Instance Count by Candidate		*27%*		*36%*

For John McCain, American(s) was the most common instance word group; similarly, this instance was the second most frequent for Barack Obama. Of the instance or instance groups that occurred most frequently, 11 of the 20 were shared between the two candidates:

1. African American
2. American/s
3. angry
4. Ayers
5. judgment
6. lead/leader
7. risk
8. strength/strong
9. terrorism
10. truth/true
11. Wright

Though these words were present in reference to both candidates, several were more directly associated with Obama than with McCain: Ayers, African American, and Wright. In fact, Wright references were Obama's most frequent instance, a prevalence

illustrative of the controversy that arose from Obama's association with the pastor. When used in McCain-designated instances, Wright and Ayers references indicated the candidate's decision either to use or not to use these associations to cast doubt on Obama's suitability as a presidential candidate. Fox News, in particular, explicitly argued that Obama's past associations with such controversial individuals suggested a lapse in judgment, which, in turn, suggested unsuitability for the office of the president.

Instances in the top twenty unique[11] to each candidate numbered nine and were as follows:

	McCain	**Obama**
1	enthusiasm	anti-American/unpatriotic
2	hero	celebrity
3	honor	Christian
4	Joe the plumber	Ludacris
5	legitimate	middle class
6	Paris Hilton	Muslim
7	racism	Oprah
8	same	plagiarism
9	veteran	respect

Several of the McCain instances pertained to his military service, for which he has been much lauded: hero, honor, and veteran. Many of the specific Obama references imply questionable circumstances and traits: anti-American/unpatriotic, Christian (often questioning his Christianity), Ludacris, Muslim (again, expressions of doubt about his faith), and plagiarism. Ties to celebrity, from well-regarded, such as Oprah Winfrey, to controversial, such as Ludacris, connote a different-ness from the average American.

[11] Unique refers only to instances occurring in the top 20 for each candidate. Paris Hilton, for example, was also an Obama instance, but it was not among his 20 most frequent instances.

Paris Hilton as a McCain instance was negative: his attempt to tie Obama to frivolity largely fell flat. Interestingly, the term middle class is present three times as often in Obama instances (36) than in McCain instances (12), but Joe the Plumber, one of McCain's top associations, served as McCain's middle class proxy to some degree.

The twenty most frequently occurring instances or instance groups encapsulated the oft-repeated characterizations of the candidates that became themes during the campaign. McCain served his country courageously as a Vietnam veteran, but he represents "more of the same," which, at the onset of the Great Recession in Republican President George W. Bush's administration, was to his detriment. Further, his efforts to distinguish himself as looking out for the interests of the common American (Joe the Plumber trope) and cast aspersions upon Barack Obama (ties to Paris Hilton) were often subject to ridicule. Obama presented himself as champion of the middle class, and he certainly more directly invoked the status of the middle class during his campaign than John McCain did. Despite this tactic, the most frequently occurring Obama-specific instances suggest he was unable to dispel the cloud of the unknown that hung over his candidacy for many Americans. The hallmark distinction between the instances associated with Obama was "difference": Obama was different from McCain, different from all previous presidential candidates.

2008 NAES Sample

Filters were applied to create a study sample that satisfied the dissertation's demographic parameters and that contained observations with data pertinent to studying the relationship between the hypothetical explanatory and response

variables. First, the filtered sample included only respondents who identified as black or white, which accounted for 91% of 2008 respondents [83% white, 8% black], and excluded respondents who either did not know or would not reveal their income level or their educational attainment level (*don't know* as indicated by "998" and *no answer* as indicated "999"). Second, the sample included only data collected from March 21, 2008 through May 29, 2008, the wave during which the NAES interviewers posed both media believability and racial group favoritism questions. The textual analysis time frame extended beyond the NAES analytical sample end date of May 29, 2008 under the assumption that the influence of televised media endured beyond a specific point in time (as documented in the literature review of this manuscript). After the filters were applied, the sample size was 7,784, lower than the 57,967 starting point. Generalizability concerns with the study sample are discussed in the next section.

Non-responses, the *don't know* and *no answer* responses, that were used as or used to create non-demographic variables, such questions on television viewing habits and candidate assessments, were recoded as missing values. Recoding these non-responses as missing allowed the inclusion of observations that contained non-responses to some questions, but valid responses to others. For example, a respondent may not have known the number of hours s/he had watched television on the previous night, but that same respondent may have been willing and able to identify which TV network s/he watched most often for presidential campaign coverage. By recoding this person's response to hours of TV viewing question to missing, SAS, the statistical software used for data analysis, ignored only the missing

variable and did not discard the entire observation (UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group, accessed September 9, 2015). An exception to recoding non-responses as missing values was made for answers to NAES questions about partisan identification and partisan lean because the "998" and "999" responses served as building blocks in the construction of a composite party identification variable (process described below in the Study Variables section).

Generalizability of Results for NAES Sample

The study sample derived from the 2008 NAES was whiter, older, wealthier, and better educated than general population, as measured by the 2010 census (Rastogi et al., 2011). Whites comprised 7,089, or 91%, and blacks comprised 695, or 9%, of the study sample; whites comprised 72% and blacks comprised 13% of the U.S. population at the time of the 2010 census (Rastogi et al., 2011). Additionally, a comparison between the African-American sample in the 2008 NAES and the 2008 U.S. Census Bureau data for African Americans revealed the NAES survey respondent pool over-represented women and was older, better-educated, and more affluent than African Americans in the general population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). A similar pattern existed for whites: NAES white respondents had a higher percentage of female[12], older, better-educated, and wealthier individuals than did the general U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). The overrepresentation of these demographic characteristics was more pronounced for African Americans than for whites, but both the white and black NAES samples skewed in the same direction.

[12] For whites, the sex distribution in the study sample from the 2008 NAES was close to the distribution in the 2010 census.

Though results for the black and white NAES respondents may not be generalizable to the general black and white populations, *the results are arguably generalizable to African Americans and whites who are most likely to vote*: older, more affluent individuals with higher levels of educational attainment (Avery & Peffley, 2005; Baldassarri & Gelman, 2008). Women, too, have been surpassing men in presidential vote turnout in presidential elections since 1980, both overall and for black and white racial groups (Center for American Women and Politics, 2014), which mitigates the concern of female overrepresentation in the NAES sample.

Study Variables

Race, perceived black racial group favoritism, partisan lean of television network, amount of television viewing, believability of television networks, and McCain and Obama presidential legitimacy ratios by television network were the primary predictor variables hypothesized to affect NAES respondents' legitimacy assessments of the two candidates, the key outcome variable. Race, limited to African-American/black and white, was a predictor across all hypotheses. Perceived black racial group favoritism, TV network partisan lean, and TV network believability were initially evaluated as outcome variables before they were tested as explanatory variables; the development of these variables is explored more fully below. For example, race was the primary predictor for the perceived black racial group favoritism response variable in the first hypothesis, and, then, perceived black racial group favoritism was a predictor for network lean preference in the third hypothesis.

The remainder of this section will discuss the control variables included in multivariate analyses, describe the use of explanatory and outcome variables in hypothesis investigation, and, where applicable, explain the way in which variables were created.

Control Variables

Demographic control variables were included in multivariate analyses to address concerns that the relationship between the relevant predictor variable(s) and the dependent variable(s) was spurious. Control variables from the 2008 NAES were:

1. Sex: The value zero denoted male and the value one denoted female in the NAES data. As noted above, women were overrepresented in the study sample, particularly for African Americans (57% for all, 57% for whites, and 64% for blacks).
2. Age: Respondents reported their actual ages at the time of the survey.
    a. Study sample: M = 53.35, SD = 15.47
    b. Whites in study sample: M = 53.92, SD = 15.38
    c. Blacks in study sample: M = 47.53, SD = 15.15
3. Income: Possible NAES responses were (1) less than $10,000 per year; (2) $10,000 to less than $15,000; (3) $15,000 to less than $25,000; (4) $25,000 to less than $35,000; (5) $35,000 to less than $50,000; (6) $50,000 to less than $75,000; (7) $75,000 to less than $100,000; (8) $100,000 to less than $150,000; or (9) $150,000 or more. Descriptive statistics for income are below.

a. Study sample: *M* = 5.83, *SD* = 2.14

b. Whites in study sample: *M* = 5.90, *SD* = 2.12

c. Blacks in study sample: *M* = 5.11, *SD* = 2.62

4. Educational attainment level: For this question, possible responses were (1) grade 8 or lower; (2) some high school, no diploma; (3) high school diploma or equivalent; (4) technical or vocational school after high school; (5) some college, no degree; (6) associate's or two-year college degree; (7) four-year college degree; (8) graduate or professional school after college, no degree; or (9) graduate or professional degree.

    a. Study sample: *M* = 5.62, *SD* = 2.27

    b. Whites in study sample: *M* = 5.66, *SD* = 2.27

    c. Blacks in study sample: *M* = 5.24, *SD* = 2.30

Also included as control variables were a composite party identification variable created from responses to three NAES questions and a party identification-race interaction variable. The composite party identification variable was created by collapsing responses to party identification, strength of identification, and party lean questions into a scale ranging from (1) to (7), with the following designations: (1) strong Republican; (2) moderate Republican; (3) lean Republican; (4) Independent; (5) lean Democrat; (6) moderate Democrat; and (7) strong Democrat. This partisan identification variable was derived from responses to the following three questions in the 2008 NAES:

1. Whether the respondent thinks of self as a Republican (R), Democrat (D), Independent (I), or something else; don't know and no answer were also possible responses
2. If responded R, D, or I to the first question, whether identification was strong, not strong; don't know and no answer were also possible responses
3. If response was not R or D, the question asking which party you think you are closer to is used; possible responses are R, D, or neither; don't know and no answer were also possible responses

The following logic was used to create the seven-level composite party identification variable, treated as a continuous variable in analyses:

1. Republican identifiers who reported a strong party identification were coded as strong Republicans (1).
2. Republican identifiers who reported a weak party identification or responded don't know to the party identification strength question were coded as weak Republicans (2).
3. Independent identifiers who reported leaning toward the Republican Party were coded as leaning Republican (3).
4. Those who responded other or don't know or did not respond to the party identification question, but reported leaning toward the Republican Party were coded as leaning Republican (3).

5. Independent identifiers who reported a strong party identification and reported no lean preference (i.e., neither, don't know, or no answer) were coded as Independents (4).
6. Those who responded other or don't know or did not respond to the party identification question, but reported leaning toward the Democratic Party were coded as leaning Democratic (5).
7. Independent identifiers who reported leaning toward the Democratic Party were coded as leaning Democratic (5).
8. Democratic identifiers who reported a weak party identification or responded don't know to the party identification strength question were coded as weak Democrats (6).
9. Democratic identifiers who reported a strong party identification were coded as strong Democrats (7).

In the study sample, the composite party identification variable had a mean value of 4.29 (*SD* = 2.23), with whites having a mean party identification of 4.11 (*SD* = 2.22) and blacks having a mean party identification of 6.10 (*SD* = 1.37). African Americans in the sample were, thus, more inclined to identify as Democrats than were whites, who tended to be more centrist in their affiliations. The African-American propensity to strongly identify with the Democratic Party was a motivating factor for including the party identification-race interaction variable as a control.

Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism

2008 NAES questions from the "Perceptions of racial and gender favoritism" subsection of the "Social group perceptions" portion of the survey were used to operationalize perceived black racial group favoritism. Responses to the following questions provided the data for this variable:

1. Do you think black elected officials are more likely to favor blacks for government jobs over white applicants?
2. Do you think black elected officials are more likely to support government spending that favors blacks?
3. Do you think black elected officials are more likely to give special favors to the black community?
4. Thinking about the statements you just read, would it be good or bad if black elected officials favored blacks?

Possible responses to the first three questions were (1) strongly agree; (2) somewhat agree; (3) somewhat disagree; and (4) strongly disagree. Possible responses to the fourth question were (1) very bad; (2) somewhat bad; (3) somewhat good; and (4) very good.

As mentioned in Chapter II, perceived black racial group favoritism had different interpretations for blacks and whites. Meaning for African Americans is explained first, followed by meaning for whites. For blacks, this variable was a proxy for linked fate effects, and higher measures of disagreement indicated a stronger sense of linked fate. The logic of using disagreement favoritism occurred as a proxy for linked fate is that

disagreement implied African Americans believed obstacles continued to prevent their group from accruing much benefit from the political system, even when its occupants were African-American. A substantial body of research corroborates this African-American sense that, black politicians and linked fate notwithstanding, inequities persist across a range of social spheres, as discussed at length in Chapter II.

African-American skepticism that blacks have benefitted disproportionately from the actions of black elected officials is also consistent with the expectation states of legitimacy view of a social reality constructed to give whites, particularly white men, the benefit of the doubt, an advantage that non-whites and women do not enjoy. Having to demonstrate the baseline competence and legitimacy assumed to be inherent in white, male elected officials, the positions and actions of African-American elected officials are arguably more heavily scrutinized than those of their white counterparts. Any hints of racial group, or special interest group, favoritism could fulfill expectations of low competence and low legitimacy of African Americans for the white majority. Framing affirmative action, for example, as reverse discrimination reflects that notion that affirmative action constitutes unwarranted special interest favoritism, which is counter to the meritocratic ideals of American society – and, thus, not legitimate public policy. Given this societal landscape of stilted progress and legitimacy challenges, disagreeing that black elected officials favor black interests is a position consistent with linked fate when viewed through the prism of the exigencies African-American elected officials confront as they navigate a largely-white defined, and largely

white-judged, political sphere in which their actions are likely to invite more examination than the actions of white elected officials.

For whites, disagreement that favoritism occurred was interpreted as a pro-black attitude, rather than as a manifestation of linked fate. Agreement that black office holders favored African Americans was interpreted as indicative of racial bias. Thus, the directionality of effect of perceived racial group favoritism should be similar for African Americans and whites with pro-black attitudes and dissimilar between African Americans and whites with anti-black attitudes.

The process to create the perceived black racial group favoritism variable was a multi-stage analysis, which consisted of first running chi square analyses to test for a bivariate relationship; then, running a generalized logistic regression model for responses to each question; and, finally, testing inter-item reliability to assess the reasonableness of summing responses to the questions to create a scale. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess reliability, which was strong for responses to the first three questions (0.87), but only moderately strong with the inclusion of responses to the fourth question (0.72), which asked respondents to assess whether black favoritism was good or bad. In light of these results, only responses to the first three questions were combined to form the perceived black racial group favoritism index variable.

Partisan Lean of News Source

Existing research and the results of the semantic textual analysis of news show transcripts were employed to determine the partisan lean of each network. Generally, the semantic analysis results corresponded with extant research findings, with the

notable exception being NBC. The semantic analysis showed NBC provided more favorable coverage of McCain relative to Obama, suggesting a conservative lean, but scholarly research has ascribed a liberal lean to NBC (Groseclose & Milyo, 2005). Table 10 shows the *weighted* McCain and Obama legitimacy to non-legitimacy ratios generated from the semantic analysis, the differences between the two ratios, and each new source's designated partisan lean based on these ratios.

Semantic Analysis Findings. As indicated by the candidates' legitimacy ratios, MSNBC, CBS, and Fox were the most unequivocally partisan in their coverage of the candidates, but the degrees to which positive or negative coverage of each candidate contributed to the final metrics varied. CBS, for example, did not provide overly negative coverage of John McCain, whose weighted legitimacy ratio was 0.71. The distinguishing factor of CBS coverage was the overwhelmingly positive presentation of Obama, whose legitimacy ratio of 1.62, compared to presentation of McCain, for a 129% difference in ratios.

Table 10

Weighted Candidate Legitimacy Ratios by Network from Semantic Textual Analysis of News Shows and Partisan Lean

	McCain Legitimacy to Non-Legitimacy	Obama Legitimacy to Non-Legitimacy	Difference	Partisan Lean	% Difference in Ratios
ABC	0.86	0.88	-0.02	Neutral	-2%
CBS	0.71	1.62	-0.91	Liberal	-129%
NBC	0.80	0.56	0.24	Conservative	30%
CNN	2.56	2.71	-0.14	Neutral	-6%
Fox	1.91	0.54	1.37	Conservative	72%
MSNBC	0.36	3.57	-3.21	Liberal	-894%

MSNBC was extraordinarily negative in its portrayal of McCain with a weighted ratio of 0.36, the lowest among all scores, but very positively inclined to Obama, whose

weighted ratio of 3.57 was the highest of all 12 metrics; the difference between these ratios was 894%. Fox was strongly favorable toward McCain with a weighted ratio of 1.91, compared to Obama with a weighted ratio of 0.54, a 72% difference. Fox's negative coverage of Obama approximated MSNBC's negative coverage of McCain, but MSNBC's coverage was more biased than was Fox News', as shown by the magnitude of discrepancy between the differences in McCain's and Obama's ratios: 1.37 (72% difference) for Fox News and 3.21 (894% difference) for MSNBC. NBC's coverage was less skewed in a particular direction than that of the MSNBC, CBS, and Fox, but NBC showed a moderate gap in the two candidate legitimacy ratios that suggested a lean, with McCain's weighted ratio 30% higher than Obama's. NBC was consequently coded as conservative. ABC and CNN were designated as neutral because the difference between the two ratios was small at 0.02, or 2%, and 0.14, or 6%, respectively.

Scholarly Findings – Cable News. Lending support to results from the semantic analysis, Stroud (2011) finds that liberals tended to prefer MSNBC and conservatives tended to prefer Fox News for campaign news. Other research supports the liberal lean of MSNBC (e.g., Groseclose & Milyo, 2005; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009) and the conservative lean of Fox News (Baum & Groeling, 2008; Della Vigna & Kaplan, 2007; Groeling, 2008; Groseclose & Milyo, 2005; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009). This same research, however, also supports a liberal lean for CNN (Groseclose & Milyo, 2005; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2011), but other findings have classified CNN as neutral. For example, Groseclose and Milyo (2005) calculate a 56.0 Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) score for CNN's *NewsNight with Aaron Brown*, which is only moderately

to the left of their estimate of 50.06 for the average American voter; by comparison, their average estimated ADA score for all included media outlets was 62.6. Further, the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism (2009) describes CNN's position in the 2008 election as expressly neutral, particularly in comparison to Fox and MSNBC:

> Not only did the topic agenda vary some by network, but a close look at the content also documents that the tone did as well. In a year dominated by politics, the three cable news networks came to fill distinctly different ideological niches. MSNBC tacked farther to the left, establishing itself as a liberal counterweight to Fox News, whose lineup of programs is more conservative. CNN's roster of commentators filled the political spectrum, but its prime-time hosts, with the exception of Lou Dobbs, tend to be more neutral, at least in their on-air presentation. (Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2009)

In the case of CNN, given the semantic analysis results and Pew's (2009) specific designation of CNN as neutral for the purposes of analysis of 2008 campaign news coverage, this network was categorized as neutral, with the caveat that this news source could justifiably be categorized as liberal, as well. MSNBC was categorized as liberal, and Fox was designated as a conservative news outlet.

Scholarly Findings – Broadcast News. Research results on partisan bias in broadcast news are mixed. Identifying more nuance than bias, H.S. Lee (2013) argues microlevel analyses obscure the way in which macrolevel conditions influence the nature of coverage and finds a focus on liberal stories in the 1960s, a shift to

conservative stories in the 1970s and early 1980s, and an "oscillation" around the mean since the mid-1980s. T.T. Lee (2005) finds that partisan and ideological positions affect views of media bias, with strong conservatives and Republicans expressing relatively greater belief in a liberal media bias. Feldman (2011) similarly finds evidence that "the tendency toward selective perception was especially prominent among those partisans whose issue positions were most closely aligned with conservative ideology" (p.427), a phenomenon known as hostile media bias.

Other scholars conclude the media, in general, have a liberal bias (Groeling, 2008, Groseclose & Milyo, 2005; Lichter, 2014). Groseclose and Milyo (2005), who approach the topic as economists, find a moderate to significant liberal bias across news outlets and programs in their study, with the *Washington Times* (newspaper) and *Fox New's Special Report with Brit Hume*, two non-broadcast outlets, as the notable conservative exceptions.[13] Also supporting the notion of a liberal news bias across the broadcast networks, Groeling (2008) compares coverage of positive and negative poll results for Presidents Clinton and G.W. Bush and finds "ABC, CBS, and NBC all appeared to favor good news for Clinton and bad news for Bush, while Fox appeared to favor the reverse" (p. 652). On the other hand, ABC and PBS have been identified as centrist news outlets compared left-leaning CBS and NBC by these same scholars (Groeling, 2008; Groseclose & Milyo, 2005). Illustrating the difficulty in ascribing a partisan lean to broadcast news, Lichter (2014) cites research showing that the tendency of

[13] Interestingly, Groseclose and Milyo (2005) find that the *Wall Street Journal* scored the highest on the liberal index! They attribute this seemingly anomalous finding to the inclusion of only news content in their study; they excluded editorial content, which would have slanted the *WSJ* toward a conservative bias.

journalists and editors to identify as liberal affects news judgments, but also notes that "communication scholars have largely failed to find liberal bias in places where one would expect to see it, such as coverage of presidential campaigns and political institutions" (p. 4).

Consistent with both the semantic analysis results and scholarly research, CBS was coded as liberal and ABC as neutral. Though contrary to research findings, NBC was categorized as leaning conservative, consistent with the semantic analysis results.

Other News Sources[14]. The six news sources included in the semantic analysis were not the only response options in the 2008 NAES – the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), and "local news (unspecified)" were also possible choices. The Christian Broadcasting Network is viewed as a conservative network, a perspective corroborated by the fact that Right Wing Watch, an organization "dedicated . . . to [shedding] light on the activities of right-wing political organizations" (2012), has featured CBN prominently on its website watch list. PBS emerged as one of three "centrist" news organizations in Groseclose and Milyo's (2005) study on media bias[15]. Interestingly, *PBS NewsHour* has been accused of "establishment bias," or relying heavily on elite news sources such as government officials, academicians, think tanks, and corporations, at the expense of representing diverse (e.g., non-white, non-male, public interest advocates) perspectives (Scott et al.,

[14] A total of 6,292 respondents in the dissertation sample, 5,707 whites and 589 blacks, provided a response to the TV program for campaign news question. Of the white respondents, four responded "none" [0%] and 339 [6%] responded they watched a different program not specified by the interviewer. Of the black respondents, zero responded "none" and 31 [5%] responded they watched a different program not specified by the interviewer.

[15] Groseclose and Milyo (2005) rank three specific news programs as centrist: *PBS NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, *CNN NewsNight with Aaron Brown*, and *ABC Good Morning America*.

2010). Establishment bias could represent liberal elitism or indicate a conservative, institutional bias, but, in light of Groseclose and Milyo's (2005) finding, PBS was classified as neutral. Finally, as there was no way to evaluate the partisan lean of unspecified local news, these responses were coded as neutral, under the assumption respondents who did not identify a specific news source and relied on local news for presidential campaign news were not overtly ideological.

Exceptions. *Lou Dobbs Tonight* and *Tucker*, which aired on CNN and MSNBC, respectively, during the 2008 presidential campaign, were also response options for the question about television news sources for campaign information. Though these shows ran on networks categorized as neutral and liberal in this dissertation, Lou Dobbs and Tucker Carlson, the program hosts, are prominent conservatives. In fact, the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism (2009) identifies Dobbs as an explicitly conservative outlier on CNN in a citation used earlier in this section. Additionally, Conservapedia, a website that describes itself as "a clean and concise resource for those seeking the truth . . . [that does] not allow liberal bias to deceive and distort" (2015), has a page dedicated to Lou Dobbs and lists Tucker Carlson as a conservative journalist. Lou Dobbs left CNN in 2009 and joined Fox Business Network in 2010; Tucker Carlson left MSNBC in March 2008 and joined Fox News in May 2009. In light of these program hosts' conservative credentials and ultimate employment status at Fox News Corp, their programs are coded as conservative and grouped with Fox News, rather than with CBS or MSNBC.

In sum, respondents could select news programs from nine networks as their primary source for presidential campaign information. Three news sources and their programs were coded as conservative: Christian Broadcasting Network, Fox News, and NBC (plus CNN's *Lou Dobbs Tonight* and MSNBC's *Tucker*). Four were coded as neutral: ABC, CNN, PBS, and unspecified local news. Two were coded as liberal: CBS and MSNBC. Because of the categorization of heavily watched CNN as neutral, the distribution of responses was concentrated in this category compared to the conservative and liberal categories. Table 11, below, illustrates the distribution of responses across the 5,992 observations in the study sample that included responses to the NAES televised media use question.

Table 11

Distribution of Presidential Campaign Television News Source by Network and Network Partisan Lean

Network and Network Lean	Number of Viewers	Percentage of Total by Lean
Conservative	1,614	27%
Christian Broadcasting Network	3	0%
Fox News	1,264	21%
NBC	347	6%
Neutral	3,599	61%
ABC	617	10%
CNN	2,113	36%
PBS	4	0%
Unspecified local news	865	15%
Liberal	709	12%
CBS	358	6%
MSNBC	351	6%
Total	**5,922**	**100%**

Amount of Television Viewing

In the 2008 NAES, respondents were asked two questions about their television viewing time: the number of hours they watched between 6:00pm and 11:00pm on the

previous night, with possible responses of (0) zero hours, (1) one hour, (2) two hours, (3) three hours, (4) four hours, (5) five hours, or (6) six hours; and the number of days they watched TV for information about the presidential campaign in the past week, with possible responses of (0) zero days, (1) one day, (2) two days, (3) three days, (4) four days, (5) five days, (6) six days, or (7) seven days. Responses to these two questions served to operationalize the total TV viewing time predictor variable for the cultivation theory components of the fourth, fifth, and sixth hypotheses. All respondents in the study sample watched a mean number of 2.57 hours (*SD* = 1.91) of television on the previous night, with whites reporting a mean 2.55 hours of TV viewing time (*SD* = 1.89) and African Americans a mean of 2.80 (*SD* = 2.05). All study sample respondents watched a mean number of 5.51 days (*SD* = 2.40) of television campaign news, with whites reporting a mean of 5.50 days (*SD* = 2.41) and African Americans a mean of 5.58 days (*SD* = 2.30). These figures are consistent with research findings that African Americans watch more television than do whites (Abrams, 2008; Abrams & Giles, 2007; Albert & Jacobs, 2008; Guskin, Moore, & Mitchell, 2011; Pew Research Journalism Project, 2012).

Television Believability

Responses to the four 2008 NAES questions on the believability of Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, and broadcast news stations (ABC, CBS, and NBC) provided the data for the television believability variable, which was the proxy for "buy in" to the media content. For this analysis, those who had not heard of the news organization, the

response option coded as (5) [16], were excluded from the analyses, which left four possible response levels ranging from (1) believe almost nothing of what the organization said to (4) believe most or all of what the news organization said. The NAES did not specify values for response options (2) and (3). Table 12 shows the mean believability rating by network and race (note: media believability was treated as a four-level categorical variable; means are provided here for illustrative purposes only). This descriptive data suggest that blacks are more likely to believe televised news sources across the board, an initial observation contrary to hypothetical predictions.

Table 12

Media Believability by Network by Race

	Fox News	CNN	MSNBC	Broadcast stations (ABC, CBS, NBC)
All respondents	2.59 (1.02)	2.82 (0.92)	2.69 (0.88)	2.70 (0.92)
White respondents	2.58 (1.01)	2.79 (0.92)	2.66 (0.87)	2.67 (0.92)
Black respondents	2.61 (1.06)	3.11 (0.89)	2.95 (0.87)	2.95 (0.90)

Presidential Legitimacy Ratios

The McCain and Obama presidential legitimacy ratios were the product of the textual semantic analysis of transcripts from the six news programs on CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, and the three broadcast stations. The process used to create these metrics was described in an earlier section, Semantic Analysis Results.

Presidential Legitimacy Assessments by NAES Respondents

Presidential legitimacy assessments, the principal response variables under investigation in this dissertation, were based on NAES respondents' answers to

[16] Within the dissertation sample, the number of respondents who said they had not heard of one of the specified news organizations was small: three for Fox, seven for CNN, eight for MSNBC, and 24 for the three broadcast networks.

questions about John McCain and Barack Obama in the "General perceptions of candidates and political figures" section of the survey (The Annenberg Public Policy Center, 2008). The candidate legitimacy outcome variables were created by overlaying Kinder's (1986) candidate qualities and the otherness quality atop the 2008 NAES questions asking respondents to rate the presidential candidates on an eleven point scale on the following nine items:

1. Favorability: is your opinion of the person favorable or unfavorable, with (0) representing very unfavorable and (10) representing very favorable
2. Leadership ability: how well the phrase strong leader applies to the person, with (0) indicating does not apply at all and (10) indicating applies extremely well
3. Trustworthiness: how well the phrase trustworthy applies to the candidate, with (0) indicating does not apply at all and (10) indicating applies extremely well
4. Experience: how well has the phrase experience to be president applies to person, with (0) indicating does not apply at all and (10) indicating applies extremely well
5. Judgment: how well has the phrase judgment to be president applies to person, with (0) indicating does not apply at all and (10) indicating applies extremely well

6. Ready to be president: how well is the phrase ready to be president applies to person, with (0) indicating does not apply at all and (10) indicating applies extremely well
7. Says what s/he believes: how well is the phrase says what s/he believes applies to person, with (0) indicating does not apply at all and (10) indicating applies extremely well
8. Patriotic: with (0) indicating does not apply at all and (10) indicating applies extremely well
9. Shares respondent's values: how well the phrase shares my values applies to the person, with (0) indicating does not apply at all and (10) indicating applies extremely well

A tenth question on readiness to be Commander-in-Chief was excluded from the analysis because the NAES surveyors posed this question from May 30, 2008 through November 3, 2008, a time period outside the March 21, 2008 through May 29, 2008 window that framed the dissertation analyses. As noted earlier, responses to these questions served as proxies for expectation states predictions about competence and legitimated leader status (Ridgeway & Berger, 1986). Each of the nine included questions was placed in one of the four Kinder (1986) candidate quality categories or the otherness category, as shown in Table 13. As described later in Chapter VI, the relationship between race and responses to each question for McCain and Obama were initially tested using a bivariate *t*-test. Then, Cronbach's alpha was calculated to verify inter-item reliability for the responses to the nine questions for each of the candidates,

yielding a value of 0.95 and 0.98 for McCain and Obama, respectively. Upon finding high inter-item reliability, responses to the nine questions were summed to create presidential two legitimacy scores, one for McCain and one for Obama. Then, a comparative ratio of Obama legitimacy to McCain legitimacy was calculated to create an outcome variable comparing their relative perceived presidential legitimacy.

Table 13

Mapping of 2008 NAES Perception of Candidates Questions to Presidential Legitimacy Qualities

	Leadership	Competence	Integrity	Empathy	Otherness
2008 NAES Question	Strong leader	Experience to be president	Trustworthy	Shares my values	Patriotic
		Judgment to be president	Says what believes		Favorability
		Ready to be president			

Analytical Procedures

Analyses were multi-staged for all hypotheses, with relationships between race and the relevant outcome variable initially tested by conducting either chi square analyses or *t*-tests. Chi square was the first test when the outcome variable was categorical, as was the case for the four-level response to the perceived black racial group favoritism questions in *Hypothesis 1*; the three-level response to news source partisan lean in *Hypotheses 2* and *3*; and the four-level response to the media believability questions in *Hypothesis 4*. A *t*-test was the first test performed when the outcome variable was continuous, as was the case for the perceived black racial group favoritism variable constructed by summing the responses to the racial group favoritism questions in *Hypothesis 1*; and for responses to the nine NAES candidate

perception questions and for the McCain and Obama presidential legitimacy scores based on these responses in *Hypotheses 5* and *6*.

If the chi square and *t*-tests yielded statistically significant results, reliability tests were conducted to assess the appropriateness of creating a scale variable by summing responses to multiple questions. Next, multivariate analyses were conducted to test whether and how relationships persisted when additional explanatory variables and controls were added to the equations.

For categorical response variables, two multivariate approaches were tested: ordinal logistic regression and generalized logistic regression. Ordinal logistical regression is frequently used to analyze survey response data because the responses often consist of levels that have an inherent order (Derr, 2013), such as the four-level response range of strongly agree to strongly disagree for the NAES racial group favoritism questions. But ordinal logistic regression is only appropriate if an explanatory variable has the same effect on the cumulative log odds at all response levels; that is, when the slope for the covariate is the same at all response levels, a condition referred to the proportional odds, or equal slopes, assumption (Derr, 2013). The SAS procedure for ordinal logistic regression first tests the null hypothesis of whether the proportional odds assumption holds. If the chi square test produces statistically significant results, the null that proportional odds holds is rejected – signaling ordinal logistic regression is ***not*** the appropriate statistical test for the data.

Though the NAES survey data would appear to conform to the proportional odds assumption, the responses to all the included questions failed to satisfy this

requisite assumption, with the chi square test for proportional odds yielding highly significant results across the board. In light of these results, generalized logistic regression, which has no equal slopes assumption, was the statistical procedure applied for hypotheses with categorical response variables. Generalized logistic regression is an alternative statistical analysis method for nominal response outcomes that do not satisfy the proportional odds assumption necessary for ordered logistic regression (Statistical Computing Seminar, accessed July 2015).

For continuous response variables, multiple regression was the statistical test of choice for analysis. The relevant continuous response variables were the summative perceived black racial group favoritism variable, responses to the NAES candidate perception questions, the McCain and Obama legitimacy scores (created by summing the responses to the nine NAES candidate perception questions for each candidate), and the Obama to McCain comparative legitimacy ratio, created by dividing Obama's NAES legitimacy score by McCain's. A modification of Ngo's (2012) recommended five-step approach for building and fitting a multiple regression model was adopted to conduct a more rigorous assessment (relative to the *t*-test) of the relationship between the predictors and continuous outcome variables. The five steps are outlined in the next paragraph, and their specific application to hypothesis testing is revisited in subsequent chapters.

Variable selection, the first step in Ngo's (2012) model building, was not applied because of the relatively small number of study variables. Further, extant literature, as surveyed in Chapter III, provides a theoretical foundation to include the predictors

identified in this project. Ngo's (2012) second step is evaluating model adequacy by running an analysis of variance procedure to check multiple model criteria, such as overall model significance provided by the predictor variables as a group (global *F*-test); inferences about the parameters (*t*-tests and confidence intervals); and amount of variation explained by the model (R^2, *adjusted* R^2). In step three, model assumptions are tested. Standard regression assumptions are normally distributed data, random error mean of zero, independence of random errors, and homogeneity of variance. A component of assumption testing is analyzing whether the data contain outliers that affect model fit, predictor values that exert undue leverage, or influential observations that disproportionately affect the outcome variable. Data plots, such as the residual against predicted value plot, normal probability plot, and studentized residual against leverage plot, and statistical metrics, such as the Durbin-Watson test, variance inflation factors, (VIF) and Cook's Distance, were used to assess whether model assumptions held.

Outlier and influential observations diagnostics revealed the data used to predict continuous outcomes were affected by these problems in some cases. Rather than remove the affected observations from the sample, an alternative to least squares regression, robust regression, was adopted for analysis to mitigate the effects of influential observations on results. Robust regression, a procedure available in SAS, is designed to "provide resistant (stable) results in the presence of outliers" (Chen, 2002, p. 1). The term "outliers," in the case of robust regression, is used as an umbrella category that includes observations with deviant patterns in the *x*-direction (leverage),

y-direction (influence), and both directions (Chen, 2002). Whether robust or least squares regression is used is addressed specifically in relevant instances in later chapters, but, in situations where robust regression was used, least squared regression results are also provided to show the standardized betas, which allow for comparison of effects across predictors.

The focus of the fourth step is remediation of any problems identified in the third step (Ngo, 2012). Violation of homogeneity of variance, for example, could be addressed by transforming the response variable, and, the Box-Cox test can assist identifying the appropriate transformation (e.g., natural log). If variation inflation factors indicate multicollinearity (VIF near or greater than 10), then removal of one of the correlated explanatory values may be warranted. As already discussed, robust regression was the remedy for outlying observations. Finally, step five in Ngo's (2012) guidelines is model validation, which is essentially running the full model and check predicted values and parameters for reasonableness.

For both generalized logistic and multiple regressions, predictor and control variables for which zero was not a meaningful value were grand mean centered. Grand mean centering helps to mitigate multicollinearity problems that can occur in multivariable analyses, particularly those with interaction terms. Centered control variables were age, education, income, and party identification. Centered predictors were perceived black racial group favoritism, the television viewing time variables (hours viewed the previous night and days of campaign TV news watched during the week), and the McCain and Obama legitimacy to non-legitimacy ratios derived from the

semantic analysis. Interaction terms were calculated using the grand mean centered versions of these variables.

Next, Chapter IV will discuss the specific application of statistical procedures and test results to assess the extent to which African Americans exhibited linked fate as measured by perceived black racial group favoritism, as posited in the first hypothesis.

Chapter IV. Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism for African Americans

Results: Responses to NAES Racial Group Favoritism Questions

The first hypothesis sought to validate the accuracy of the prediction that African Americans exhibited a degree of racial group favoritism characteristic of linked fate by testing the relationship between race and the responses to a series of racial group favoritism questions posed in the 2008 NAES. The relationship was examined separately for three questions and at the macrolevel using the summative index variable, perceived black racial group favoritism, which was created by summing the responses to NAES questions on racial group favoritism. The pertinent NAES questions were:

1. Do you think black elected officials are more likely to favor blacks for government jobs over white applicants?
2. Do you think black elected officials are more likely to support government spending that favors blacks?
3. Do you think black elected officials are more likely to give special favors to the black community?

Chi square analyses for each question were initially conducted to test for differences in response category by race, and results for responses to all four questions were highly significant, signifying statistically significant differences between blacks and whites in their responses. For the question about black favoritism for government employment the results were $X^2(3, N = 7{,}298 = 249.02, p < 0.0001$. For the question about black favoritism for government spending, the results were $X^2(3, N = 7{,}295) =$

128.09, $p < 0.0001$. For the question about likelihood of black elected officials giving special favors to the black community, the results were $X^2(3, N = 6{,}312) = 255.80$, $p < 0.0001$.

Having established a likely difference between white and black race in measures of black favoritism, the general logit model was applied to responses to the three questions to investigate model fit and directionality and persistence of the relationship between race and the outcome variables in the presence of controls. In generalized logistic regression models, the first assessment is testing the null hypothesis that the model with fewer variables is a better fit than is the full model; if the null is rejected, the proposed generalized logistic model is the superior fit. Next, goodness of fit is tested with the Pearson chi square statistic. In this test, the desired outcome is acceptance of the null hypothesis that the observed values conform to the expected values generated by the model.

For perceived black racial group favoritism, the generalized logistic regression models generated highly statistically significant Wald tests, indicating rejection of the null hypothesis that the smaller model (i.e., model with fewer coefficients) was better than the proposed model (i.e., model with more coefficients currently being tested) across all three questions. Further, the Pearson chi square test statistic indicated failure to reject the null hypothesis across all three question response sets. As noted in the preceding paragraph, failure to reject the null hypothesis, as measured by a high Pearson chi square p-value (e.g., $p > 0.10$), indicates a good model fit (Allison, 2014). An R^2 measure can also be used to assess the model's explanatory power. Though

interpretation of the R^2 in generalized logistic regression differs from interpretation in least squares regression (i.e., does not estimate percentage of variance explained by the model), the higher the R^2 is the better (Allison, 2014).

For the question about black favoritism for government employment, the Wald test results were $X^2(18, N = 7{,}298) = 601.2$, $p < 0.0001$, and the Pearson test results were $X^2(19{,}000, N = 7{,}298) = 19{,}192.61$, $p = 0.27$ and $R^2 = 0.09$. For the question about black favoritism for government spending, Wald test results were $X^2(18, N = 7{,}295) = 498.68$, $p < 0.0001$, and the Pearson test results were $X^2(19{,}000, N = 7{,}298) = 19{,}003.15$ $p = 0.53$ and $R^2 = 0.07$. For the question about likelihood of black elected officials giving special favors to the black community, the Wald test results were $X^2(18, N = 6{,}312) = 574.20$, $p < 0.0001$, and the Pearson test results were $X^2(17{,}000, N = 6{,}312) = 16{,}697.41$, $p = 0.55$ and $R^2 = 0.10$. In the model including the partisan identification-race interaction term for the third question, the Wald test results were $X^2(21, N = 6{,}312) = 577.77$, $p < 0.0001$, and the Pearson test results were $X^2(17{,}000, N = 6{,}312) = 16{,}731.78$, $p = 0.46$ and $R^2 = 0.10$. Thus, in all cases, the generalized logistic regression results shows the full model was a better fit than was the reduced model (indicated by Wald test results to reject the null) and that the model generated variable values consistent with expectations (Pearson chi square results indicating failure to reject the null). Black race was, therefore, associated with disagreement that black elected officials exhibited favoritism for black constituents.

The maximum likelihood and odds ratios (i.e., exponentiated coefficients) estimates for predictors in the response data for the three included questions are in

the below tables, which separately display interaction and non-interaction variables, if interaction terms rose to statistical significance. In all models, the lowest response value of (1) was the reference category, meaning all logit odds were modeled in comparison to strongly agree that black racial group favoritism exists.

Results for the employment favoritism question (Table 14) showed that race was significantly associated with disagreement that black elected officials favored African Americans for government employment opportunities. The odds that an African-American respondent strongly disagreed over strongly agreed that black officials favored black candidates for government jobs was 3.88 times the odds of whites, or 288% times higher than the odds of whites. The odds ratio for somewhat disagreeing to strongly agreeing showed a similar, though less pronounced, relationship of blacks more likely to disagree than to agree favoritism existed (1.77). Democratic Party identification was also associated with disagreement that black employment favoritism occurred, and partisan identification effects did not differ by race, indicating liberal leans did not explain disagreement among African Americans (race-partisan identification interaction not statistically significant). The converse was true for whites, who were more likely to respond that black employment favoritism exists. These relationships persisted with the inclusion of the control demographic variables.

In sum, race exerted the strongest effect, followed by sex and, then, partisan identification on the perception that black employment favoritism occurred, with

blacks, women, and Democrats more likely than whites, men, and Republicans to disagree favoritism existed.

Table 14

Generalized Logistic Regression of 2008 NAES Question 1 on Whether Agree Black Elected Officials Favor Blacks for Government Employment by Race and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.99	0.07	217.39***	2.70	
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	1.13	0.07	288.95***	3.09	
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.86	0.07	155.71***	2.35	
Sex					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.25	0.09	7.95**	1.28	1.08, 1.52
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.09	0.09	1.10	1.10	0.92, 1.30
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	-0.07	0.09	0.53	0.94	0.79, 1.12
Race					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	1.36	0.21	41.38***	3.88	2.57, 5.86
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.57	0.22	6.79**	1.77	1.15, 2.71
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.09	0.24	0.13	1.09	0.68, 1.75
Age					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	-0.02	0.00	66.92***	0.98	0.97, 0.98
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	-0.01	0.00	25.17***	0.99	0.98, 0.99
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.00	0.00	0.89	1.00	0.99, 1.00
Education					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.16	0.02	57.58***	1.18	1.13, 1.23
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.15	0.02	52.23***	1.16	1.12, 1.21
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.08	0.02	13.65***	1.08	1.04, 1.13
Income					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.09	0.02	15.89***	1.10	1.05, 1.14
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.05	0.02	5.27*	1.05	1.01, 1.10
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.05	0.02	4.50*	1.05	1.00, 1.10
Party identification					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.18	0.02	87.46***	1.20	1.16, 1.25
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.10	0.02	27.69***	1.11	1.07, 1.15
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.05	0.02	6.31*	1.05	1.01, 1.10

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses are strongly agree (1), somewhat agree (2), somewhat disagree (3), or strongly disagree (4)

The second question on whether respondents agreed black elected officials supported spending that favored African Americans showed a similar directionality of relationship, albeit to a lesser degree, with black race associated with disagreement

that black constituents benefitted from favoritism. Race was only a significant factor for the odds of strongly disagreeing over strongly agreeing with this statement, with African Americans having 1.90 times (90% higher) the odds of whites of expressing strong disagreement compared to strong agreement. Party identification was highly significant, with Democratic affiliation associated with disagreement that African-American politicians favored spending that benefits blacks. Partisanship was the most consistent effect in this model, with statistically significant differences at all three response levels and large effect size differences at the strongly disagree to strongly agree (1.26 odds ratio) and somewhat disagree to strongly agree (1.16 odds ratio) levels. Relationships persisted in the presence of control variables, and female sex was again associated with disagreement that black racial group favoritism existed. Similar to results for the first question, the party identification-race interaction term was not statistically significant, showing the effect of partisan identification did not differ for blacks and whites – and that the effect of black race on disagreement was not due to Democratic identification. Results for this generalized logistic regression are in Table 15.

Table 15

Generalized Logistic Regression of 2008 NAES Question 2 on Whether Agree Black Elected Officials Support Spending that Favors Blacks by Race and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.56	0.06	75.03***	1.75	
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.80	0.06	169.07***	2.24	
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.86	0.06	197.30***	2.36	
Sex					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.45	0.08	28.92***	1.57	1.33, 1.85
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.28	0.08	11.70***	1.32	1.13, 1.55
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.07	0.08	0.77	1.07	0.92, 1.26
Race					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.64	0.17	14.64***	1.90	1.37, 2.64
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.02	0.18	0.01	1.02	0.72, 1.43
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.04	0.18	0.05	1.04	0.73, 1.48
Age					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	-0.02	0.00	53.03***	0.98	0.98, 0.99
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	-0.02	0.00	43.65***	0.98	0.98, 0.99
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	-0.01	0.00	9.54**	0.99	0.99, 1.00
Education					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.13	0.02	39.32***	1.14	1.09, 1.18
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.12	0.02	35.46***	1.13	1.08, 1.17
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.10	0.02	26.22***	1.11	1.07, 1.15
Income					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.06	0.02	6.63*	1.06	1.01, 1.11
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.01	0.02	0.20	1.01	0.97, 1.05
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.01	0.02	0.41	1.01	0.97, 1.06
Party identification					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.23	0.02	143.50***	1.26	1.21, 1.31
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.15	0.02	62.35***	1.16	1.12, 1.20
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.06	0.02	11.81***	1.07	1.03, 1.11

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses are strongly agree (1), somewhat agree (2), somewhat disagree (3), or strongly disagree (4)

For the third question on agreement that black elected officials bestowed special favors on the black community, race was significantly associated with the likelihood of expressing strong disagreement over strong agreement that such favoritism occurs, with African Americans having 3.62 times the odds of expressing strong disagreement compared to whites (262% times higher). Party identification was again highly significant, with Democrats more likely than Republicans to disagree that black elected officials granted special favors to black constituents at all response levels. Relationships persisted in the presence of controls. Table 16 shows the generalized logit analysis results.

For responses to this question, the partisan identification-race interaction was statistically significant, as shown in Table 17, at the somewhat disagree to strongly agree and somewhat agree to strongly agree levels. Even with the significant interaction, however, race was still highly significant at the strongly disagree to strongly agree level and exerted a strong effect on the outcome variable, with blacks having more than twice the odds of expressing strong disagreement compared to whites (3.09 odds ratio). For strongly disagree versus strongly agree, the effect of black race was not related to partisanship, as the partisanship-race interaction term was not statistically significant at this level. In contrast, partisanship did influence black responses at the other two response levels: at the somewhat disagree and somewhat agree levels, race was not statistically significant, but the partisan identification-race interaction was statistically significant, showing Democrat partisanship was a factor in

some African Americans' disagreement that black political favoritism occurred in black communities.

Table 16

Generalized Logistic Regression of 2008 NAES Question 3 on Whether Agree Black Elected Officials Give Special Favors to Black Community by Race and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.78	0.07	120.64***	2.18	
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.93	0.07	179.30***	2.54	
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.92	0.07	174.73***	2.51	
Sex					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.36	0.09	15.50***	1.43	1.20, 1.71
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.19	0.09	4.33*	1.21	1.01, 1.44
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	-0.02	0.09	0.04	0.98	0.82, 1.17
Race					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	1.29	0.21	37.58***	3.62	2.40, 5.47
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.19	0.22	0.71	1.21	0.78, 1.88
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.19	0.23	0.71	1.22	0.77, 1.91
Age					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	-0.02	0.00	42.66***	0.98	0.98, 0.99
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	-0.01	0.00	21.80***	0.99	0.98, 0.99
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.00	0.00	1.93	1.00	0.99, 1.00
Education					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.18	0.02	66.20***	1.20	1.15, 1.26
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.17	0.02	60.80***	1.19	1.14, 1.24
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.14	0.02	36.41***	1.15	1.10, 1.20
Income					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.09	0.02	12.62***	1.09	1.04, 1.14
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.03	0.02	1.59	1.03	0.98, 1.08
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.05	0.02	4.02*	1.05	1.00, 1.10
Party identification					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.21	0.02	104.74***	1.24	1.19, 1.29
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.12	0.02	34.75***	1.13	1.09, 1.18
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.06	0.02	8.41**	1.06	1.02, 1.11

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses are strongly agree (1), somewhat agree (2), somewhat disagree (3), or strongly disagree (4)

Table 17

Generalized Logistic Regression of 2008 NAES Question 3 on Whether Agree Black Elected Officials Give Special Favors to Black Community by Race, Partisan Identification-Race Interaction, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.78	0.07	119.45***	2.17	
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.93	0.07	178.30***	2.53	
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.92	0.07	173.38	2.50	
Sex					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.36	0.09	15.62***	1.44	1.20, 1.72
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.19	0.09	4.34*	1.21	1.01, 1.44
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	-0.02	0.09	0.05	0.98	0.82, 1.17
Race					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	1.13	0.24	21.53***	3.09	1.92, 4.98
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	-0.09	0.28	0.12	0.91	0.53, 1.57
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	-0.26	0.30	0.75	0.77	0.43, 1.39
Age					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	-0.02	0.00	42.81***	0.98	0.98, .99
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	-0.01	0.00	22.16***	0.99	0.98, .99
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.00	0.00	2.10	1.00	0.99, 1.00
Education					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.18	0.02	66.28***	1.20	1.15, 1.26
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.17	0.02	61.12***	1.19	1.14, 1.24
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.14	0.02	36.79***	1.15	1.10, 1.20
Income					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.08	0.02	12.38***	1.09	1.04, 1.14
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.03	0.02	1.47	1.03	0.98, 1.08
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.05	0.02	3.78+	1.05	1.00, 1.10
Party identification					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.21	0.02	99.16***	1.24	1.19, 1.29
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.12	0.02	30.91***	1.12	1.08, 1.17
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.05	0.02	6.29*	1.05	1.01, 1.10
Party identification-race interaction					
Strongly disagree to strongly agree	0.14	0.11	1.67	1.15	0.93, 1.43
Somewhat disagree to strongly agree	0.21	0.12	2.96+	1.24	0.97, 1.58
Somewhat agree to strongly agree	0.31	0.13	5.52*	1.37	1.05, 1.78

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses are strongly agree (1), somewhat agree (2), somewhat disagree (3), or strongly disagree (4)

Results: Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism Model

Upon completion of analysis of the individual questions and calculation of Cronbach's alpha, responses to the three questions were summed to create the

perceived black racial group favoritism variable. The newly created variable, in contrast to its components, was treated as a continuous variable since the summation operation created 12 response levels (as opposed to the four levels in each question) across nearly 8,000 respondents. To initially test for differences in perceived black racial group favoritism by race, a bivariate test (*t*-test) was conducted and yielded significant results, with black respondents showing higher perceived black racial group favoritism scores ($M = 9.19$, $SD = 2.62$) than white respondents ($M = 7.72$, $SD = 2.89$), $t(848.56) = -13.87$, $p < 0.0001$; the Satterthwaite method for unequal variances was used for estimation due to the rejection of the null hypothesis of equal variances between the black and white groups.

Upon finding significant bivariate results, regression analysis was run to test whether the relationship between race and perceived black racial group favoritism persisted with the addition of control variables. Results of the regression were highly significant, with all statistically significant predictors significant at the $p < 0.0001$ level; the party identification and race interaction variable was not statistically significant. As shown in Table 18, black race was positively associated with the newly created perceived black racial group favoritism variable, as were Democratic Party identification, female sex, and education level, indicating disagreement with the idea that blacks received special favors from black elected officials. Partisanship, race, and age had the largest effect sizes. Age was negatively associated with perceived black racial group favoritism; that is, older respondents generally agreed that African-American elected officials engaged in preferential policy making to benefit other

African Americans. The *R*-squared for the model was low, showing the model explained only 8% of the variation in perceived black racial group favoritism. Though the partisan identification-race interaction term was not statistically significant, the model including this variable is shown because the interaction term did not greatly affect the values of the other predictors.

Table 18

Regression Analysis of Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism by Race, Partisan Identification-Race Interaction, and Control Demographics

Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Coefficient (*β*)

	B	*SE*	β
Intercept	7.53***	0.05	0.00
Sex	0.39***	0.07	0.07
Race	1.19***	0.18	0.12
Age	-0.02***	0.00	-0.12
Education	0.12***	0.02	0.09
Income	0.07***	0.02	0.06
Party identification	0.19***	0.02	0.15
Party identification-race interaction	-0.09	0.08	-0.02
R-squared = 0.08			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Values for perceived black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

Summary of Results: Individual Question Models and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism Model

Generalized logistic analyses of responses to the three included NAES questions and regression analysis of the perceived black racial group favoritism variable, a summation of responses to the three questions, lent support to the first hypothesis that African Americans expressed a level of ingroup identification that set them apart from whites, a sentiment approximated by the perceived black racial group favoritism variable. These analyses showed perceived black racial group favoritism was not

necessarily a belief that African Americans gleaned benefits from the political system through black elected officials. On the contrary, perceived black racial group favoritism signified a recognition of the inability of the political system to respond specifically to black needs. Perceived black racial group favoritism, as defined in this study, was characterized by African Americans' recognition that the political-social world tended to skew against their ingroup's favor. This relationship between black race and perceived black racial group favoritism persisted in the face of controls, including the party identification-race interaction term.

The interpretation of the perceived black ingroup favoritism results differs for whites, who were more likely to believe that African Americans in public office acted in the interests of the black community. For African Americans, disagreement that black elected officials favored "their own" was interpreted as a cognizance of continued societal challenges for African Americans and, thus, as an expression of ingroup identification characteristic of linked fate. For whites, agreement that black racial group favoritism occurred in public policy was interpreted as an indicator of the persistent, racism-tinged beliefs that African Americans benefitted disproportionately from policies enacted by black elected officials; such beliefs eclipsed any pro-black sentiment among whites, as anticipated. These analytical results highlight a racial gap in perception exists alongside a racial gap in social circumstances.

Overall, these analyses illustrated partisan identification and race had the largest effect sizes on perceived black racial group favoritism, a variable that is treated as a predictor, rather than an outcome, in the next chapter. Chapter V explores the

relationship between race, perceived black racial group favoritism, and televised news media, arguing, though African Americans may have tended to select sources that were consistent with their political preferences, they were still less affected than whites by the television news programs they used for political information.

Chapter V. Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, and the Media

This chapter will present the results of tests for three media-related hypotheses: *Hypothesis 2*, which posits African Americans preferred neutral or liberal that portrayed Barack Obama in a relatively amiable light over conservative televised news sources and that whites conversely preferred conservative news sources; *Hypothesis 3*, which predicts that perceived black racial group favoritism augmented the African-American preference for non-conservative televised news sources; and *Hypothesis 4*, which proposes African Americans were less likely than whites to report believing televised news content. The second and third hypotheses are addressed together, followed by the fourth media believability hypothesis.

Results: Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism and TV Network Preference

To initially evaluate whether race and linked fate beliefs, the latter operationalized by the perceived black racial group favoritism variable, affected television news source preference, chi square analyses were conducted separately with race and perceived black racial group favoritism to test for a relationship between each of these predictors and the partisan lean of the television network respondents identified as their primary source of information for presidential campaign news. The partisan network lean variable had three response levels, conservative (-1), neutral (0), and liberal (1). For the chi square test with perceived black racial group favoritism and partisan network lean, a categorical version of perceived black racial group favoritism was employed rather than the continuous, grand mean centered version of this variable. The choice to use chi square to test with a predictor variable otherwise

treated as continuous was motivated by simplicity: running a chi square operation as a baseline test was more straightforward than running a logistic analysis for the three-level categorical outcome variable of partisan network lean. Chi square results with both race and perceived black racial group favoritism as predictors were statistically significant, generating $X^2(2, N = 7{,}784) = 89.32$, $p < 0.0001$ for race and $X^2(22, N = 7{,}533) = 48.41$, $p = 0.001$ for perceived black racial group favoritism. These preliminary results showed whites and blacks used television sources with different partisan leans and perceived black racial group favoritism was associated with differential use of news sources.

Having established the existence of baseline relationships between race and partisan network lean and perceived black racial group favoritism and partisan network lean, generalized logistic regression was used to conduct a more rigorous assessment of the relationships with control variables. In both cases, odds of using a liberal or neutral TV news source for presidential campaign news were evaluated against the odds of using a conservative news source. Odds of using a neutral source compared to a conservative source are of particular interest because both white and black respondents in the NAES study sample reported CNN, designated as neutral in this study, as their primary televised source for news about the 2008 presidential election campaign.

As explained in Chapter III, existing research and the results of the semantic textual analysis of news show transcripts (the candidate legitimacy ratios) were employed to determine the partisan lean of each network, with the semantic analysis

as the deciding factors for the six news sources included in the semantic analysis. Given that the candidate legitimacy ratios from the semantic analysis were used to designate network lean, a liberal network was interpreted to present a positive portrayal of Barack Obama relative to John McCain and a conservative network to present a positive portrayal of John McCain relative to Barack Obama. Neutral sources were interpreted to present balanced portrayals of the two candidates. Per the candidate legitimacy ratios, conservative news sources were Fox News and NBC; liberal news sources were CBS and MSNBC; ABC and CNN were neutral sources. Again, PBS and unspecified local news were designated as neutral and the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) as conservative.

The generalized logistic regression models for both partisan network lean by race and partisan network lean by perceived black racial group favoritism met global significance and model fit tests. For partisan lean of televised news source by race, the Wald statistic was $X^2(12, N = 7{,}784) = 610.10$, $p < 0.0001$, and the Pearson test results were $X^2(13{,}000, N = 7{,}784) = 13{,}510.54$, $p = 0.36$ and $R^2 = 0.10$. For partisan lean of televised news source by perceived black racial group favoritism, the Wald statistic was $X^2(14, N = 7{,}533) = 584.88$, $p < 0.0001$, and the Pearson test results were $X^2(15{,}000, N = 7{,}533) = 14{,}894.99$, $p = 0.24$ and $R^2 = 0.10$. Tables 19 and 20 show the results for the analysis of the relationship between race and perceived black racial group favoritism, respectively, and the partisan lean of the NAES respondents' preferred network for presidential campaign news.

Table 19

Generalized Logistic Regression of Partisan Lean of Preferred News Outlet by Race and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Intercept - liberal to conservative	-0.96	0.07	188.95***	0.38	
Intercept - neutral to conservative	-0.59	0.05	493.33***	2.65	
Sex					
Liberal to conservative	-0.06	0.09	0.43	0.94	0.79, 1.13
Neutral to conservative	0.07	0.06	1.56	1.07	0.96, 1.20
Race					
Liberal to conservative	0.52	0.18	8.71**	1.68	1.19, 2.36
Neutral to conservative	0.45	0.13	11.78***	1.58	1.22, 2.04
Age					
Liberal to conservative	0.00	0.00	0.98	1.00	0.99, 1.00
Neutral to conservative	-0.01	0.00	42.39***	0.99	0.98, 0.99
Education					
Liberal to conservative	0.01	0.02	0.33	1.01	0.97, 1.06
Neutral to conservative	0.00	0.01	0.12	1.01	0.98, 1.03
Income					
Liberal to conservative	-0.02	0.02	0.77	0.98	0.93, 1.03
Neutral to conservative	-0.10	0.02	40.96***	0.91	0.88, 0.93
Party identification					
Liberal to conservative	0.32	0.02	219.04***	1.38	1.32, 1.44
Neutral to conservative	0.25	0.01	365.36***	1.28	1.25, 1.32

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

The generalized logistic regression results of partisan network lean by race (Table 19) show black race was statistically significantly associated with preferring both liberal and neutral TV news sources over conservative news sources. African Americans' odds of preferring a liberal to conservative source were 68% higher than the odds of whites having this preference; blacks' odds of preferring a neutral over conservative source were 58% higher than the odds of whites. Identifying as a Democrat was also associated with preferring a liberal or neutral TV news source over a conservative source, with odds 38% higher for liberal over conservative and 28% higher

for neutral over conservative with increased levels of Democratic identification.

Overall, the prediction in *Hypothesis 2* that African Americans preferred either liberal or neutral televised news outlets that presented Obama favorably, or at least not unfavorably, relative to McCain was supported. Partisan identification did not explain the differences across race, as the partisanship-race interaction term failed to achieve statistical significance.

Table 20

Generalized Logistic Regression of Partisan Lean of Preferred Televised News Outlet by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Intercept - liberal to conservative	-0.96	0.07	181.90***	0.38	
Intercept - neutral to conservative	0.96	0.04	466.50***	2.62	
Sex					
Liberal to conservative	-0.06	0.09	0.46	0.94	0.78, 1.13
Neutral to conservative	0.07	0.06	1.34	1.07	0.96, 1.20
Race					
Liberal to conservative	0.51	0.18	8.20**	1.66	1.17, 2.36
Neutral to conservative	0.47	0.13	12.06***	1.60	1.23, 2.08
Age					
Liberal to conservative	0.00	0.00	0.73	1.00	0.99, 1.00
Neutral to conservative	-0.01	0.00	39.61***	0.99	0.98, 0.99
Education					
Liberal to conservative	0.01	0.02	0.35	1.01	0.97, 1.06
Neutral to conservative	0.01	0.01	0.37	1.01	0.98, 1.04
Income					
Liberal to conservative	-0.03	0.03	0.99	0.98	0.93, 1.02
Neutral to conservative	-0.10	0.02	37.28***	0.91	0.88, 0.94
Party identification					
Liberal to conservative	0.32	0.02	202.07***	1.37	1.31, 1.43
Neutral to conservative	0.25	0.01	341.32***	1.28	1.25, 1.31
Perceived black racial group favoritism					
Liberal to conservative	0.02	0.02	1.15	1.02	0.99, 1.05
Neutral to conservative	0.00	0.01	0.04	1.00	0.98, 1.02

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses are conservative lean (-1), neutral (0), or liberal lean (1)

Table 20 above shows results for the logistic regression of partisan lean of television news source by perceived black racial group favoritism and race. The principal purpose of this regression was to test whether race moderated perceived black racial group favoritism, such that black race amplified the effect of perceived black racial group favoritism on preference for televised news source. As the results show, while race had statistically significant main effects, perceived black racial group favoritism did not. Race had a significant effect on preference for a liberal news source over a conservative source, with the odds of African Americans showing this preference 1.66 times the odds of whites. Similarly, the odds of blacks preferring a neutral over conservative source were 1.60 times the odds of whites. The effect of partisanship was strongly statistically significant, with Democratic identification associated with 37% higher odds of preferring liberal over conservative sources and 28% higher odds of preferring neutral over conservative sources.

Table 21 shows the perceived black racial group and preferred network lean model with the party identification-race interaction and perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction terms. In this model, the party-race interaction was not statistically significant, signifying differences in race were not attributed to partisan preference. Party identification was the most reliable and statistically significant predictor in the model with interactions, with the odds of Democratic-leaning respondents preferring liberal and neutral networks over conservative 37% and 28% higher, respectively, than the odds of Republican-leaning respondents.

Table 21

Generalized Logistic Regression of Partisan Lean of Preferred Televised News Outlet by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Intercept - liberal to conservative	-0.96	0.07	181.86***	0.38	
Intercept - neutral to conservative	0.96	0.04	465.86***	2.62	
Sex					
Liberal to conservative	-0.06	0.09	0.46	0.94	0.78, 1.13
Neutral to conservative	0.07	0.06	1.34	1.07	0.96, 1.20
Race					
Liberal to conservative	0.59	0.28	4.36*	1.80	1.04, 3.13
Neutral to conservative	0.46	0.18	6.39*	1.59	1.11, 2.27
Age					
Liberal to conservative	0.00	0.00	0.59	1.00	0.99, 1.00
Neutral to conservative	-0.01	0.00	39.63***	0.99	0.98, 0.99
Education					
Liberal to conservative	0.01	0.02	0.35	1.01	0.97, 1.06
Neutral to conservative	0.01	0.01	0.38	1.01	0.98, 1.04
Income					
Liberal to conservative	-0.02	0.03	0.94	0.98	0.93, 1.03
Neutral to conservative	-0.10	0.02	37.32***	0.91	0.88, 0.94
Party identification					
Liberal to conservative	0.31	0.02	190.81***	1.37	1.31, 1.43
Neutral to conservative	0.25	0.01	330.90***	1.28	1.25, 1.31
Perceived black racial group favoritism					
Liberal to conservative	0.03	0.02	3.13+	1.03	1.00, 1.07
Neutral to conservative	0.00	0.01	0.02	1.00	0.98, 1.02
Party identification-race interaction					
Liberal to conservative	0.04	0.12	0.11	1.04	0.82, 1.32
Neutral to conservative	0.01	0.08	0.02	1.01	0.87, 1.18
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction					
Liberal to conservative	-0.13	0.06	4.42*	0.88	0.77, 0.99
Neutral to conservative	-0.01	0.05	0.01	1.00	0.90, 1.10

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses are conservative lean (-1), neutral (0), or liberal lean (1)

In this model, the interaction between perceived black racial group favoritism and race was statistically significant at one level, but the directionality of the relationship between this interaction term and network preference ran counter to

predictions. The odds ratio of 0.88 at the liberal to conservative level indicates blacks were less likely to prefer liberal over conservative television news sources as perceived black racial group favoritism increased, a result that suggests linked fate, as operationalized in this study, conferred no additive effect to race. To ascertain the source of this unexpected finding, this interaction is graphically represented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism (IGF) Interaction: Partisan Lean of Preferred Television Source for Campaign News

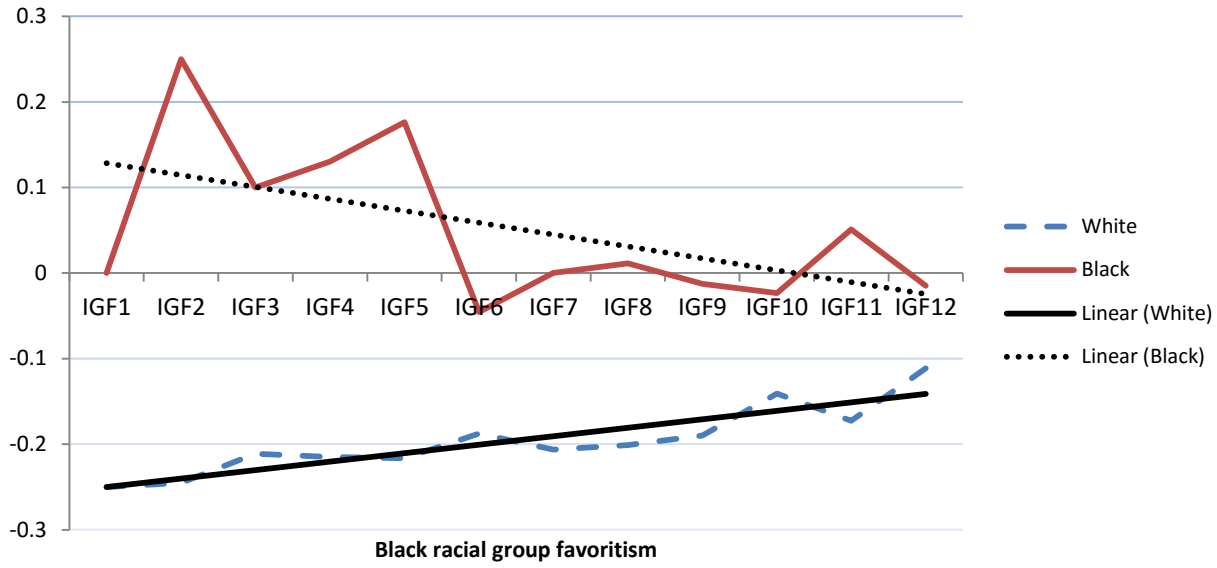


Figure 2 does, indeed illustrate that African Americans tended to become more conservative in their TV network preferences at higher levels of perceived black racial group favoritism, the proxy for linked fate for African Americans. Nevertheless, that the line representing black preferences generally stays near or above zero indicates blacks generally preferred neutral or liberal television news sources for campaign news, in contrast to whites, whose line below zero indicates a consistent preference for conservative sources. Interestingly, this figure shows a contrasting trend for whites, for

whom higher levels of perceived black racial group favoritism were associated with a liberalization of TV network preference.

Overall, results did not support the prediction in *Hypothesis 3* that race and perceived black racial group favoritism interacted for African Americans to increase the odds of preferring a liberal or neutral over a conservative televised news source, the last of which would generally portray Obama relatively less favorably compared to McCain, the implications of which are also explored in the final summary section of this chapter.

Results: Televised News Source Believability

Before investigating the presence of cultivation effects in more complex regression models, baseline relationships between race and perceptions of televised media believability and perceived black racial group favoritism and perceptions of televised media believability were evaluated, a process that once again began with chi square analyses. The results for race and media believability were statistically significant for three of the four new sources, with Fox News as the exception. For the consolidated ABC, CBS, and NBC variable, results were $X^2(3, N = 6{,}389) = 61.57$, $p < 0.0001$; for CNN, results were $X^2(3, N = 4{,}230) = 65.93$, $p < 0.0001$; for MSNBC, results were $X^2(3, N = 6{,}984) = 81.70$, $p < 0.0001$; and for Fox News, results were at $X^2(3, N = 7{,}022) = 10.36$, $p = 0.2$. The non-significant findings for race and Fox News believability raised the question as to whether the Fox News viewer subset had sufficient variation as to make statistical analysis meaningful. The chi square results for perceived black racial group favoritism (categorical version of variable) and TV believability were

consistently significant across all networks. For the consolidated ABC, CBS, and NBC variable, results were $X^2(33, N = 6{,}266) = 161.76$, $p < 0.0001$; for CNN, results were $X^2(33, N = 4{,}194) = 157.55$, $p < 0.0001$; for MSNBC, results were $X^2(33, N = 7{,}203) = 182.26$, $p < 0.0001$; and for Fox News, results were $X^2(33, N = 6{,}825) = 186.47$, $p < 0.0001$.

Exploring further the Fox News case, this model had a particular challenge: a paucity of African-American viewers, one for every 34 white viewers, in the dissertation's reduced NAES study sample. Table 22 shows the number of respondents by race for the question on primary television news source for presidential campaign news; the table includes only respondents who selected one of the pre-defined NAES options for televised news source. The ratio of white to black viewers was smallest for CNN and MSNBC, followed by unspecified local news and, then, the consolidated broadcast category. Fox News, however, stood out as an overwhelmingly white news source, and this discrepancy appeared to create a situation of insufficient sample variance, thereby limiting the meaningfulness of statistical analysis. Given this problem, Fox News was omitted in further analyses on media believability in this chapter, though Fox News believability was retained as a predictor in the models with media variables in Chapter VII.

Table 22

2008 NAES Television News Source for Presidential Campaign News by Race – White (W) and Black (B)

Network	W	B	% Network of W Total	% Network of B Total	Ratio of W to B
Broadcast subtotal	1,229	93	22%	16%	13
ABC	572	45	10%	8%	13
CBS	324	34	6%	6%	10
NBC	333	14	6%	2%	24
CNN	1,821	292	32%	50%	6
Fox News	1,228	36	22%	6%	34
MSNBC	305	46	5%	8%	7
Christian Broadcasting Network	3	0	0%	0%	n/a
PBS	4	0	0%	0%	n/a
Unspecified local news	774	91	14%	15%	9
Other	339	31	6%	5%	11
None	4	0	0%	0%	n/a
Total	**5,707**	**589**	**100%**	**100%**	**10**

With the chi square tests illustrating statistically significant relationships between race or perceived black racial group favoritism and televised media believability for three of the four models, the process of building more complex models that included cultivation theory predictors proceeded. The outcome variable was a four-level categorical variable where a "1" indicated the respondent believed almost nothing the televised news organization reported and a "4" indicated the respondent believed all or most of what the news organization said. Generalized logistic regressions, where the response of believing almost nothing the news organization said, or a "1" response, was the reference category against which odds of responses of "2", "3", or "4" (the last of which represents believing almost everything the source reports) responses were calculated, were performed for each of the three included networks, or network groups in the case of the broadcast channels. The generalized logistic regression analyses for the three news sources all achieved global statistical

significance and showed good model fit. The global and fit tests results for all four models will now be presented, and, then, parameter estimates and odd ratios for and items specific to each network model will be individually discussed. The model for ABC, CBS, and NBC believability yielded a Wald statistic of $X^2(27, N = 6{,}125) = 669.59$, $p < 0.0001$ and a Pearson statistic of $X^2(18{,}000, N = 6{,}125) = 18{,}451.28$, $p = 0.29$ and $R^2 = 0.11$. The CNN believability model Wald statistic was $X^2(27, N = 6{,}682) = 732.53$, $p < 0.0001$, and the Pearson statistic was $X^2(20{,}000, N = 6{,}682) = 20{,}200.99$, $p = 0.18$and $R^2 = 0.12$. The MSNBC believability model Wald statistic was $X^2(27, N = 7{,}082) = 784.23$, $p < 0.0001$, and the Pearson statistic was $X^2(21{,}000, N = 7{,}082) = 21{,}204.11$, $p = 0.52$ and $R^2 = 0.11$. The significant Wald statistics indicate rejection of the null hypothesis that a smaller model offers a better fit than does the proposed model. The statistically insignificant Pearson statistics indicate failure to reject the null hypothesis that the proposed model values deviate from the observed values.

Broadcast Networks – ABC, CBS, and NBC: Results

For each television news source, a basic model will first be presented, followed by a model with interaction terms that attained statistical significance; if no interaction terms were statistically significant, only the main effects model will be presented. This is the case for the broadcast believability model, for which interactions between race and multiple variables – party identification, perceived black racial group favoritism, television viewing time – and between perceived black racial group favoritism and television viewing time were not statistically significant.

Table 23

Generalized Logistic Regression of Broadcast Television Believability by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Believe almost all vs. almost nothing	-0.26	0.16	2.41	0.77	
Believe some vs. almost nothing	0.96	0.14	33.57***	2.60	
Believe little vs. almost nothing	1.05	0.14	36.57***	2.85	
Sex					
Almost all	0.73	0.10	50.16***	2.08	1.70, 2.55
Some	0.45	0.09	24.25***	1.57	1.31, 1.89
Little	0.24	0.09	6.65**	1.28	1.06, 1.53
Race					
Almost all	-0.24	0.20	1.41	0.79	0.54, 1.17
Some	-0.48	0.19	6.28*	0.62	0.42, 0.90
Little	-0.37	0.20	3.41+	0.69	0.47, 1.02
Age					
Almost all	-0.03	0.00	79.30***	0.97	0.96, 0.98
Some	-0.02	0.00	55.82***	0.98	0.97, 0.98
Little	-0.01	0.00	13.85***	0.99	0.98, 0.99
Income					
Almost all	-0.07	0.03	6.11*	0.93	0.88, 0.99
Some	0.01	0.03	0.08	1.01	0.96, 1.06
Little	-0.01	0.03	0.26	0.99	0.94, 1.04
Education					
Almost all	-0.02	0.03	0.46	0.98	0.94, 1.03
Some	0.10	0.02	18.28***	1.10	1.05, 1.15
Little	0.06	0.02	6.93**	1.06	1.02, 1.11
Party identification					
Almost all	0.36	0.03	210.30***	1.44	1.37, 1.51
Some	0.29	0.02	163.40***	1.33	1.27, 1.39
Little	0.17	0.02	52.51***	1.18	1.13, 1.23
Perceived black racial group favoritism					
Almost all	0.07	0.02	16.35***	1.08	1.04, 1.11
Some	0.07	0.02	20.86***	1.08	1.04, 1.11
Little	0.05	0.02	8.09**	1.05	1.02, 1.08
Hours watched TV on previous night					
Almost all	0.07	0.03	6.07*	1.07	1.01, 1.13
Some	0.03	0.03	1.43	1.03	0.98, 1.08
Little	-0.01	0.03	0.05	0.99	0.95, 1.05
Days watched TV for campaign news in past week					
Almost all	0.07	0.02	8.37**	1.07	1.02, 1.12
Some	0.04	0.02	3.94*	1.04	1.00, 1.08
Little	0.00	0.02	0.00	1.00	0.96, 1.04

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001
For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black
Possible responses to outcome variable of media believable are (1) believe almost nothing to (4) believe almost all of what the organization says

The direction of the relationship between black race and media believability is in the predicted direction at all three response levels and, for two of the three levels, at marginally statistically significant levels. Odds ratios show odds of blacks believing over not believing were 0.62 and 0.69 times the odds of whites believing at the some to none and little to none levels, respectively. Perceived black racial group favoritism and media believability are, in contrast, positively related, with increases in the predictor related to small to moderate increased likelihood to report believing the broadcast stations. The cultivation predictors – number of days watched of television for campaign news, number of hours watched of television the night before – were statistically significant for three of the six response levels across the two television viewing time variables. The days and hours of television watched predictors were positively and moderately related to media believability, with an increase in number of days associated with an increased likelihood of believing almost all or some of broadcast coverage over believing none. Party identification was an important control variable, both statistically and effectively, with Democratic identification associated with broadcast believability; odds of believing over not believing broadcast news were 44%, 33%, and 18% higher for Democratic identification than for Republican identification.

The results for the broadcast model supported the fourth hypothetical prediction that race was negatively associated with televised media believability and

also showed the existence of a small cultivation effect, which is consistent with extant research on effect size (Gerbner, 1988; Gerbner et al., 1980; Jamieson & Romer, 2015). Race was not shown to moderate the effect of television viewing time, or any other predictor, including perceived black racial group favoritism, on broadcast believability. Perceived black racial group favoritism did not augment blacks' tendency to doubt the veracity of broadcast news.

It is also important to remember that the NAES asked respondents to consider the believability of ABC, CBS, and NBC in one question under the umbrella of "broadcast channels," but each of these three networks was designated as having a different partisan lean, with ABC as neutral, CBS as liberal, and NBC as conservative. The consolidation of the three broadcast networks into one category, therefore, could have produced confounding effects on the results.

CNN: Results

Unlike the broadcast network findings, interaction terms influenced perceived believability of CNN among NAES respondents. Results from both the original generalized logistic regression and model with interaction terms are displayed below in Tables 24 and 25.

Table 24

Generalized Logistic Regression of CNN Believability by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Believe almost all vs. almost nothing	0.42	0.15	8.13**	1.52	
Believe some vs. almost nothing	1.27	0.14	86.23***	3.58	
Believe little vs. almost nothing	0.98	0.14	47.54***	2.67	
Sex					
Almost all	0.65	0.10	42.30***	1.92	1.58, 2.34
Some	0.37	0.09	15.90***	1.45	1.21, 1.75
Little	0.01	0.10	0.02	1.01	0.84, 1.23
Race					
Almost all	-0.12	0.21	0.31	0.89	0.59, 1.34
Some	-0.42	0.21	4.13*	0.66	0.44, 0.99
Little	-0.27	0.22	1.58	0.76	0.50, 1.17
Age					
Almost all	-0.03	0.00	58.39***	0.97	0.97, 0.98
Some	-0.02	0.00	26.64***	0.98	0.98, 0.99
Little	-0.01	0.00	2.65	0.99	0.99, 1.00
Income					
Almost all	-0.06	0.03	5.51*	0.94	0.89, 0.99
Some	-0.01	0.03	0.08	0.99	0.94, 1.05
Little	0.02	0.03	0.38	1.02	0.96, 1.07
Education					
Almost all	-0.02	0.02	0.49	0.98	0.94, 1.03
Some	0.08	0.02	10.59**	1.08	1.03, 1.13
Little	0.03	0.02	1.77	1.03	0.99, 1.08
Party identification					
Almost all	0.37	0.02	225.91***	1.45	1.38, 1.52
Some	0.30	0.02	173.47***	1.36	1.30, 1.42
Little	0.17	0.02	49.82***	1.18	1.13, 1.24
Perceived black racial group favoritism					
Almost all	0.08	0.02	20.50***	1.08	1.05, 1.12
Some	0.09	0.02	27.20***	1.09	1.06, 1.13
Little	0.06	0.02	14.03***	1.07	1.03, 1.10
Hours watched TV on previous night					
Almost all	0.07	0.03	7.01**	1.08	1.02, 1.13
Some	0.01	0.03	0.17	1.01	0.96, 1.06
Little	0.00	0.03	0.02	1.00	0.95, 1.06
Days watched TV for campaign news in past week					
Almost all	0.04	0.02	3.13+	1.04	1.00, 1.08
Some	0.03	0.02	2.87+	1.04	1.00, 1.08
Little	0.04	0.02	3.29+	1.04	1.00, 1.08

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses to outcome variable of media believable are (1) believe almost nothing to (4) believe almost all of what the organization says

Discussing the first model in Table 24, race was negatively related to CNN believability at all levels, though only statistically significant at the some versus almost none level. Perceived black racial group favoritism, on the other hand, was moderately related to tendency to trust CNN coverage compared to mistrusting CNN at all three levels at high levels of statistical significance. The coefficients for hours and days watched television showed support for a small cultivation effect. Finally, Democratic Party identification is very strongly related to the likelihood of believing CNN coverage.

Table 25

Generalized Logistic Regression of CNN Believability by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Believe almost all vs. almost nothing	0.53	0.16	10.64**	1.70	
Believe some vs. almost nothing	1.43	0.15	89.28***	4.19	
Believe little vs. almost nothing	1.10	0.16	49.01***	3.01	
Sex					
Almost all	0.65	0.10	42.65***	1.93	1.58, 2.34
Some	0.38	0.09	16.28***	1.46	1.22, 1.76
Little	0.01	0.10	0.02	1.02	0.84, 1.23
Race					
Almost all	-0.11	0.55	0.04	0.89	0.30, 2.62
Some	-0.98	0.56	3.05+	0.38	0.13, 1.13
Little	-0.47	0.58	0.65	0.63	0.20, 1.96
Age					
Almost all	-0.03	0.00	57.42***	0.97	0.97, 0.98
Some	-0.02	0.00	25.58***	0.98	0.98, 0.99
Little	-0.01	0.00	2.48	1.00	0.99, 1.00
Income					
Almost all	-0.06	0.03	5.18*	0.94	0.89, 0.99
Some	-0.01	0.03	0.06	0.99	0.94, 1.05
Little	0.02	0.03	0.43	1.02	0.97, 1.07
Education					
Almost all	-0.02	0.02	0.49	0.98	0.94, 1.03

Some	0.07	0.02	10.31**	1.08	1.03, 1.13
Little	0.03	0.02	1.78	1.03	0.99, 1.08
Party identification					
Almost all	0.38	0.03	223.62***	1.46	1.39, 1.53
Some	0.31	0.02	174.35***	1.37	1.31, 1.43
Little	0.17	0.02	48.78***	1.19	1.13, 1.25
Perceived black racial group favoritism					
Almost all	0.16	0.05	10.53**	1.17	1.06, 1.29
Some	0.18	0.05	14.94***	1.19	1.09, 1.31
Little	0.18	0.05	13.96***	1.20	1.09, 1.31
Hours watched TV on previous night					
Almost all	0.08	0.03	7.40**	1.08	1.02, 1.15
Some	0.02	0.03	0.33	1.02	0.96, 1.07
Little	0.01	0.03	0.05	1.01	0.95, 1.07
Days watched TV for campaign news in past week					
Almost all	0.02	0.02	0.48	1.02	0.97, 1.07
Some	0.01	0.02	0.07	1.01	0.96, 1.05
Little	0.02	0.02	0.61	1.02	0.97, 1.07
Party identification-race interaction					
Almost all	-0.23	0.14	2.87+	0.80	0.61, 1.04
Some	-0.28	0.13	4.34*	0.76	0.58, 0.98
Little	-0.07	0.14	0.22	0.94	0.71, 1.24
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction					
Almost all	-0.03	0.07	0.17	0.97	0.84, 1.12
Some	-0.04	0.07	0.28	0.96	0.83, 1.11
Little	-0.06	0.08	0.54	0.95	0.81, 1.10
Hours watched TV on previous night-race interaction					
Almost all	-0.07	0.10	0.52	0.93	0.77, 1.13
Some	-0.06	0.10	0.35	0.94	0.77, 1.15
Little	-0.04	0.11	0.11	0.97	0.79, 1.19
Days watched TV for campaign news in past week-race interaction					
Almost all	0.10	0.08	1.58	1.11	0.94, 1.30
Some	0.21	0.08	6.18*	1.23	1.05, 1.46
Little	0.07	0.09	0.74	1.08	0.91, 1.28
Hours watched TV on previous night-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction					
Almost all	-0.01	0.01	0.35	1.00	0.98, 1.01
Some	0.00	0.01	0.00	1.00	0.98, 1.02
Little	0.00	0.01	0.23	1.00	0.99, 1.02
Days watched TV for campaign news in past week-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction					
Almost all	-0.01	0.01	1.98	0.99	0.97, 1.00
Some	-0.02	0.01	4.66*	0.98	0.97, 1.00
Little	-0.02	0.01	8.12**	0.98	0.96, 0.99

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses to outcome variable of media believable are (1) believe almost nothing to (4) believe almost all of what the organization says

In the CNN believability model with interaction terms, race was again negatively associated with believing some over none of the coverage, but only at a marginally statistically significant level for the some versus almost nothing level. Consistent with the first model, perceived black racial group favoritism and Democratic Party identification were strongly associated with CNN believability, and the main effect of hours watched the previous night continued to exert a moderate cultivation effect. Moderators were present in this model, where black race attenuated the effect of liberal partisanship on believability by reversing the direction of effect in a moderating relationship and reducing the odds of trusting CNN; odds of believing almost all or some versus none decreased from 1.46 and 1.37 for liberal leaning respondents to 0.80 and 0.76 for *black*, liberal leaning respondents. Black race, however, appeared to augment the cultivation effect of watching days of television (at the some versus almost nothing level). Perceived black racial group favoritism, in contrast, slightly reduced the effect of number of hours of TV watched the night before on CNN believability.

The CNN results lent some support to the fourth hypothesis' prediction of a negative relationship between black race and media believability and perceived black racial group favoritism and media believability, as shown in the party identification-race, hours watched television-perceived black racial group favoritism, and days watched television campaign coverage-perceived black racial group favoritism

interaction terms. On the other hand, black race augmented the cultivation effect of television viewing days at least at one response level.

MSNBC: Results

MSNBC model results are displayed in Table 26. Though two of the results for the race predictor were in the expected direction – negative – they were not statistically significant. Perceived black racial group favoritism was, however, positively associated with MSNBC believability.

Table 26

Generalized Logistic Regression of MSNBC News Believability by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Believe almost all vs. almost nothing	-0.07	0.15	0.23	0.93	
Believe some vs. almost nothing	1.20	0.13	83.04***	3.33	
Believe little vs. almost nothing	1.16	0.13	76.32***	3.20	
Sex					
Almost all	0.67	0.10	42.02***	1.96	1.60, 2.40
Some	0.40	0.09	19.68***	1.50	1.25, 1.79
Little	0.16	0.09	2.87+	1.17	0.98, 1.40
Race					
Almost all	0.03	0.21	0.02	1.03	0.68, 1.56
Some	-0.30	0.20	2.15	0.74	0.50, 1.11
Little	-0.16	0.21	0.57	0.85	0.57, 1.29
Age					
Almost all	-0.02	0.00	48.01***	0.98	0.97, 0.98
Some	-0.02	0.00	35.74***	0.98	0.98, 0.99
Little	-0.01	0.00	9.90**	0.99	0.98, 1.00
Income					
Almost all	-0.09	0.03	11.77***	0.91	0.86, 0.96
Some	-0.01	0.03	0.19	0.99	0.94, 1.04
Little	-0.01	0.03	0.24	0.99	0.94, 1.04
Education					
Almost all	-0.09	0.03	11.47***	0.92	0.87, 0.97
Some	0.08	0.02	11.58***	1.08	1.03, 1.13
Little	0.05	0.02	4.92*	1.05	1.01, 1.10
Party identification					
Almost all	0.35	0.02	193.05***	1.41	1.35, 1.48

Some	0.29	0.02	170.63***	1.33	1.28, 1.39
Little	0.15	0.02	43.32***	1.16	1.11, 1.21
Perceived black racial group favoritism					
Almost all	0.08	0.02	19.18***	1.08	1.05, 1.12
Some	0.08	0.02	27.58***	1.09	1.06, 1.12
Little	0.06	0.02	13.57***	1.06	1.03, 1.10
Hours watched TV on previous night					
Almost all	0.10	0.03	11.61***	1.10	1.04, 1.16
Some	0.04	0.03	2.15	1.04	0.99, 1.09
Little	0.01	0.03	0.05	1.01	0.96, 1.06
Days watched TV for campaign news in past					
Almost all	0.03	0.02	2.28	1.03	0.99, 1.08
Some	0.04	0.02	3.36+	1.04	1.00, 1.08
Little	0.03	0.02	1.97	1.03	0.99, 1.07

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses to outcome variable of media believable are (1) believe almost nothing to (4) believe almost all

The hours TV watched term was statistically significant at the almost all over almost none, showing odds of believing MSNBC coverage increased 10% with increases in hours of television watched on the previous night. One level of days watched TV for campaign news was marginally significant and, similar to the hours of TV viewing predictor, was indicative of a small cultivation effect. Party identification was a strong effect, statistically significant at all levels and with Democrat-identifiers likelier than Republican-identifiers to believe what MSNBC said.

Table 27

Generalized Logistic Regression of MSNBC Believability by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Television Viewing Time, Interaction Terms and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), Wald X^2, Odds Ratio (*OR*), & 95% Confidence Interval (*CI*)

	B	*SE*	Wald X^2	*OR*	95% *CI*
Believe almost all vs. almost nothing	-0.16	0.16	1.09	0.85	
Believe some vs. almost nothing	1.17	0.13	75.19***	3.21	
Believe little vs. almost nothing	1.11	0.14	66.80***	3.04	
Sex					
Almost all	0.68	0.10	42.32***	1.96	1.60, 2.41
Some	0.41	0.09	20.09***	1.51	1.26, 1.80
Little	0.16	0.09	2.97+	1.17	0.98, 1.40

Race					
Almost all	1.05	0.68	2.34	2.85	0.75, 10.89
Some	0.49	0.67	0.54	1.64	0.44, 6.08
Little	0.53	0.68	0.61	1.70	0.45, 6.48
Age					
Almost all	-0.02	0.00	48.04***	0.98	0.97, 0.98
Some	-0.02	0.00	35.30***	0.98	0.98, 0.99
Little	-0.01	0.00	10.07**	0.99	0.98, 1.00
Income					
Almost all	-0.09	0.03	11.55***	0.91	0.86, 0.96
Some	-0.01	0.03	0.16	0.99	0.94, 1.04
Little	-0.01	0.03	0.25	0.99	0.94, 1.04
Education					
Almost all	-0.09	0.03	11.50***	0.92	0.87, 0.96
Some	0.08	0.02	11.32***	1.08	1.03, 1.13
Little	0.05	0.02	4.83*	1.05	1.01, 1.10
Party identification					
Almost all	0.35	0.03	185.15***	1.41	1.35, 1.49
Some	0.30	0.02	172.07***	1.34	1.29, 1.41
Little	0.15	0.02	43.37***	1.16	1.11, 1.22
Perceived black racial group favoritism					
Almost all	0.05	0.03	2.76+	1.05	0.99, 1.12
Some	0.05	0.03	3.31+	1.05	1.00, 1.11
Little	0.02	0.03	0.49	1.02	0.97, 1.07
Hours watched TV on previous night					
Almost all	0.11	0.03	12.09***	1.11	1.05, 1.18
Some	0.05	0.03	3.54+	1.05	1.00, 1.11
Little	0.01	0.03	0.19	1.01	0.96, 1.07
Days watched TV for campaign news in past week					
Almost all	0.05	0.02	4.26*	1.05	1.00, 1.10
Some	0.04	0.02	3.55+	1.04	1.00, 1.08
Little	0.04	0.02	3.20+	1.04	1.00, 1.08
Party identification-race interaction					
Almost all	-0.01	0.14	0.01	0.99	0.75, 1.29
Some	-0.19	0.12	2.42	0.83	0.65, 1.05
Little	-0.05	0.13	0.14	0.95	0.74, 1.23
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction					
Almost all	-0.09	0.07	1.42	0.92	0.79, 1.06
Some	-0.05	0.07	0.56	0.95	0.82, 1.09
Little	0.01	0.08	0.02	1.01	0.87, 1.17
Hours watched TV on previous night-race interaction					
Almost all	0.04	0.10	0.19	1.05	0.86, 1.28
Some	0.02	0.10	0.03	1.02	0.84, 1.24
Little	0.10	0.10	0.89	1.10	0.90, 1.35

Days watched TV for campaign news in past week-race interaction					
Almost all	-0.19	0.10	3.64+	0.83	0.68, 1.01
Some	-0.08	0.10	0.72	0.92	0.76, 1.12
Little	-0.17	0.10	2.68	0.85	0.70, 1.03
Hours watched TV on previous night-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction					
Almost all	0.01	0.01	2.50	1.02	1.00, 1.03
Some	0.02	0.01	3.56+	1.02	1.00, 1.03
Little	0.02	0.01	3.69+	1.02	1.00, 1.03

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female; for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Possible responses to outcome variable of media believable are (1) believe almost nothing to (4) believe almost all of what the organization says

In the MSNBC believability model with interaction terms, race as a moderator behaved as predicted, but was only statistically significant in the interaction with days watched TV for campaign news at the almost all versus almost none level, where odds of believing fell to 0.83 for blacks compared to 1.05 for the main effect of days watched TV at the same level – a relationship indicating a diminished cultivation effect on African Americans. The tendency of race to reduce the likelihood of believing MSNBC coverage was evident when crossed with party identification and perceived black racial group favoritism, but these interaction terms failed to attain statistical significance. Perceived black racial group favoritism had an inconclusive effect on cultivation effects, with the hours watched TV-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction attaining marginal statistical significance, but showing a slightly depressing effect on television time at the some versus none level and a very small augmenting effect at the little versus none level.

Overall, the results for the MSNBC showed moderate support for the portion of the fourth hypothesis that predicted black race was associated with reduced believability in MSNBC's news coverage.

Summary of Results

Results for three hypotheses, *Hypotheses 2*, *3*, and *4*, were reported in this chapter. Findings for the second hypothesis that black race was associated with a preference for liberal or neutral television news sources over conservative sources was the most unequivocally supported among the three.

For *Hypothesis 3*, though black race was associated with a preference for liberal or neutral over conservative networks, perceived black racial group favoritism was negatively associated with a preference for liberal over conservative outlets for African Americans, with an odds ratio of 0.88. This finding was inconsistent with the prediction that a linked fate effect, operationalized as perceived black racial group favoritism, would amplify a black preference for TV news sources with amiable coverage of Barack Obama.

For *Hypothesis 4*, race generally behaved as predicted. Black race was negatively associated with broadcast and CNN believability. Black race moderated liberal partisan identification to reduced CNN believability, but black race also augmented the CNN cultivation effect in an interaction with the number of days of TV watched for campaign coverage. In contrast, black race reduced the cultivation effect in the MSNBC model in its interaction with days of TV campaign news watched.

As with the third hypothesis, the big, unexpected finding for the fourth hypothesis pertained to the perceived black racial group favoritism predictor, which was generally associated with heightened trust in televised news sources. Perceived black racial group favoritism was positively associated with broadcast, CNN, and

MSNBC believability. Two moderating relationships ran counter to this trend of positive association between perceived black racial group favoritism and television news believability. First, perceived black racial group favoritism interacted with days of TV campaign news coverage watched to reduce CNN believability. Second, this predictor interacted with the hours of television watched on the previous night to reduce MSNBC believability, but only very slightly at only at one of three levels.

Overall, tests for the third and fourth hypotheses showed no support for the predicted moderating relationship between perceived black racial group favoritism and black race, which were hypothesized to act together to reduce black trust in televised news sources. Further, the findings for the main effects of perceived black racial group favoritism and for the handful of interaction effects that contained perceived black racial group favoritism were similarly counterintuitive in the context of hypothetical predictions, as they were associated with increased believability.

On the other hand, an expected and consistently supported finding was the cultivating effect of increased television viewing time, as measured by the number of hours respondents watched prime time television the previous night and number of days respondents watched television for campaign news the previous week, on reported tendency to believe a televised news source. African-American race had mixed effects on reported television news source believability, augmenting the effect of number of days of TV campaign coverage watched for CNN at one variable level, but diminishing the effect of amount of TV campaign coverage watched for MSNBC at one variable level.

Though not explicitly hypothesized, the effect of black race on partisan identification was also consistent with predictions that African Americans were less likely to report trusting televised news sources: for both the CNN and MSBNC models, the partisan identification-race interaction term illustrated the attenuating effect black race exerted on liberal partisan leans on believability, but this relationship failed to attain statistical significance in the MSNBC model.

The next chapter steps back from media effects to examine the relationship between race and perceived candidate legitimacy before media enters into the equation.

Chapter VI. Expectation States Effects on Perceived Candidate Legitimacy

The predictions in this dissertation intentionally depart from the universalism implicit in expectation states theory for African Americans, who are expected to deviate from a white norm in their evaluations of "one of their own," Barack Obama, because the centripetal pull of the African-American experience supersedes the explanatory power of expectation states assumptions. Linked fate (Dawson, 1994), explicated in Chapter IV, is proposed to have created an ingroup bond stronger than the norms borne of a white society that perpetrated slavery and has yet to fully rectify persistent institutional inequities and, consequently, to have eclipsed any universalistic influence of expectation states assumptions for blacks as they cast their ballots in the 2008 presidential election. The extent to which white race was associated with negative and positive legitimacy appraisals of Barack Obama and John McCain, respectively, and the extent to which black race and perceived black racial group favoritism was associated with converse legitimacy appraisals of the two candidates were assessed to establish a baseline threshold of racial differences before adding media effects predictors to the equation.

Results: Race and Presidential Legitimacy Assessments

Similar to previous analyses, a multi-stage process was employed to evaluate the *Hypothesis 5* prediction that whites and blacks differentially evaluated the presidential timber of Barack Obama and John McCain, with white assessments informed by expectation states beliefs about legitimacy and African-American assessments informed by linked fate beliefs. Two series of *t*-tests were performed.

The first series was conducted to assess the relationship between race and responses to each of the nine NAES questions from which the overall candidate legitimacy score was derived. The second series was conducted to assess the relationship between race and each of the five candidate qualities (competence, empathy, integrity, leadership, and otherness) to which the question responses were mapped. Upon finding all *t*-test results statistically significant, a *t*-test was conducted to assess the relationship between race and the overall presidential legitimacy scores (the sum of all the question responses), which also yielded statistically significant results.

All *t*-test results are shown in Tables 28-31 on the following pages. Tables 28 and 29 display means by race for responses to the McCain and Obama candidate assessment questions, respectively. Tables 30 and 31 show means by race for each of the five presidential legitimacy categories – competence, empathy, integrity, leadership, and otherness – and for the summative presidential legitimacy variable for McCain and Obama, respectively.

Table 28

John McCain: Means for Candidate Evaluation Question Responses by White and Black Race Mean, Standard Deviation (*SD*), and Test Scores*

	White		Black			
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*t*	*df*
Experience to be president	6.76	2.40	5.23	2.94	12.74***	710.93
Judgment to be president	6.25	2.53	4.41	2.91	15.36***	723.8
Ready to be president	6.43	2.66	4.63	3.07	12.21***	523.89
Shares my values	5.25	2.71	3.22	2.82	14.38***	4688
Trustworthy	6.51	2.58	4.43	2.87	17.46***	715.07
Says what believes	6.80	2.52	5.05	3.01	14.08***	708.04
Strong leader	6.61	2.45	4.87	2.96	14.31***	712.24
Patriotic	8.34	2.17	6.69	3.15	11.24***	528.92
Favorability	5.59	2.50	3.67	2.59	18.75***	7591

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

* Satterthwaite method used for all estimations because of unequal variances except for "Shares my values" and "Favorability" questions.

Possible responses to all questions on a scale of 0 to 10

Table 29

Barack Obama: Means for Candidate Evaluation Question Responses by White and Black Race Mean, Standard Deviation (*SD*), and Test Scores*

	White		Black			
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*t*	*df*
Experience to be president	4.15	2.77	7.16	2.35	-31.14***	857.90
Judgment to be president	5.09	2.99	8.04	2.32	-30.35***	888.50
Ready to be president	4.81	3.06	8.18	2.33	-29.46***	661.68
Shares my values	4.76	3.22	8.20	2.27	-28.75***	622.17
Trustworthy	5.46	3.04	8.17	2.21	-29.13***	938.15
Says what believes	5.86	3.00	8.39	2.14	-28.01***	947.29
Strong leader	5.55	2.94	8.38	2.15	-31.35***	934.85
Patriotic	5.67	3.13	8.07	2.29	-21.57***	710.98
Favorability	5.19	3.003	8.42	2.08	-36.76***	982.37

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

* Satterthwaite method used for all estimations because of unequal variances.

Possible responses to all questions on a scale of 0 to 10

Table 30

John McCain Legitimacy Scores: Means for Presidential Legitimacy Qualities and Summative Presidential Legitimacy Score by White and Black Race
Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and Test Scores*

	White		Black			
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*t*	*df*
Competence	17.47	7.19	12.84	7.76	14.51***	744.62
Empathy	5.25	2.71	3.22	2.82	14.38***	4688
Integrity	13.15	4.85	9.34	5.41	17.10***	729.12
Leadership	6.61	2.45	4.87	2.96	14.32***	712.24
Otherness	11.66	5.16	8.64	5.02	14.31***	7591
Presidential legitimacy score**	51.65	18.66	36.99	19.87	18.11***	764.28

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

* Satterthwaite method used for all estimations because of unequal variances except for Empathy and Otherness qualities.

** Presidential legitimacy score is the sum of all responses to the nine candidate assessment questions; range of responses is from 0 to 90.

Table 31

Barack Obama Legitimacy Scores: Means for Presidential Legitimacy Qualities and Summative Presidential Legitimacy Score by White and Black Race
Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and Test Scores*

	White		Black			
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*t*	*df*
Competence	12.59	8.03	20.81	7.12	-28.34***	853.28
Empathy	4.76	3.22	8.20	2.27	-28.75***	622.17
Integrity	11.18	5.82	16.42	4.29	-29.23***	936.06
Leadership	5.55	2.94	8.38	2.15	-31.35***	934.85
Otherness	9.42	5.71	14.96	4.87	-21.53***	535.57
Presidential legitimacy score**	41.22	22.67	65.01	17.82	-32.34***	906.76

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

* Satterthwaite method used for all estimations because of unequal variances.

** Presidential legitimacy score is the sum of all responses to the nine candidate assessment questions; range of responses is from 0 to 90.

Next, as described in Chapter III, a modified version of Ngo's (2012) recommended regression analysis steps was followed, the result of which was the decision to use robust linear regression in addition to ordinary least squares regression due to the presence of influential and outlying observations in the data. For the full models that include interaction terms, both robust linear regression and ordinary least

squares regression results are included because the least squares models show standardized betas, which allow comparison of magnitude of effect across variables. The robust linear regression procedure in SAS, the statistical software package chosen for analysis, does not include standardized betas in the output. Regression results for Barack Obama and John McCain are shown in Tables 32-35a on the following pages.

Table 32

Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*) and Standard Error (*SE*)

	B	*SE*
Constant	42.93***	0.39
Sex	-0.25	0.51
Race	12.99***	0.89
Age	-0.03*	0.02
Income	-0.12	0.13
Education	1.35***	0.12
Party identification	4.34***	0.12
Perceived black racial group favoritism	1.99***	0.09
R-squared = 0.28		

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001
For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black
Values for black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

In the first robust regression of Obama presidential legitimacy shown in Table 32, R^2 indicated the model explained 28% of the variation in Obama presidential legitimacy assessments. The main effects of both race and perceived black racial group favoritism were statistically significant and positively associated with perceived presidential legitimacy for Obama. That is, African-American race and higher degrees of perceived black racial group favoritism were independently related to increasing Obama presidential legitimacy scores

Tables 33 and 33a show the robust regression and ordinary least squares regression results, respectively, for the Obama legitimacy model with interaction terms. Of note are the small differences in the *R*-squared measures. After adjusting for outliers, the robust linear regression model (Table 33) generated a slightly smaller R^2 value than did the ordinary least squares model (Table 33a): 0.29 versus 0.31, a difference indicating variance explained by the model decreased after outliers are accounted for. Both the robust and ordinary least squares models generated the same statistically significant variables, with moderate differences in the parameters: partisan identification, perceived black racial group favoritism, race, education, and the perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction, all of which, except for the interaction term, were positively associated with Obama legitimacy.

Table 33

Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics Coefficient (*B*) and Standard Error (*SE*)

	B	*SE*
Constant	42.91***	0.38
Sex	-0.260	0.50
Race	17.47***	1.50
Age	-0.030	0.02
Income	-0.110	0.13
Education	1.33***	0.12
Party identification	4.28***	0.12
Perceived black racial group favoritism	2.22***	0.09
Party identification-race interaction	-0.120	0.62
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction	-2.62***	0.32
R-squared = 0.29		

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

Values for black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

Table 33a

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Coefficient (β)

	B	*SE*	β
Intercept	42.25***	0.36	
Sex	-0.06	0.46	0.00
Race	15.68***	1.35	0.19
Age	-0.03+	0.02	-0.02
Income	0.01	0.12	0.00
Education	1.25***	0.11	0.12
Party identification	3.76***	0.11	0.36
Perceived black racial group favoritism	1.99***	0.08	0.25
Party identification-race interaction	0.29	0.57	0.01
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction	-1.96***	0.30	-0.07
R-squared = 0.31			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black

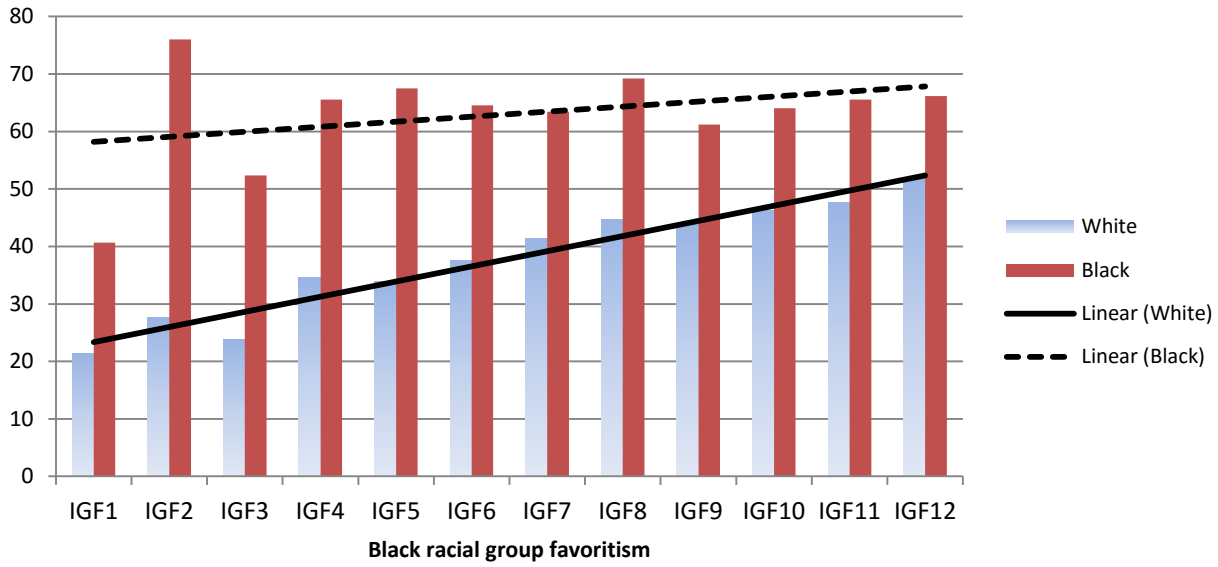
Values for black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

The least squares regression model's inclusion of standardized coefficients allows the evaluation of the relative influence of the predictors. Party identification was clearly the most influential predictor (β = 0.36), followed by a second tier of predictors that included perceived black racial group favoritism (β = 0.25) and race (β = 0.19). The party identification-race interaction was not statistically significant, a finding that counters the idea that Democratic identification explained African-American legitimacy assessments of Barack Obama.

The perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction, however, countered the direction of the relationship of its component main effects, with higher levels of perceived black racial group favoritism associated with lower degrees of perceived presidential legitimacy for Obama among African Americans. Because this finding contradicted the hypothesized expectation that Obama's presidential legitimacy

score would increase with perceived black racial group favoritism among African Americans, this interaction was graphed in Figure 3 to parse the effects. The trend lines in Figure 3 show that increased perceived black racial group favoritism was, in fact, associated with increasing legitimacy assessments for Obama among both blacks *and* whites. The negative directionality of the interaction term results from the comparatively steep slope of the trend line for whites vis a vis the trend line for blacks.

Figure 3. Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism (IGF) Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential Legitimacy



Though the explanation of the unexpected valence of the perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction mitigates concerns about counter-hypothetical results, two other factors should be considered when evaluating the Obama legitimacy model with interaction terms. First, this interaction term was one of the least influential predictors in the model. Second, the amount of variance explained

increased only slightly between the first model and second model with interactions: R^2 value increased from 0.28 to 0.29 in the robust regression versions.

In the McCain presidential legitimacy model (Table 34), the R^2 value indicated the model explained 16% of variation in John McCain's perceived presidential legitimacy. The race and racial group favoritism variables showed relationships in the expected directions: both black race and perceived black racial group favoritism were negatively related to assessments of John McCain's presidential legitimacy. That is, African Americans gave McCain lower presidential legitimacy scores than whites did, and higher levels of perceived black racial group favoritism were associated with lower legitimacy scores for McCain.

Table 34

Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*) and Standard Error (*SE*)

	B	*SE*
Constant	52.89***	0.32
Sex	-0.70+	0.42
Race	-6.72***	0.78
Age	0.07***	0.01
Income	0.67***	0.11
Education	0.38***	0.10
Party identification	-3.10***	0.10
Perceived black racial group favoritism	-0.48***	0.07
R-squared = 0.16		

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001
For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black
Values for black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

In the models shown in Tables 35 and 35a, below, neither the partisan identification-race interaction nor the perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction was significant, but all other variables were statistically significant, with sex

only marginally significant in the robust regression model (Table 35). The difference in the R^2 values between the robust and ordinary least squares models was greater than the difference in the Obama models, 0.21 in the least squares model compared to 0.16 in the robust regression model, which suggests outliers were a larger factor in the McCain models.

Table 35

Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*)and Standard Error (*SE*)

	B	*SE*
Constant	52.90***	0.32
Sex	-0.70+	0.42
Race	-5.56***	1.27
Age	0.07***	0.01
Income	0.67***	0.11
Education	0.38***	0.10
Party identification	-3.09***	0.10
Perceived black racial group favoritism	-0.45***	0.08
Party identification-race interaction	-0.32	0.53
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction	-0.43	0.28
R-squared = 0.16		

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black
Values for black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

Table 35a

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Coefficient (β)

	B	*SE*	β
Intercept	51.35***	0.31	0.00
Sex	-0.80*	0.41	-0.02
Race	-5.63***	1.20	-0.08
Age	0.08***	0.01	0.06
Income	0.76***	0.11	0.08
Education	0.50***	0.10	0.06
Party identification	-3.19***	0.10	-0.37
Perceived black racial group favoritism	-0.43***	0.07	-0.06

Party identification-race interaction	-0.04	0.50	0.00
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction	-0.44	0.27	-0.02
R-squared = 0.21			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001
For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black
Values for black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

McCain's legitimacy models are distinct from the Obama models in several ways. First, the McCain models explained less variance than did the Obama models, with the latter explaining nearly twice as much variance as the former. Second, unlike the Obama models, the effect of perceived black racial group favoritism did not change with race in the McCain models; however, as explained above, the change in directionality of this interaction term in the Obama model was a function of slope differentials between blacks and whites. Finally, as shown by the standardized parameters in the ordinary least squares regression model (Table 35a), partisan identification was unequivocally the most important factor in assessments of McCain's legitimacy, with those identifying as conservative rating McCain higher and those identifying as liberal rating McCain lower in presidential legitimacy. While partisan identification was also the most influential variable in Obama legitimacy, black racial group favoritism and race were also important, and the differences among the standardized values in the Obama models were much smaller than those in the McCain models.

When considered together, these three contrasts suggest two conclusions. First, factors influencing legitimacy assessments were more diverse for Barack Obama than were the factors for John McCain, whose legitimacy evaluations were clearly most

affected by partisan affiliation. Obama's perceived legitimacy was multidimensional, as was the electorate that delivered his 2008 victory. Second, variables *not* included in these models affected McCain's perceived legitimacy among NAES respondents, as suggested by the comparatively low *R*-squared values for the McCain models. The incorporation of the media variables into the models, described in the next chapter, will partially offset this second conclusion.

This first set of tests, results of which are shared in Tables 32 through 35a, examined white versus black assessments of each presidential candidate independently of the other candidate, one component of the fifth hypothesis' prediction. A second component is the Obama versus McCain legitimacy evaluation within race, the response variable for which was the ratio of Obama's summative presidential legitimacy score divided by McCain's summative presidential legitimacy score. A natural log transformation of the outcome variable was computed to correct for non-normality, but adjustment for outlying values was not necessary, allowing the use of ordinary least squares regression for analysis. Results are displayed in the Table 36.

The R^2 indicated the model explained 32% of the variation in the Obama to McCain presidential legitimacy ratio. The main effects of race and black racial group favoritism were statistically significant and in the expected direction, with African Americans and respondents with higher degrees of black racial group favoritism more likely to view Obama as more presidential than McCain. The standardized *betas* in this first model shows partisan identification had the greatest effect on perceptions of legitimacy, with, as expected, Democratic leans associated with Obama legitimacy and

Republican leans associated with McCain legitimacy. Similar to the Obama legitimacy models, black racial group favoritism and race were the second and third most influential variables, but the gap between partisanship and these two variables was greater in the within race model than it was in the Obama legitimacy models in Tables 32 through 33a.

Table 36

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Log Transformed Obama Presidential Legitimacy versus McCain Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Black Racial Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Coefficient (β*)*

	B	*SE*	β
Constant	-0.28***	0.02	0.00
Sex	0.020	0.02	0.01
Race	0.49***	0.04	0.14
Age	0.00***	0.00	-0.05
Income	-0.02***	0.01	-0.05
Education	0.01**	0.00	0.03
Party identification	0.18***	0.00	0.42
Perceived black racial group favoritism	0.07***	0.00	0.19
R-squared = 0.32			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001
For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black
Values for black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

Table 37

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Log Transformed Obama Presidential Legitimacy versus McCain Presidential Legitimacy by Race, Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Coefficient (β)

	B	*SE*	β
Constant	-0.28***	0.02	0.00
Sex	0.020	0.02	0.01
Race	0.58***	0.06	0.17
Age	0.00***	0.00	-0.04
Income	-0.02***	0.01	-0.05
Education	0.01**	0.00	0.03
Party identification	0.18***	0.00	0.42
Perceived black racial group favoritism	0.07***	0.00	0.20
Party identification-race interaction	-0.010	0.02	-0.01
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction	-0.06***	0.01	-0.05

R-squared = 0.32

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001
For sex, 0 indicates male, and 1 indicates female, for race, 0 indicates white, and 1 indicates black
Values for black racial group favoritism range from 1 to 12

In the second model with interactions (Table 37), party identification, again, was key, followed by the perceived black racial group favoritism and race main effects. The gap between the partisanship effect and other variable effects was similar to the gap in the model without interactions shown in Table 36: the gap was significant, underscoring the relative importance of party identification for presidential legitimacy assessments. Further, the party identification-race interaction term was not statistically significant, indicating race effects did not stem from differences in partisanship. Partisanship and race, thus, affected legitimacy assessments independently. The black racial group favoritism-race interaction term was negative, but Figure 3 again provides the explanation for the valence of this term: the slopes for both the white and black trend lines are positive, but the slope for whites is steeper than the slope for blacks.

Summary of Results: Race and Presidential Legitimacy Assessments

Applying these results formally to the *Hypothesis 5* predictions, party identification was the most impactful variable across all models, and this impact did not affect blacks and whites differently, as illustrated by the failure of the party identification-race variable to attain statistical significance. The effect of partisanship was particularly strong in the McCain models; it was also strong in the Obama versus McCain model (Table 37), but other variables, black racial group favoritism and race,

were moderately important in this last comparative model. Race was also moderately important in the Obama legitimacy models.

Notably, the coefficients of determination changed very little from the Obama baseline to Obama full model and not at all for the McCain baseline to McCain full model. This absence of effect suggests the interaction terms contributed very marginally to model explanatory power. If fact, the interaction term with perceived black racial group favoritism confounded more than contributed to interpretation of which predictors most affected candidate legitimacy.

The outcomes for the black racial group favoritism-race interaction appeared counter to the hypothesized relationships, but the negative sign of this interaction resulted from a slope differential. Increased levels of black racial group favoritism were associated with judging Obama as more presidential for both blacks and whites, but a one unit increase in perceived black racial group favoritism had a larger effect on whites than on blacks, which suggests pro-black attitudes exerted a relatively greater influence on whites inclined to judge Obama favorably than did linked fate beliefs among African Americans.

This nuanced interpretation of the perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction term reappears in the next chapter, which brings the media effects predictors into the models. Chapter VII will integrate cultivation effects predictors – including amount of television viewing time, perceived televised news source believability, and valence of coverage toward the two candidates – into the analysis to

evaluate for whom and to what extent mass media affect assessments of what constitutes a right and proper president.

Chapter VII. Televised Media Effects on Presidential Legitimacy Assessments

Hypothesis 6 had similarly predicted that perceived black racial group favoritism would eclipse media effects for African Americans, such that this group would be little influenced by televised media coverage of the two presidential contenders, Barack Obama and John McCain. The underpinning of the argument that blacks discard mediated content is the content reflects a white, not an African-American, social reality. As explored in Chapter II, the individual characteristics associated with legitimately attained power are laden with expectation states assumptions that largely favor those who already hold societal power. These assumptions are argued to pervade mass media content, including visually rich televised content, effectively creating a symbolic world that mirrors and reinforces the social reality of the white audience. Both televised reality and social reality are permeated with disparaging (un-presidential) representations of African Americans that are argued to affect and reinforce white judgments about whether a black man is a right and proper president.

To measure whether and the extent to which the televised narrative about Barack Obama and John McCain influenced judgments of presidential legitimacy, a semantic textual analysis, described in Chapter III, was conducted on transcripts from six news programs that covered the 2008 U.S. presidential election. Presidential legitimacy ratios, the products of the semantic analysis, served as predictors to ascertain whether, when considered with measures of TV viewing time, perceived believability of televised news sources, and partisan lean of TV news source, televised news coverage cultivated beliefs about presidential legitimacy. That is, the ratios from

the textual semantic analysis were intended to reflect the news sources' representations of the candidates as legitimate or non-legitimate presidential contenders and, as such, were key to assessing televised media's effect on voter perceptions.

Results: Televised Media and Presidential Legitimacy Assessments

To fit the multiple regression models for perceived Obama and McCain presidential legitimacy, least squares regression and robust regression techniques were employed. For Obama, the results from least squared regression were relatively close to those generated through the robust regression procedure; therefore, standard regression was used to assess the way in which predictor variables affected Obama presidential legitimacy scores. This was not the case for evaluating McCain's presidential evaluation; therefore, robust regression was the statistical tool of choice, but least squares regression models are also presented to allow comparison of standardized coefficients for the McCain findings.

Looking first at Obama's perceived presidential legitimacy, Table 38 shows the Obama's legitimacy assessment before interactions are added to the model. Table 39 contains predictors from the full model, with all statistically significant main effects and interaction terms.

Table 38

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Black Racial Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Estimate (β)

	B	*SE*	β
Constant	29.47***	1.30	0.00
Sex	-0.30	0.59	-0.01
Race	14.48***	1.03	0.18
Age	-0.02	0.02	-0.02
Income	0.01	0.16	0.00
Education	0.81***	0.15	0.08
Party identification	2.19***	0.16	0.21
Perceived black racial group favoritism	1.33***	0.11	0.16
Days watched TV for campaign news	0.06	0.20	0.00
Hours watched TV the evening before	-0.10	0.16	-0.01
Partisan network lean	-0.23	0.88	-0.01
Broadcast believability	2.29***	0.47	0.09
CNN believability	3.18***	0.46	0.13
Fox News believability	-4.23***	0.34	-0.18
MSNBC believability	3.22***	0.47	0.12
Obama legitimacy ratio	2.09***	0.59	0.10
McCain legitimacy ratio	-1.84***	0.52	-0.06
R-squared = 0.43			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

In the above model, race, education level, party identification, perceived black racial group favoritism, the four media believability predictors, and both candidates' legitimacy ratios attained statistical significance. Except for Fox News believability, all the statistically significant variables were positively related to Obama legitimacy evaluations. That Fox News is the only statistically significant media predictor that reduced Obama's perceived legitimacy is an unsurprising finding given the nature of Fox's coverage of the Obama campaign.

The standardized coefficients show a cluster of predictors influenced the outcome to a similar degree: party identification (β = 0.21), followed by race (β = 0.18), Fox News believability (β = -0.18), and perceived black racial group favoritism (β =

0.16). A second cluster of predictors showed similar, but lower, levels of influence: CNN believability (β = 0.13), MSNBC believability (β = 0.12), and the Obama legitimacy ratio (β = 0.10). The least influential, statistically significant predictors were broadcast believability, education level, and the McCain legitimacy ratio. The *R*-squared indicates this baseline model without interactions explained 43% of the variation in Obama legitimacy evaluations, a substantial improvement over the models in the previous chapter that did not yet include the media effects predictors.

Table 39

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Barack Obama's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Estimate (β)

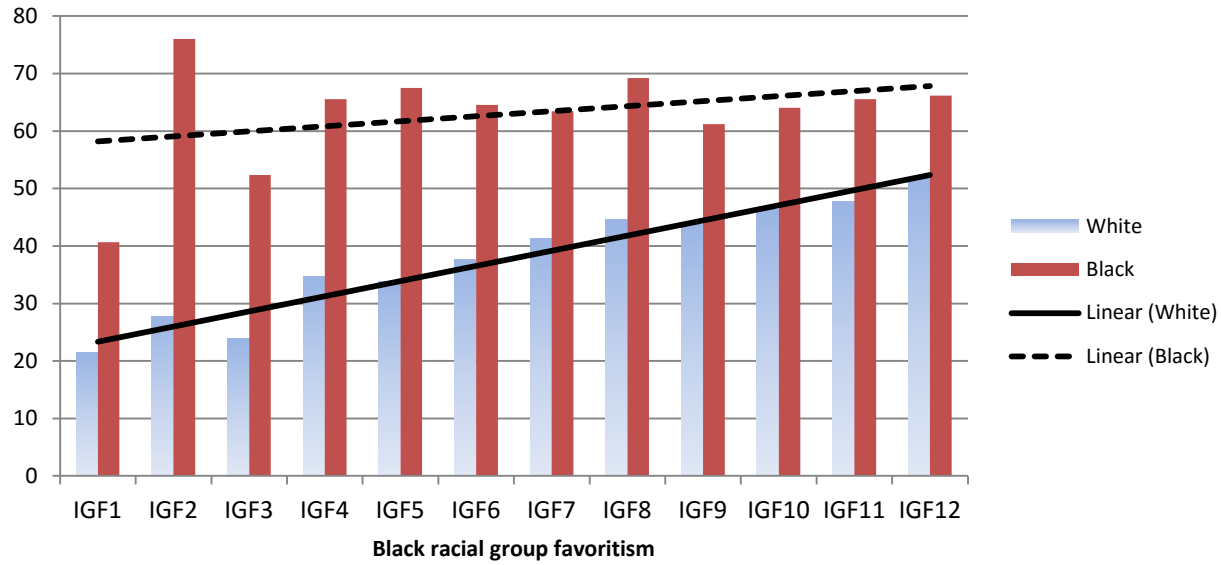
	B	*SE*	β
Constant	30.13***	1.25	0.00
Race	12.26***	1.67	0.16
Education	0.83***	0.13	0.08
Party identification	2.09***	0.16	0.20
Perceived black racial group favoritism	1.92***	0.38	0.23
Days watched TV for campaign news	-0.13	0.20	-0.01
Broadcast believability	2.29***	0.46	0.09
CNN believability	3.19***	0.45	0.13
Fox News believability	-4.30***	0.34	-0.18
MSNBC believability	3.13***	0.47	0.12
Obama legitimacy ratio	1.92***	0.31	0.09
McCain legitimacy ratio	-1.60***	0.38	-0.06
Party identification-race interaction	1.83**	0.68	0.06
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction	-1.46***	0.37	-0.06
Days watched TV for campaign news-race interaction	1.46*	0.63	0.03
Fox News believability-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction	0.24*	0.10	0.08
MSNBC believability-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction	-0.41***	0.11	-0.14
R-squared = 0.44			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

This second model shown in Table 39 consists of all statistically significant predictors, including interaction terms, from the full model. The first thing to note is

that the *R*-squared changed only slightly between the baseline model and the full model, from 0.43 to 0.44, a small difference that suggests the new predictors included in the model – the interaction terms – added little explanatory power. The relationships are in the expected direction, with three exceptions. Interaction terms that contained black racial group favoritism once again yielded results contrary to predictions. Consistent with the findings shared in the previous chapter, the sign of the perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction term was negative, and also consistent with those earlier findings, the reversal in sign valence is explained by a steeper rate of increase of rising levels of perceived black racial group favoritism for whites than for blacks. For convenience of reference, Figure 3, which illustrates this relationship, is included in this chapter, below.

Figure 3. Race and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism (IGF) Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential Legitimacy



The interaction terms comprised of perceived black racial group favoritism and two media predictors, Fox News believability and MSNBC believability, also generated counterintuitive results. The negative valence of the MSNBC believability-perceived black racial group favoritism term suggests that higher levels of perceived black racial group favoritism combined with higher levels of MSNBC believability to depress Obama legitimacy ratings, a result incongruous with the overwhelmingly positive nature of MSNBC's coverage of this candidate. Similarly, the positive valence of the Fox News believability-perceived black racial group favoritism term suggests that higher levels of perceived black racial group favoritism combined with higher levels of Fox News believability to augment Obama legitimacy ratings, another surprising result given that Fox News portrayed Obama most negatively among the six included networks. Figures 4 and 5, below, provide insight as to the source of these seemingly illogical results.

Figure 4. MSNBC Believability and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential Legitimacy

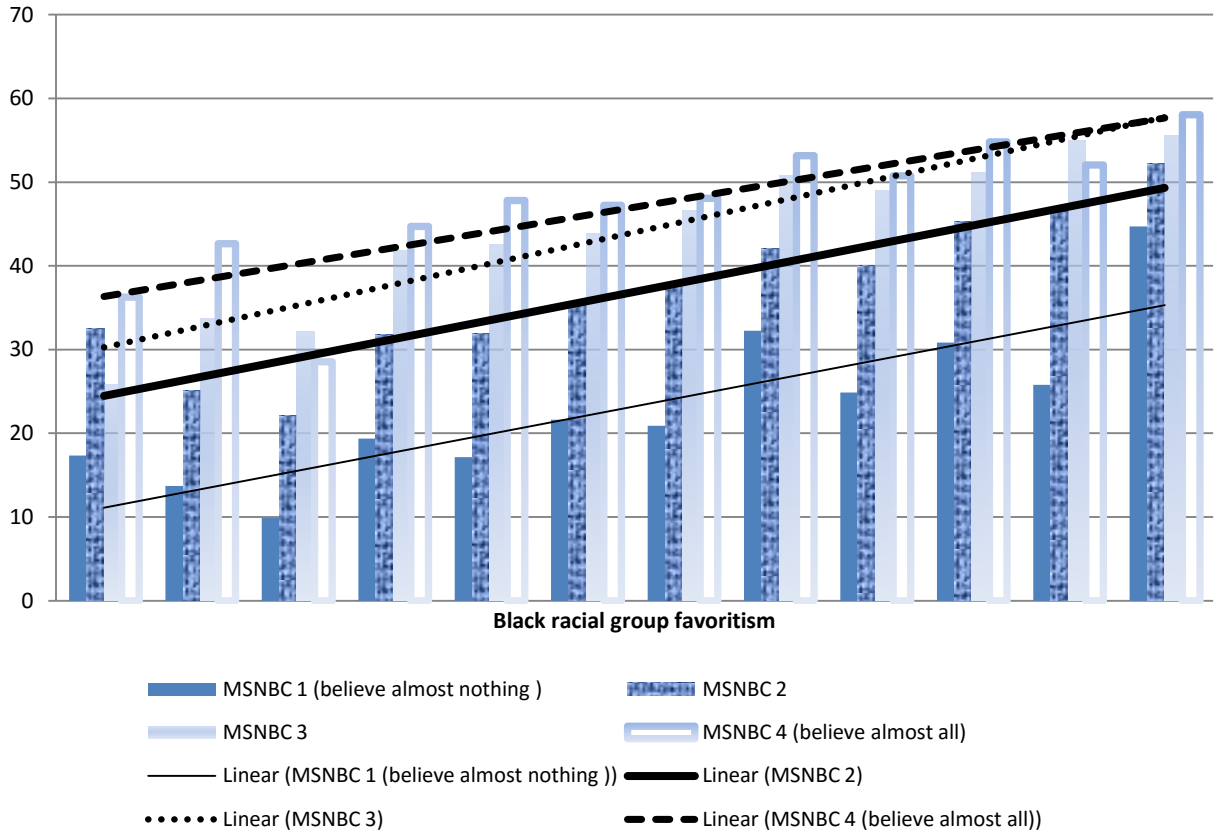


Figure 5. Fox News Believability and Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential Legitimacy

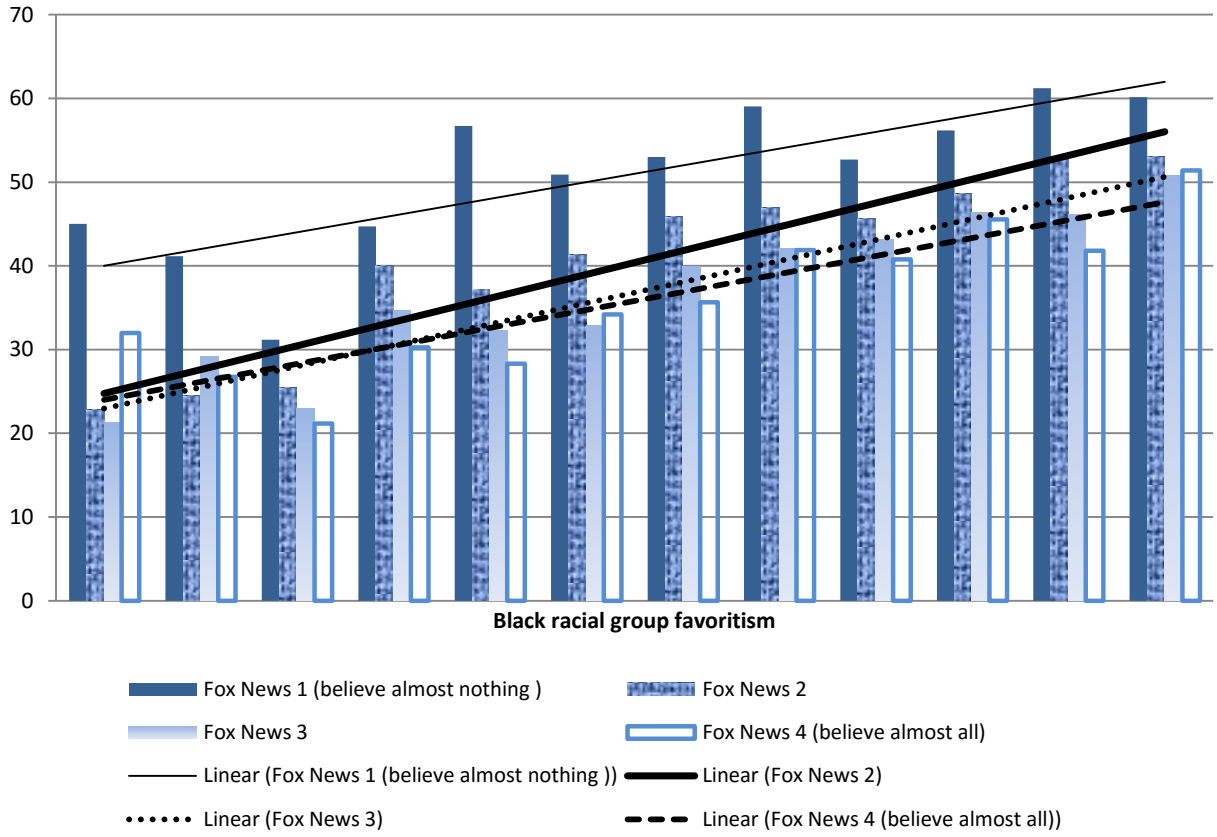


Figure 4 shows that both higher levels of MSNBC believability and higher levels of perceived black racial group favoritism were associated with higher legitimacy assessments of Obama. A disordinal interaction, however, between the two highest levels of believability, "4" and "3," complicated the interaction effect. The slope for the "believe almost all" level (indicated by "4") is less steep than the slope for the next level down (indicated by "3"), which suggests that respondents who trusted MSNBC a fair amount, but not quite as much as others who believed almost all MSNBC coverage, tended to report larger increases in their Obama legitimacy assessments with each unit increase in perceived black racial group favoritism than did their counterparts who expressed the highest level of trust in MSNBC. In contrast, the slope differentials

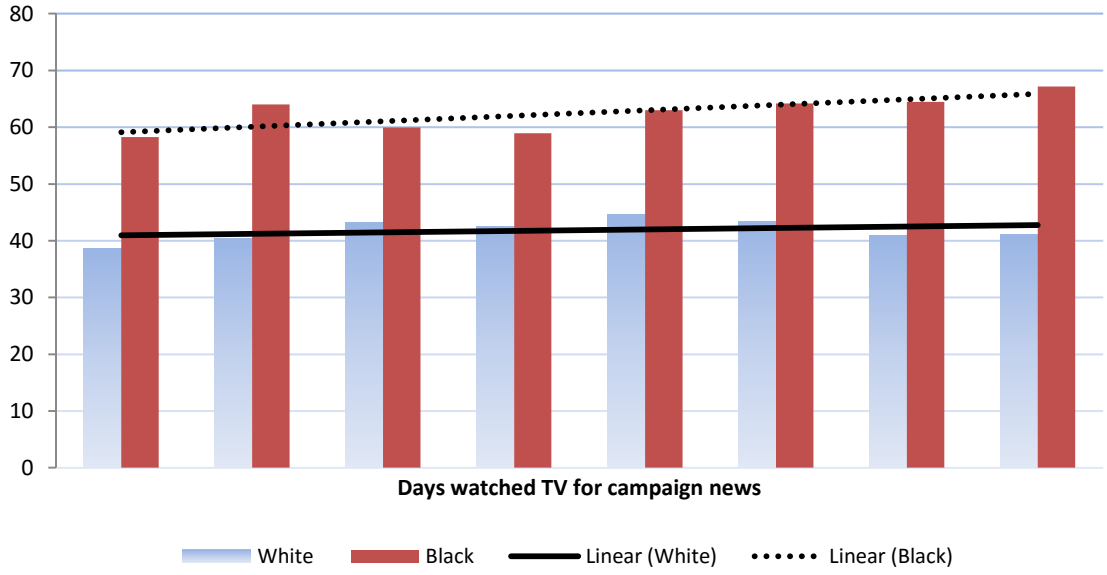
between the "believe almost nothing" group (indicated by "1") and the next level up (indicated by "2), exhibited an ordinal interaction, whereby the curve for the higher level of MSNBC believability was higher than was the curve for the lowest level of believability. In sum, the disordinal interaction between the two highest levels of MSNBC believability resulted in the negative valence of the interaction term, complicating interpretation and, to some degree, obfuscating the actual relationships between the predictors and Obama legitimacy assessments.

A similar interpretation recurs for the Fox News believability-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction, which is charted in Figure 5. Converse to the relationship between MSNBC believability and Obama's perceived legitimacy, lower levels of Fox News believability were associated with higher Obama legitimacy assessments, but, similar to MSNBC believability findings, the relationship between perceived black racial group favoritism and the candidate's legitimacy was positive. Again, a disordinal interaction at the two highest levels of believability, this time for Fox News, complicated interpretation: the slope for level "3" Fox News believability is greater than the slope for level "4" Fox News believability (the highest level). This situation resulted in the positive valence of the Fox News believability-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction term and, as with the MSNBC interaction, generated seemingly illogical results.

Another finding contrary to hypothetical predictions was the days watched TV for campaign news-race interaction: African Americans were proposed to be shielded from televised media cultivating effect by perceived black racial group favoritism. Not

only was this prediction not borne out, black race contributed to a greater cultivation effect through the positive valence of days watched TV for campaign news-race interaction coefficient. Figure 6, below, shows the interaction between race and television viewing time and its effect on assessments of Obama's perceived presidential legitimacy. The influence of this cultivating interaction effect was small, as suggested by both the relatively similar slopes of the trend lines for whites and blacks and the comparatively low value of standardized coefficient for the Days watched TV for presidential campaign news-race interaction term (β = 0.02).

Figure 6. Race and Number of Days Watched TV for Presidential Campaign News Interaction: Obama's Perceived Presidential Legitimacy



In fact, the standardized coefficients in the full Obama legitimacy model reinforce the notion that the additional variables in the full model added little explanatory power to the source of variance. Black racial group favoritism (β = 0.23) and Democratic party identification (β = 0.20) were the two most influential predictors, followed by Fox News believability (β = -0.18), race (β = 0.16), MSNBC believability-

perceived black racial group favoritism interaction (β = -0.14), CNN believability (β = 0.13), and MSNBC believability (β = 0.12). The MSNBC believability-perceived black racial group favoritism term was the only interaction that fell into the two groups of most influential variables in the model. Arguably, the baseline model for Obama presidential legitimacy offered a better fit than the full model because several interaction terms in the latter model complicated interpretation while only contributing marginally to explaining the variance in Obama's ratings; recall that coefficient of determination increased only to 0.44 from 0.43 between the two models.

The models of John McCain's perceived presidential legitimacy exhibited a similar pattern of minimal contribution to explained variance in the full model, as review of the models in Tables 40, 40a, 41, and 41a will illustrate. To adjust for outliers, robust regression was used to assess overall effect size (i.e., coefficient of determination for percentage of explained variance), accompanied by least squares regression models with standardized coefficients to compare influence across predictors. Tables 40 and 40a show the robust regression and least squares regression results for the baseline McCain presidential legitimacy model.

With the exception of CNN believability, which reached statistical significance only in the robust regression model, the robust and least squares regression models generated the same statistically significant predictors: race, age, income, education, party identification, perceived black racial group favoritism, days watched TV for campaign news, and Fox News believability. Directionality of relationships was consistent in the two models: black race, liberal party identification, and perceived

black racial group favoritism negatively influenced McCain legitimacy assessments; while, the number of days respondents watched televised campaign news, Fox News believability, and the control variables of age, income, and education were positively associated with McCain's perceived presidential legitimacy. Cultivating effects worked as predicted through the days watched campaign news and Fox News believability variables, which contributed to a positive assessment of John McCain. The extent to which the television news sources portrayed McCain as legitimate, however, was not statistically significant (McCain legitimacy ratio), nor was the Obama legitimacy ratio. In the robust regression model, the more stringent of the two models, CNN believability also contributed to positive McCain assessments.

Table 40

Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics Coefficient (*B*) and Standard Error (*SE*)

	B	*SE*
Constant	44.91***	1.22
Sex	-0.75	0.55
Race	-6.87***	0.99
Age	0.06**	0.02
Income	0.62***	0.15
Education	0.38**	0.14
Party identification	-2.85***	0.15
Perceived black racial group favoritism	-0.54***	0.10
Days watched TV for campaign news	0.68***	0.18
Hours watched TV the evening before	0.07	0.15
Partisan network lean	-0.27	0.82
Broadcast believability	-0.14	0.44
CNN believability	0.99*	0.43
Fox News believability	1.86***	0.32
MSNBC believability	0.41	0.44
McCain legitimacy ratio	-0.02	0.48
Obama legitimacy ratio	-0.77	0.55
R-squared = 0.20		

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 40a

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, and Control Demographics Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Estimate (β)

	B	*SE*	β
Constant	43.91***	1.19	0.00
Sex	-0.85	0.54	-0.02
Race	-6.88***	0.94	-0.11
Age	0.06***	0.02	0.05
Income	0.69***	0.15	0.07
Education	0.55***	0.13	0.07
Party identification	-2.99***	0.14	-0.37
Perceived black racial group favoritism	-0.51***	0.10	-0.08
Days watched TV for campaign news	0.69***	0.18	0.06
Hours watched TV the evening before	0.20	0.15	0.02
Partisan network lean	-0.42	0.80	-0.02
Broadcast believability	0.33	0.42	0.02
CNN believability	0.63	0.41	0.03
Fox News believability	1.64***	0.31	0.09
MSNBC believability	0.31	0.43	0.01
McCain legitimacy ratio	0.10	0.47	0.00
Obama legitimacy ratio	-0.78	0.54	-0.05
R-squared = 0.27			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

The robust and least squares regression models in Tables 40 and 40a differ in two ways: the size of the coefficient of determination and the presence of standardized coefficients. *R*-squared is 0.27 in the least squares regression model, but, in the robust regression model, which adjusts for outliers in the data, the coefficient of determination is 0.20. Using the more rigorous robust regression results, this finding indicates the baseline model explained 20% of the variance in assessments of John McCain's presidential legitimacy, an improvement, albeit small, over the 16% of variance explained by the models without the media effects variables in the previous chapter. The McCain model explained substantially less variance than did the Obama baseline model, for which the coefficient of determination was 0.43.

The purpose of including the least squares regression model alongside its robust regression counterpart was the availability of standardized coefficients, which permit comparison across predictors to ascertain their relative influence on the outcome variable. Similar to the baseline McCain model without media effects predictors, conservative partisan identification was unequivocally the most important influence on perceptions of McCain's presidential legitimacy, as shown by the value of the coefficient (β = -0.37). Race as a predictor was a distant second (β = -0.11), with African-American race negatively and white race positively associated with McCain legitimacy assessments. The statistically significant media cultivation variables fell into a third tier of influencers with perceived black racial group favoritism. Believability of Fox News (β = 0.09), which offered the most congenial coverage of McCain relative to other news sources, positively affected legitimacy assessments, as did believability of CNN(β = 0.03), one of three neutral networks, though to a lesser degree. A small cultivation effect was evident, as illustrated by the positive relationship between the number of days of TV presidential campaign coverage watched (β = 0.06). Finally, perceived black racial group favoritism (β = -0.08) was negatively associated with McCain presidential legitimacy, an expected finding.

The McCain full models, with interaction terms, are displayed in Tables 41 and 41a. Again, least squares regression results (Table 41a) are included to permit assessment of the predictors' relative effects, and robust regression results (Table 41) provide the definitive figure for coefficient of determination. A notable commonality across both McCain analyses is the lack of change in the value for the coefficients of

determination from the baseline models to the full models: the coefficient of determination remained at 0.20 and 0.27 in the robust and the least squares regression analyses, respectively. The absence of increased power to explain variance in the full models suggests the baseline models are sufficient. Nevertheless, findings in the two full models are more fully explored in the following paragraphs.

Table 41

Robust Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Perceived Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*) and Standard Error (*SE*)

	B	*SE*
Intercept	45.17***	1.08
Race	-6.99***	1.18
Age	0.06***	0.02
Income	0.74***	0.14
Education	0.39**	0.13
Party identification	-2.83***	0.13
Perceived black racial group favoritism	-0.16	0.16
Days watched TV for campaign news	-0.39	0.46
Hours watched TV previous night	0.12	0.14
CNN believability	1.20***	0.30
Fox News believability	1.68***	0.31
Obama legitimacy ratio	-1.04***	0.26
Perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction	-0.93**	0.34
Hours watched TV previous night-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction	-0.11*	0.05
Days watched TV campaign news-Fox News believability interaction	0.39*	0.17
Obama legitimacy ratio-race interaction	2.78**	0.89
R-squared = 0.20		

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

With one exception, across both versions of the full McCain model, the same predictors were statistically significant, and the relationships showed the same directionality. Black race, Democratic Party affiliation, the Obama legitimacy ratio, and the perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction were negatively associated

with assessments of McCain's presidential legitimacy. Additionally, the hours watched TV on the previous night-perceived black racial group favoritism interaction was statistically significant and negatively related to McCain legitimacy assessments only in the robust regression model. These negative relationships were consistent with expectations. Interestingly, the McCain legitimacy full model was one of the few cases where interaction terms comprised of perceived black racial group favoritism predictor yielded the anticipated results and did not require graphical representation to discern actual effects.

Conservative party affiliation, white race, CNN believability, Fox News believability, the days watched campaign news-Fox News believability interaction, and the Obama legitimacy ratio-race interaction positively influenced evaluations of McCain's presidential legitimacy. CNN as a neutral source was also positively associated with perceived Obama legitimacy. In contrast, Fox News, as a conservative source, exerted opposite effects on the two candidates' perceived legitimacy, diminishing Obama's ratings and bolstering McCain's. The McCain full models had fewer statistically significant media effects variables than did the Obama full models, and Fox News emerged as the most important media influencer, through both the main effect and the interaction with days watched TV campaign news.

Table 41a

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of John McCain's Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Coefficient (β)

	B	*SE*	β
Intercept	44.83***	1.05	0.00
Race	-7.13***	1.14	-0.11
Age	0.06***	0.02	0.05

Income	0.77***	0.14	0.08
Education	0.52***	0.13	0.06
Party identification	-2.98***	0.13	-0.37
Black racial group favoritism	-0.24	0.16	-0.04
Days watched TV for campaign news	-0.32	0.45	-0.03
Hours watched TV previous night	0.23	0.14	0.02
CNN believability	1.04***	0.30	0.05
Fox News believability	1.41***	0.31	0.08
Obama legitimacy ratio	-1.10***	0.26	-0.07
Black racial group favoritism-race interaction	-0.88**	0.33	-0.04
Hours watched TV previous night-black racial group favoritism interaction	-0.07	0.05	-0.04
Days watched TV campaign news-Fox News believability interaction	0.36*	0.16	0.08
Obama legitimacy ratio-race interaction	2.50**	0.86	0.05
R-squared = 0.27			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Of the positive associations in the McCain full models, only the Obama legitimacy ratio-race interaction was surprising and merited additional investigation. To better understand the seemingly anomalous directionality of this relationship, the interaction was graphed in Figure 7, below.

Figure 7. Race and Obama Semantic Analysis Legitimacy Ratio Interaction: McCain's Perceived Presidential Legitimacy

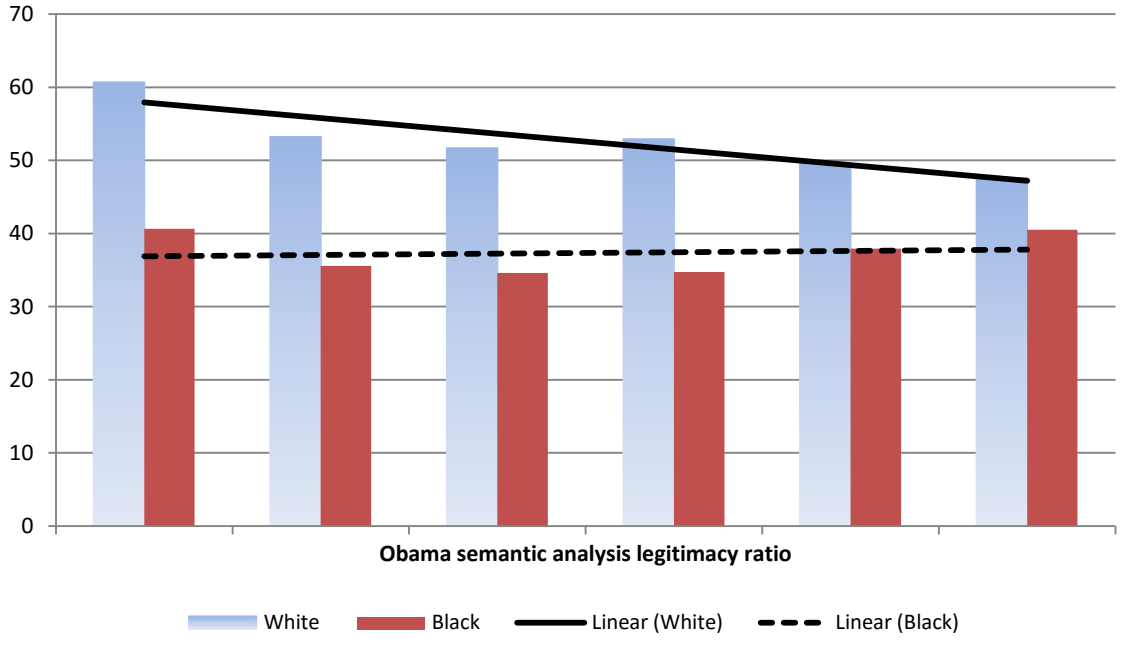


Figure 7 shows that, overall, whites rated McCain as having more presidential legitimacy than did blacks. This figure also shows that, for whites, as the Obama legitimacy ratio increased, which signified increasingly legitimate portrayals by news sources, McCain's perceived presidential legitimacy declined. For blacks, however, the trend line was nearly flat with a very slight rise, indicating as the Obama legitimacy ratio increased, African-American assessments of McCain's legitimacy increased ever so slightly. This marginal increase in perceived legitimacy among African Americans was the source of the positive valence of the Obama legitimacy ratio-race interaction term. Though this term was statistically significant, its effect was limited and not that meaningful.

To compare influence across predictors, the standardized coefficients in the least squares model in Table 41a provide guidance. As with the baseline model, partisan identification ($\beta = -0.37$) was unequivocally the most impactful predictor, followed by race ($\beta = -0.11$). The effects of the other predictors on assessments of McCain's presidential legitimacy paled in comparison to those of these two dominant variables.

Table 42, below, shows the baseline model for Obama versus McCain presidential legitimacy; only the baseline model is included because the full model with interactions only marginally increased explanatory power. The purpose of this model, which explained 42% of the variance in the comparative legitimacy outcome, is to uncover the factors that affected which of the two candidates, when compared

Table 42

Regression Analysis of NAES Respondents' Assessments of Log Transformed Obama Presidential Legitimacy versus McCain Presidential Legitimacy by Media Use, Race, Black Racial Group Favoritism, Interaction Terms, and Control Demographics
Coefficient (*B*), Standard Error (*SE*), and Standardized Coefficient (β)

	B	*SE*	β
Constant	-0.60***	0.08	0.00
Sex	0.00	0.03	0.00
Race	0.51***	0.05	0.15
Age	0.00+	0.00	-0.03
Income	-0.01*	0.01	-0.03
Education	0.00	0.01	0.00
Party identification	0.13***	0.01	0.29
Perceived black racial group favoritism	-0.06***	0.01	-0.17
Days watched TV for campaign news	-0.02*	0.01	-0.03
Hours watched TV the evening before	-0.01+	0.01	-0.03
Partisan network lean	0.04	0.05	0.03
Broadcast believability	0.06**	0.02	0.06
CNN believability	0.12***	0.02	0.11
Fox News believability	-0.18***	0.01	-0.18
MSNBC believability	0.11***	0.02	0.09
Obama legitimacy ratio	0.08	0.06	0.04
McCain legitimacy ratio	-0.07	0.08	-0.02
R-square = 0.42			

+p<0.10, *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

head-to-head, were viewed as the most presidentially legitimate. The four most influential predictors were party identification, Fox News believability, perceived black racial group favoritism, and race. Democratic Party identification (β = 0.29) and black race (β = 0.15) were associated with Obama legitimacy, Republican Party identification and white race with McCain legitimacy. Fox News believability (β = -0.18), the second most influential predictor, depressed Obama and augmented McCain legitimacy assessments. Perceived black racial group favoritism (β = -0.17) showed an anomalous effect in this model: whereas this predictor was positively associated with Obama legitimacy in the Obama model, it is positively associated with McCain legitimacy in this

comparative model – and, it preceded race in effect size. The directionality of the relationship between perceived racial group favoritism and Obama to McCain legitimacy indicates disagreeing black elected officials favored African Americans was associated with viewing McCain as a more legitimate presidential candidate compared to Obama, an interpretation that raised questions about whether this variable accurately captured the linked fate construct. This problem will be further explored in the Study Limitations section in the final chapter.

The results in Table 42 provide some evidence, though not specific to race, that those inclined to view Obama as a legitimate presidential contender attended less to televised mass media than did those inclined to view McCain as a legitimate candidate. The two quintessential cultivation predictors, the number of hours (β = -0.03) and days (β = -0.03) respondents watched television, were negatively associated with Obama legitimacy. This finding hints at the hypothesized notion that Obama supporters were less likely to heed television portrayals of their favored candidate than were his detractors, which, in turn, hints at the hypothesized notion that portrayals of Obama were derogatory, consistent with expectation state assumptions. But such observations are conjecture that was not directly supported in the findings.

The statistical significance of other media effects variables underlines the greater impact televised coverage had on perceptions of Obama's presidential legitimacy relative to McCain's. Given the sheer frequency with which TV news shows talked about Barack Obama compared to John McCain, the importance of the media's role in informing perceptions about Obama was unsurprising.

The contrasts between the Obama and McCain legitimacy models are stark. The explanatory power of the Obama legitimacy model with media effects exceeded 40%; while this statistic for the McCain model hovered near 20%. The Obama legitimacy model with media variables showed bands containing predictors with similar effect sizes; while the counterpart McCain model showed Republican Party identification dwarfed all other predictors' effect sizes, with the possible exception of race. Results from the Obama-McCain comparative model bore some resemblance to those from the Obama legitimacy model, but it more clearly accentuated the way in which mass media predictors operated to affect each candidate's legitimacy. Such differences will be more fully explored in the final chapter, Chapter VIII, which will provide an integrated review of the findings, discuss study limitations, and recommend some next steps to further understanding of racial differences in presidential politics.

Chapter VIII. Discussion, Study Limitations, and Future Directions

Discussion: The Obama and McCain Legitimacy Models

If one were to distill this dissertation's principal contention to one concept, it would be societal separateness was amplified by mass media in the 2008 presidential election. Hypothesis testing delivered moderate support for the existence of parallel, non-overlapping social realities for blacks and whites, but some similarities of effects emerged. For both Obama and McCain legitimacy, party identification and race were the most influential predictors. Race, overall, behaved largely as predicted across the hypotheses, with black race associated with Obama legitimacy and McCain non-legitimacy and white race associated with the converse.

For McCain, the effect of partisanship was particularly acute, with an effect size more than three times the effect size of race and four times the size of the most powerful media effect, Fox News believability. In contrast, multiple predictors of comparable effect size factored into Obama legitimacy assessments. For Obama versus McCain legitimacy, partisanship again ranked first, followed by perceived black racial group favoritism and race. In this comparative model, the media predictors influenced the outcome in a pattern similar to that of the Obama legitimacy model: several statistically significant variables clustered in ranges of similar influence.

Reviewing results at the individual hypothesis level further clarifies where and how differences between blacks and whites were uncovered. *Hypothesis 1* results showed that African Americans, unlike whites, overwhelmingly disagreed they benefitted from special treatment by black elected officials, outcomes that formed the

basis for arguing African Americans experienced a black racial group favoritism grounded in continued doubt about the group's ability to progress. Results for *Hypotheses 2* and *3* provided support for the contention that African Americans were different from whites in their televised news source preferences, with both black race and perceived black racial group favoritism associated with opting for liberal and neutral sources over conservative sources.

Hypothesis 4 tests on media believability illustrated black race was directly associated with reduced likelihood to believe televised news coverage or, in some cases, interacted with televised media viewing time variables and partisan identification to depress likelihood of believing TV news among blacks. This African-American skepticism of televised media, however, did not appear to diminish media effects on presidential legitimacy assessments among blacks or whites, as the results from *Hypothesis 6* analysis illustrated.

The most significant departure from hypothesized effects centers on the perceived black racial group favoritism variable, a construct designed to capture the essence of African-American linked fate and, secondarily, pro-black sentiments among whites. For blacks, race was predicted to moderate perceived black racial group favoritism in a manner that bolstered the effect of race and shielded African Americans from susceptibility to televised media cultivation effects, particularly to negative coverage of Barack Obama. Race, however, did not moderate perceived black racial group favoritism to augment preferences for liberal or neutral over conservative television news sources (*Hypothesis 3*) or to decrease the tendency to believe televised

news sources (*Hypothesis 4*). Actually, perceived black racial group favoritism tended to be positively associated with trusting televised news sources, a finding converse to predictions.

Further, results from *Hypotheses 5* and *6* testing showed the perceived black racial group favoritism-race interaction to be more of a confounding than clarifying term, because, while the interaction term's negative valence appeared to point to a depressing effect on perceived presidential legitimacy for Obama, additional examination revealed the negative sign stemmed from a differential in slopes for whites and blacks. The perceived black racial group favoritism main effect in the sixth hypothesis' test of Obama versus McCain legitimacy (Table 42) also behaved counter to expectations, negatively affecting Obama's perceived presidential legitimacy vis a vis McCain's. In short, perceived black racial group favoritism, as operationalized in this study, conferred no protection for African Americans against a media cultivation effect. In contrast to expectations, the perceived black racial group favoritism variable had a larger effect on whites than it did on blacks, with whites showing larger increases in Obama legitimacy ratings with each unit increase in perceived black racial group favoritism than did African Americans. Potential reasons for the perceived black racial group favoritism variable's failure to perform as hypothesized will be explored in the Study Limitations section.

Televised media coverage of the presidential election mattered, as demonstrated by the increase in the coefficients of determination from *Hypothesis 5* to *Hypothesis 6* testing, the last of which incorporated the media variables into the

models. But the media mattered differently for the candidates. Measured by both number of statistically significant media variables and magnitude of effect sizes, Obama's legitimacy assessments were more affected by media predictors than were McCain's. In the Obama presidential legitimacy model, statistically significant predictors could be parsed into three categories of influence. The most influential group of variables contained Democratic partisan identification, black race, Fox News believability, and perceived black racial group favoritism. The next most influential category included CNN believability, MSNBC believability, and the Obama legitimacy ratio derived from the semantic analysis. Finally, the third grouping of influential predictors consisted of broadcast believability, the education control variable, and the McCain legitimacy ratio. These predictors operated to yield a model that explained 43% of the variance in Obama legitimacy assessments, in contrast to the 28% of variance explained by the model without media variables. For Obama, all statistically significant predictors were positively associated with legitimacy except for Fox News believability and the McCain legitimacy ratio, findings consistent with expectations.

McCain's presidential legitimacy evaluations, in contrast, were driven primarily by Republican partisan identification and, to a lesser extent, race, though several media variables attained statistical significance in the McCain model. The statistically significant media effects variables were the number of days respondents watched television for campaign news, CNN believability, and Fox News believability, all of which worked to augment McCain's legitimacy assessments. The proportion of variance in McCain legitimacy assessments explained by adding media effects to the

model rose to 20% from 16% in the model without media predictors, figures substantially lower than the 43% and 28% in the respective Obama models. In general, the McCain legitimacy model displayed a narrow band of effects, and the discrepancy between the coefficients of determination in the McCain and Obama models suggest predictors not included in this analysis affected McCain's perceived presidential legitimacy.

Another finding that departed from prediction pertains to the candidate legitimacy ratios, created to measure the extent to which expectation states assumptions permeated televised media content. These variables were statistically significant only in the Obama model. This finding differed from expectations, in that, legitimacy beliefs were predicted to affect McCain perceived legitimacy and, in particular, Obama's legitimacy vis a vis McCain. The absence of statistically significant effects for the candidate legitimacy ratios in the comparative Obama versus McCain model (Table 42) is telling because this is **the** model where such influence was thought most likely to be evident. Regression results for the inter-candidate comparison, however, suggested a straightforward media effects path, with amount of television viewing time and network believability influencing perceptions of candidate legitimacy, rather than a nuanced channel of effects where portrayals of candidates and moderating relationships swayed perceptions.

The range of predictors in the Obama legitimacy model implied myriad perspectives notably absent in the McCain legitimacy model, a pattern that mirrored the diverse coalition that ultimately supported him. McCain's perceived presidential

legitimacy was *literally* a question of Democrat or Republican, black or white, with partisanship and race overshadowing the effects of media. Obama's perceived presidential legitimacy was a question of partisanship, race, televised media choices, and the nature of candidate portrayals on televised news shows. Obama versus McCain legitimacy was a question of partisanship, Fox News believability, perceived black racial group favoritism, and race.

An optimistic element of these findings is the range of forces at play for Obama, for whom neither race nor partisanship alone dominated evaluations of his presidential legitimacy. Less optimistic elements are the parochial band of predictors that influenced McCain's perceived legitimacy and the divisive undercurrents revealed by the direction of relationships in the Obama legitimacy model and in the Obama versus McCain model. After party identification, Fox News believability was the second strongest influence in both the Obama legitimacy model (where its effect size equaled that of race) and in the Obama versus McCain comparative model, negatively affecting assessments of Obama's presidential legitimacy. The power of this particular news source is compelling because, as shown earlier, whites are more likely to attend to conservative media news sources, with 22% of the study sample using Fox News as their primary television source for campaign news. Further, the McCain legitimacy ratio was negatively associated with legitimacy assessment in the Obama model, a finding indicative of the continued sway of status beliefs about which individuals have the right to aspire to the presidency. Historically, these individuals are white men.

Electoral conflict rooted in racial division, fed by a partisan divide, is a real concern because the demographic profile of this country is undergoing significant change. As of the middle of this century, the population will be one of pluralities rather than one of a white majority and several minorities (Colby & Ortman, 2015). This demographic transformation raises the importance of understanding race effects in elections, the foundation of our democracy. Though extant research suggests the African-American experience in this country is unique (Sanchez & Morin, 2011), the nature of relationship between blacks and whites may be mirrored in the relationship between whites and other non-white groups, such as Asian- and Hispanic Americans. That is, the African-American experience may prove instructive for other non-white minorities because race and race-associated status beliefs have the potential to influence beliefs about non-whites among a significant proportion of whites, particularly those who attend to conservative media, thereby contributing to racial divisiveness.

Status beliefs are resilient, reinforced by social interaction and the mass media, and as technology extends the reach and improves the sophistication of the media, this influence will continue to occur both directly and subtly. Direct influence occurs in political campaigns, which intentionally seek to affect short-term attitudes and behaviors (Huber & Arceneaux, 2007; Mutz & Soss, 1997). Subtle influence occurs with enculturation, the long-term inculcation of cultural beliefs that results from repeated exposure to consistent messages (Bandura, 2009; Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Morgan, 2009). This subtle influence is, perhaps, the most difficult to counter, though some

research suggests racial attitudes have changed dramatically over time. For example, Welch and Sigelman (2011) note that as younger cohorts replace older cohorts, the American population should become, as a whole, more racially liberal:

> Younger whites have the most equalitarian attitudes in assessing traits of intelligence and work ethic, views that should continue to shape their overall stance toward African Americans. The other generations lag behind, most notably, the pre–civil rights movement generation. (p. 218)

In his study of the 2008 ANES survey data, Knuckey (2011) similarly observes, "At the same time, younger voters are also likely to be more racially sympathetic than resentful" (p. 568).

There is disagreement, however, on whether these data do, in fact, show a promising decline of negative racial beliefs among young whites. Looking at the same data as Welch and Sigelman (2011) and Knuckey (2011), Hutchings (2008) finds little evidence that the young white cohort holds dramatically different racial beliefs than older white cohorts.

> Although it is true that in 2008 younger Whites were slightly more racially liberal than older Whites, this was also generally true among Blacks and Latinos. In short, on matters of public policy dealing explicitly with race, there is little evidence that the racial divide is declining among younger cohorts. (p. 929)

The difference in findings could stem from the nature of the questions asked. Asking a white 20-something whether he or she believes African Americans lack the "Protestant

work ethic" is qualitatively different than asking that same person whether he or she supports public policies that intentionally seek to mitigate racial disparities, sometimes at his or her expense. In short, egalitarianism in the abstract differs from egalitarianism in the concrete. Therefore, it remains to be seen whether the younger generation is, in fact, better positioned to resolve this country's persistent racial divide.

Study Limitations

Some study limitations have been discussed or alluded to earlier in the dissertation. Adequate sample size is one such limitation. The study sample was narrowed to include only white and African-American or black respondents and observations that were collected during the time window when the media believability and racial group favoritism questions were asked, from March 21, 2008 through May 29, 2008. The application of filters effectively reduced the baseline sample to 7,784 from 57,967. Of the 7,784 study sample respondents, 695, or 8.9%, identified as African-American or black.

A practical challenge and a statistical challenge arose from this constrained sample size. Practically, the African-American study sample had a different demographic profile than the African-American population in the United States. This discrepancy, on one hand, raises the possibility the study results were not generalizable to the larger population. The black study population, on the other hand, arguably reflected the *voting* African-American population (older, wealthier, more educated, more likely to be female), suggesting the analytical results had explanatory power beyond this dissertation.

Nevertheless, generalizability remains a concern. Statistically, the small size of the black study population created an imbalanced design, a problem readily apparent in the media believability analyses. The MSNBC and Fox News cells had only 46 and 36 African-American observations, respectively, and the ratio of white to black viewers for Fox News was particularly pronounced at 34 to one. The ratio of white to black viewers for MSNBC was less stark at seven to one. The paucity of black observations for these new sources, especially Fox News, raised the possibility that the data lacked the variation requisite for meaningful statistical analysis, a problem affirmed by statistical testing results that led to the exclusion of the Fox News model from the media believability analysis. The preponderance of white compared to black Fox News viewers, however, was telling in and of itself.

A challenge particular to the media analyses was the NAES' consolidated treatment of the three broadcast channels, ABC, CBS, and NBC. The NAES media believability question did not distinguish among the three channels and asked respondents to assess trustworthiness of "broadcast news outlets like ABC News, NBC News, and CBS News" as one (The Annenberg Public Policy Center, 2008). The collapsing of the three into one category was problematic because the textual semantic analysis yielded different legitimate ratios for McCain and Obama, which resulted in ABC being classified as a neutral, non-partisan network, CBS as a liberal-leaning network, and NBC as a conservative network. Therefore, the relationships between race, partisanship, network lean, broadcast media believability, and, ultimately, perceived presidential legitimacy were obscured to some degree.

Finally, the study's most significant limitation centers on the perceived black racial group favoritism variable. The question as to whether this variable was a valid measure of the linked fate construct emerged because of unanticipated and contradictory findings (e.g., positively associated with legitimacy in the Obama model, but negatively associated with legitimacy in the Obama versus McCain model). Its interaction with race generated effects completely opposite to prediction and contrary to prior research findings that showed racial group favoritism was associated with ingroup identification, which, in turn, was associated with pro-ingroup beliefs and behaviors (Abrams, 2010; Abrams & Giles, 2007, 2009). These anomalous results raised questions about this variable, which, for the purposes of this project, served as an operationalization of linked fate, and suggest it could have been an ill fit for the construct it sought to measure, an African-American political perspective (the group moves forward together) that is the hallmark of linked fate. The NAES questions used to build the variable appeared to home in on the central aspect of linked fate – that the forward movement of the race benefits all blacks – by asking whether black elected officials behaved in ways that benefitted black constituents. But perhaps respondents, black and white, hesitated to answer the questions honestly for social desirability reasons. African Americans could have been reluctant to suggest that black politicians "looked out" for them, lest they conjured recriminations of undeserved affirmative action. Whites also could have been reluctant to admit to believing black politicians favored African Americans, lest they appeared racist. The NAES survey, in short, may

not have been a safe environment for respondents to share their honest beliefs about the impact of race on public policy.

The component parts of the black racial group favoritism term also presented some inherent complications. The variable was constructed from responses to three NAES questions on the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed that black elected officials engaged in favoritism toward their racial group. Higher levels of disagreement that African Americans received special treatment from African-American politicians were defined as signifying higher levels of black racial group favoritism, a proposition that appears, prima facie, odd. The rationale for this apparently counterintuitive scale was skepticism: as described in Chapter II, African Americans sometimes adopt negotiated perspectives toward social reality, viewing some social phenomena, such as media messages about their ingroup, with cynicism and outright rejecting others (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2005; Davis & Gandy, 1999; Harwood & Roy, 2007). But the perceived black racial group favoritism variable did not represent the approach many scholars take to ascertaining the presence and strength of linked fate: asking specifically whether what happens to the group as a whole affects individual group members (e.g., Harris-Lacewell & Junn, 2007). The behavior of the black racial group favoritism variable, perhaps, can be explained as a function of the complexity of the African-American experience in this country, but a metric based on response data that more precisely targeted the concept of linked fate would have been preferable.

Future Directions for Research

As discussed at length in the Study Limitations section, given the uncertainty surrounding the perceived black racial group favoritism variable in this study, identifying a more robust measurement could help clarify the effects of linked fate among African Americans.

Further, revisiting this dissertation's questions with the results from the 2012 National Annenberg Election Surveys would be an interesting and obvious next step. Anecdotally, the racial climate during the 2012 general election had deteriorated since 2008, which suggests worsened conditions for healing racial divisions. Examining whether televised media played a role in assessing perceived presidential legitimacy would provide a sense of the extent to which the mass media have helped or hindered mitigating racial tensions.

Finally, we are on the cusp of the 2016 U.S. presidential election, where a woman, Hillary Clinton, stands poised to win the Democratic nomination, and to contest an unconventional Republican candidate, Donald Trump, for the office of the presidency. The study of the 2008 election revealed that expectation states assumptions, as measured by the candidate legitimacy ratios, had but a moderate effect on assessments of Barack Obama's and John McCain's perceived presidential legitimacy. In 2016, status beliefs about who has the right to hold the highest office in the land could prove more relevant than in 2008 because of gender. Expectation states scholarship has been more prolific in gender studies, where research has repeatedly shown women are viewed as less competent than are men and as having lower status

than do men. Applying the presidential legitimacy scenario to the contest between Clinton and Trump, whose own legitimacy challenges are rooted in specific, as opposed to pervasive diffuse, status characteristics, could very well show that deep-seated assumptions about gender and power – and who has the right to hold power – continue to affect United States political processes and social structure.

Appendix A

Legitimacy Semantic Tree for Textual Analysis

Legitimacy Semantic Tree for Textual Analysis		
Candidate or Candidate Quality	**Subquality I**	**Subquality II**
Barack Obama		
	obama	
John McCain		
	mccain	
Competence		
	Capable	
		Able
		Capable
		Competent
		Effective
		Expert
		Qualified
		Professional
	Incapable	
		Empty suit
		Incapable
		Incompetent
		Ineffective
		Inept
		Too old
		Too old to lead
		Unprofessional
		Unqualified
	Composure	
		Aplomb
		Discipline
		Restraint
		Regularity
		Self-control
		Temperance
		Even-temper
		Level-head
	Discomposure	
		Anger
		Disobedience
		Erratic
		Hot head
		Hot temper
		Impulsive

	Intemperance
	Knee jerk
	Undisciplined
	Lack of restraint
	Volcanic
Experienced	
	Elder
	Maturity
	Ready to be president
	Ready to lead
	Savvy
	Seasoned
	Sophisticated
	Veteran
	Discretion
	Foresight
	Judgment
	Prudence
	Statesmanship
	Wisdom
	Contemplative
	Thoughtfulness
Inexperienced	
	Amateur
	Inexperienced
	Imprudence
	Naiveté
	Neophyte
	Not ready to be president
	Not ready to lead
	Unsophisticated
	Indiscreet
	Novice
	Recklessness
	Too young
	Too young to lead
	Unwise
Intelligence	
	Acumen
	Shrewdness
	Keen

		Genius
		Smart
		Intellectual
	Stupidity	
		Dull
		Dumb
		Ignorance
		Stupidity
	Suitability	
		Appropriateness
		Fitness
		Suitability
	Unsuitability	
		Inappropriateness
Empathy		Unfitness
		Unsuitability
	Attentiveness	
		Attentive
		Carefulness
	Inattentiveness	
		Carelessness
		Inattentive
		Incaution
	Empathetic	
		Shares my values
		Understanding
		Understands people like me
		Gets people like me
		In touch
	Insensitive	
		Elitist
		Indifferent
		Lack empathy
		Out of touch
		Discriminatory
		Racism
	Humility & modesty	
		Humility
		Modesty
	Pride & arrogance	

		Arrogance
		Cavalier
		Egotistic
		Haughty
		Pompous
		Presumptuous
		Pretentious
		Smug
		Uppity
		Conceit
		Pride
	Kindness & goodness	
		Beneficence
		Compassion
		Caring
		Goodness
		Humaneness
		Humanitarian
		Mercifulness
		Kindliness
		Kindness
		Sympathy
		Tenderness
	Inhumaneness	
		Mercilessness
		Selfishness
		Egoism
Integrity		Opportunism
		Cruelty
	Credibility	
		Credibility
		Plausibility
	Noncredibility	
		Implausibility
		Noncredible
	Dependability	
		Consistent
		Dependable
		Hardworking
		Responsibility
		Trustworthiness

Undependability	
	Inconsistent
	Undependable
	Lazy
	Irresponsibility
	Untrustworthiness
Honesty	
	Candor
	Credulity
	Honesty
	Says what he believes
	Trustfulness
	Truth
Dishonesty	
	Deceit
	Dishonesty
	Distrust
	Falsehood
	Misleading
	Shady
	Untruthful
Respect	
	Courtesy
	Appreciation
	Awe
	Consideration
	Deference
	Dignity
	Admiration
Disrespect & abuse	
	Abuse
	Condescension
	Defamation
	Denigration
	Detraction
	Discourtesy
	Disparagement
	Smear
	Derision
	Disrespect
	Impudence
	Mock

		Scandalization
		Sneer
	Morality & virtue	
		Decency
		Fidelity
		Morality
		Values
		Kansas values
		Middle-America values
		Virtue
	Immorality & indecency	
		Immorality
		Indecency
	Respectability & righteousness	
		Respectability
		Honorableness
		Upright
		Upstanding
		Worthiness
		Righteousness
		Ethical
		Incorruptible
		Principled
		High-minded
		Noble
		Right-minded
		Scrupulousness
	Nonrespectability	
		Corrupt
		Keating five
		Savings and loan
		Machine politics
		Chicago machine
		Chicago politics
		Chicago machine politics
		Dishonorable
		Shamefulness
		Unethical

		Unprincipled
		Unscrupulous
		Unworthiness
Leadership		
	Authority	
		Assertive
		Authority
		Commander-in-chief
		Commanding
		Compelling
		Imposing
		Initiative
		Strength
		Leadership
		Masculinity
		Powerful
		Strong
	Powerlessness	
		Inferiority
		Subordination
		Impotence
		Powerlessness
		Weakness
	Courage & heroism	
		Audacity
		Courage
		Heroism
		Superhero
		War hero
		Veteran
		Maverick
		Dissenter
	Cowardice & timidity	
		Cowardice
		Craven
		Poltroonery
		Pusillanimity
		Timidity
	Exceptional	
		Consequential

	Exceptional
	Extraordinary
	Impressive
	Noteworthy
	Phenomenal
	Remarkable
	Significant
Unexceptional	
	Common
	Inconsequential
	Insignificant
	Ordinary
	Unexceptional
	Unimportant
	Unremarkable
Inspiring	
	Exhilarating
	Inspirational
	Moving
	Stirring
	Uplifting
Uninspiring	
	Boring
	Mcsame
	Unexciting
	Uninspiring
Resoluteness	
	Ambition
	Assiduity
	Certainty
	Determination
	Finality
	Indefatigability
	Indisputability
	Predictability
	Surety
	Resoluteness
	Stubbornness
Indecisiveness	
	Doubt
	Indefiniteness
	Irresoluteness

		Uncertainty
Otherness		
	Authenticity & naturalness	
		Acceptability
		Admissibility
		Authenticity
		Legitimacy
		Naturalness
		Real
	Artificiality & unnaturalness	
		Affectedness
		Artificiality
		Illegitimate
		Inadmissibility
		Unacceptability
		Unnaturalness
		Bizarre
		Abnormal
		Funny
		Odd
		Peculiar
		Ridiculous
		Strange
		Weird
		Boy wonder
		Unusualness
		Urban
		Criminal
		Dependence
		Culture of dependence
		Culture of dependency
		Gang
		Thug

	Welfare
	Welfare queen
Capitalism and freedom	
	Enterprisingness
	Initiative
	Individualism
	Individuality
	Freedom
	Capitalism
	Free market
	Pull yourself up
Socialism	
	Collectivist
	Communist
	Distributionist
	Marxist
	Tax and spend
	Tax and spend liberal
	Jeremiah Wright
	Reverend Jeremiah Wright
	Reverend Wright
Ordinariness	
	Average
	Everyday Joe
	Joe the plumber
	Normal
	Regular
Celebrity	
	Arnold Schwarzenegger
	Britney spears
	Idolatry
	Messiah
	Lindsay Lohan
	Obamania
	Paris Hilton
Citizenship	
	American
	Eligibility
	U.S. citizen
	Patriotic

Noncitizenship	
	African
	Anti-American
	Arab
	Birther
	Foreign
	Ineligibility
	Kenyan
	Not a citizen
	Non-citizen
	Uncitizen
	Alien
	Illegal
	Un-American
	Unpatriotic
Ethnic group	
	Anglo-Saxon
	Arab
	Black person
	Mixed-blood
	People of color
	White person
Moderate	
	Reasonable
	Harmless
	Safe
	Non-threatening
Extremist	
	Aryan
	Extremist
	Radical
	Leftwing
	Antimilitarism
	Dovishness
	Pacifism
	Peace
	Rightwing
	Religious right
	Danger
	Risky
	Threatening
	Terrorism

	Ayers
Christianity	
	Christian
	God-fearing
Non-Christianity	
	Non-Christian
	Godless
	Islam
	Islamist
	Muslim
	Sect

Appendix B

Presidential Legitimacy Categorization Steps and Guidelines

1. Cleaned transcripts are loaded into Tropes for analysis, which applies a semantic scenario, or dictionary, to identify frequently co-occurring words and phrases. These words and phrases are "instances."
2. For this project, a customized "Presidential Legitimacy Scenario," which contains concepts generally pertinent to presidential legitimacy (e.g., leadership) and concepts specific to the 2008 presidential election (e.g., Reverend Jeremiah Wright), is employed.
3. The instance is the categorization unit. Multiple instances can occur in a single text block. For example, the below excerpt from MSNBC's October 15, 2008 airing of *Countdown with Keith Olbermann* contains four instances, the underlined words, pulled by the Presidential Legitimacy Scenario in Tropes:

> **EXAMPLE 1** – "The attempts to dehumanize Obama, to all but call him a "terrorist," to deem him scary, to call him "dangerous," that electing him would be the biggest mistake ever undertaken by the American people -- is that off the table because, if you`re doing that, you are sitting down next to him? I mean, this is the point that the far-right made after last week`s debate. If Obama appears calm and collective (sic) and somebody you can have a chat with, how can you convince anybody -- now, this is a madman here, this is a dangerous society here?" (Keith Olbermann, MSNBC *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*, October 15, 2008).

4. After Tropes is applied, a second round of data cleaning occurs to eliminate non-pertinent instances not caught during the first round of text cleaning (e.g., "leader" in Senate Majority Leader and "American" in American Broadcast Corporation are not relevant).
5. Next, the remaining instances are categorized as either having a literal or opposite meaning. A negative often flags an opposite meaning, such as the word "not" preceding "truthful" or "lack" preceding "credibility." An example of a negative meaning from the transcripts is below.

    EXAMPLE 2 – ". . . that Romney especially is a successful businessman, might bring McCain some badly needed credibility on the economy" (Michael Crowley, CBS *The Early Show*, August 18, 2008).

    In this context, the speaker is saying McCain lacks credibility on the economy; therefore, this instance of "credibility" is an opposite meaning.

    The next text block, the subject of which is McCain's running mate Sarah Palin, shows an example of a literal meaning of an instance of "credible."

    EXAMPLE 3 – . . . "Then they challenged her on experience until they realized she's got more credible experience than Barack Obama does except for running for president" (Fred Thompson, CBS *The Early Show*, August 18, 2008).

6. Instances from the Competence, Empathy, Integrity, and Leadership branches of the "Presidential Legitimacy Scenario" lend themselves well to the literal and opposite categorization scheme; however, instances from the Otherness branch, particularly those in the *ethnic or racial group* and *citizenship and patriotism* sub-branches, do not always fit well into this rubric. There is no natural opposite, for example, of African American (in the *ethnic or racial group* sub-branch). Therefore, instances from these categories will be categorized in the following manner:

    a. If the instance occurs in a context describing [1] similarity or alignment between the candidate and the group, [2] the candidate's support for the group or group's support for the candidate, or [3] as a general modifier for the group, it is categorized as literal. When categorized as literal, the instance remains in the original Tropes-designated "Presidential Legitimacy" branch of Otherness.

    EXAMPLE 4 – Similarity or alignment: "We've been in Germany for 60 years, but the point is that, if we can reduce and eliminate American casualties, Americans will be satisfied with American presence here" (John McCain, ABC *Good Morning America*, March 17, 2008).

        1. McCain is stating Americans do not oppose a long-term U.S. presence in Iraq under specific conditions, an expression of similarity of opinion.

2. Therefore, “Americans” remains in the category identified by Tropes, *citizenship and patriotism, Americans*.

EXAMPLE 5 – Support: “Now does -- should the Republican Party seize on this at any time during this campaign and make it even more of an issue? The polls show 66 percent of Americans have heard about this story. 34 percent don't know anything about it. So if you were advising John McCain, would you say hey, here's something you can drive home?” (Bill O’Reilly, Fox News *The O’Reilly Factor*, March 17, 2008).

1. O’Reilly is asking whether the McCain campaign should try to increase awareness about Reverend Jeremiah Wright among the 34% of Americans who know nothing about him – a supportive, raising awareness effort.
2. In this case, “Americans” is categorized as literal under *citizenship and patriotism*, the original Tropes classification.

EXAMPLE 6 – General modifier: “Gadhafi was telling Biden about why Libyan democracy was superior to the American version of democracy” (Norm Kurz, CNN *Anderson Cooper 360°*, September 15, 2008).

1. “American” is a general modifier for democracy.
2. “American” remains in the category identified by Tropes, *citizenship and patriotism, American*.

EXAMPLE 7 – Similarity or alignment in a different sub-branch: "I felt sympathy. I felt compassion. I know that what they are going through - right now is probably something that a lot of other American families have gone through" (Sandi Huddleston, ABC *Good Morning America*, September 2, 2008).

1. The above statement, which is an Indiana GOP delegate's reaction to Sarah Palin's daughter's pregnancy, expresses similarity or alignment in a very individualized manner that is more personal than a reference to, for example, American support for economic or foreign policy.
2. To capture the personal nature of this instance, "American" is categorized as literal in Otherness (original Tropes category), *familiarity and known, ordinary American*.

b. If the instance occurs in a context describing [1] a true opposite, [2] dissimilarity or dissonance between the candidate and the group or [3] non-support between the group and the candidate, it is categorized as opposite. If categorized as opposite, the instance may remain in its original branch (Otherness) or be recategorized to a different, more appropriate branch.

EXAMPLE 8 – True opposite: "You know, she [Michelle Obama] had some turbulence during the course of the campaign over

comments whether or not she was proud to be an American before this campaign" (George Stephanopoulos, ABC *Good Morning America*, May 19, 2008).

1. In the above excerpt, George Stephanopoulos is alluding to Michelle Obama's earlier statement that she was proud of her country for the first time, which many interpreted as "un-American" or "unpatriotic."
2. This instance of "American" remains in Otherness, but is recategorized as opposite to *noncitizenship and non-patriotism, un-American*.

EXAMPLE 9 – Dissonant: "Right now, his campaign is not relevant, and it`s off tune from where the American people are" (Rahm Emmanuel, MSNBC Countdown, October 15, 2008).

1. The meaning of this statement is that McCain is "off tune" from Americans. The statement does not imply that American citizenship or American-ness or their opposites (non-American citizenship, un-American or anti-American) are associated with McCain.
2. Therefore, this instance is recategorized to Empathy, *unempathetic, disconnect, out-of-touch (off tune)* for analysis.

EXAMPLE 10 – Non-supportive: “Don't be distracted. These attacks don't hurt Barack Obama and me, what they hurt is you and your fellow Americans” (Joe Biden, NBC *The Today Show*, November 3, 2008).

1. Joe Biden is stating McCain’s messages are non-supportive for Americans.
2. This instance is recategorized as opposite to *noncitizenship and non-patriotism, un-American*.

EXAMPLE 11 – Dissimilarity in a different sub-branch: “[Michelle Obama’s] political test, to connect the story of the Obamas to the story of average Americans” (David Gregory, NBC *The Today Show*, August 26, 2008).

1. Similar to EXAMPLE 7, this core of this statement is personal: Michelle Obama needs to personally connect with Americans, to demonstrate the Obama family’s “story” is similar to their own.
2. To reflect the perceived chasm Michelle Obama needs to address, “Americans” is recategorized as opposite.
3. To reflect the highly individualized nature of her task, the instance is recategorized to the Otherness sub-branch of unfamiliarity and unknown, not like us.

c. For *ethnic and racial group* categorization, instances are similarly categorized as literal for similar/aligned, supportive, or descriptive and as opposite for true opposite, dissimilar/dissonant, or non-supportive contexts.

EXAMPLE 12 – Descriptive: "The 45th Democratic National Convention, Barack Obama will accept the party's nomination for president, the first African American nominee in America's 232-year history" (Diane Sawyer, ABC *Good Morning America*, August 25, 2008).

1. "African American" is descriptive in this context, though it could also be interpreted as supportive in so far as this "first" is to be celebrated.
2. In this case, "African American" is categorized as literal in the Otherness, *ethnic and racial* group category.

EXAMPLE 13 – Non-supportive: "In Florida we're hearing about another kind of voting anxiety. Among African-Americans, there is concern that if they vote early it may not count or somehow won't really matter" (Anderson Cooper, CNN *Anderson Cooper 360°*, October 31, 2008).

1. The context of this instance of "African American" implies racism.

2. Therefore, “African American” is categorized in the Otherness branch, but under *extremism, racism* rather than *ethnic or racial group, African American*.

7. Instances Tropes places in the Competence, Empathy, Integrity, and Leadership branches periodically require recategorization into a different branch, though less frequently than the group-oriented instances in Other. Circumstances that trigger reclassification from these branches are: [1] Tropes’ misclassification of a word with multiple meanings and [2] speaker-modified meaning of instance.

   EXAMPLE 14 – Tropes misclassification: “Tonight's debate will focus on foreign policy and national security an area of strength for Senator John McCain. John -- Senator John McCain a Navy veteran and former prisoner of war” (Brit Hume, Fox News *The O’Reilly Factor*, September 26, 2008).

      1. Tropes categorized this instance of “veteran” under Competence, *experienced, maturity, veteran*.
      2. But, here, “veteran” describes McCain’s military service and consequently belongs in Leadership, *courage and heroism, veteran*.

   EXAMPLE 15 – Tropes misclassification: “What I can say is that under the approach I'm taking, if you make $150,000 or less, you

will see a tax cut. If you're making $250,000 a year or more, you're going to see a modest increase" (Barack Obama, CNN *Anderson Cooper 360°*, August 18, 2008).

1. Tropes interpreted "modest" as meaning humble and, thus, categorizes this instance under Empathy, *humility and modesty, humble, modesty*.
2. In this context, "modest" means "reasonable," so is reclassified to Otherness, *moderate, reasonable*.

EXAMPLE 16 – Speaker-modified meaning: "Behind all of these claims and positions by Senator Obama lies the ambition to be president" (John McCain, MSNBC *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*, August 18, 2008).

1. In the Presidential Legitimacy Scenario, "ambition" connotes a positive clarity of purpose and is located in Leadership branch and *resoluteness* sub-branch.
2. McCain, however, is using "ambition" in a negative sense to suggest Obama's statements are motivated by self-interest.
3. In this context, "ambition" is recategorized to Empathy, *pride and arrogance, egotistic, self-serving*.

EXAMPLE 17 – Speaker-modified meaning: "And Senator McCain has no ambition to be president, or he does, and his is good, but Obama`s is bad or he doesn`t and he`s being forced to run by nefarious forces" (Keith Olbermann, MSNBC *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*, August 18, 2008).

1. Keith Olbermann is responding to John McCain's criticism of Barack Obama's "ambition" in this text block, and his response also deviates from the scenario's definition.
2. Like McCain, Olbermann uses "ambition" in a negative sense, but he employs the word to convey an assessment of hypocrisy on McCain's part.
3. Therefore, "ambition" is recategorized to Integrity, *dishonesty, dishonesty, hypocrisy*.

8. The impact of speakers on instance categorization:
    a. Stand-alone, non-embedded video of and statements by the candidates, their surrogates and other individuals speaking for or about the candidates, such as campaign ad clips and interview question responses, will be categorized at "face value."

i. For example, if McCain says he is the best candidate to serve as "Commander-in-Chief", the instance will be categorized under Leadership, *authority, Commander-in-Chief*.

ii. If a campaign ad states Obama is not "ready to lead," the instance will be categorized under Competence, *incapable, not ready to lead*.

b. In contrast, if a quotation or video is embedded within a program speaker's statement, instances contained therein will be categorized to reflect the meaning conveyed by the speaker.

i. Returning to the "ambition" example, Olbermann uses video clips of McCain commenting on Obama's "ambition to be president" to illustrate hypocrisy because, he notes, McCain similarly shares an ambition to be president.

ii. As noted above, "ambition" is recategorized to Integrity, *dishonesty, hypocrisy* from Leadership, *resoluteness, ambition*.

9. After categorization to the appropriate branch and sub-branch is complete, each instance is then categorized as denoting "legitimacy" (L) or "non-legitimacy" (NL).

a. The instance's location in the "Presidential Legitimacy Scenario" determines this designation.

b. The tree consists of five branches: Competence, Empathy, Integrity, Leadership, and Otherness.

c. Each of these branches contains parallel groups of words that denote legitimacy and non-legitimacy. For example:
    i. Integrity contains six sub-branches, with three comprised of words and phrases signaling legitimacy and three comprised of words and phrases associated with non-legitimacy.
    ii. Legitimacy sub-branches are empathetic, humility and modesty, and kindness and goodness.
    iii. The counterpart non-legitimacy branches are Unempathetic, pride and arrogance, and inhumaneness.
d. The Otherness branch also sub-branches discretely associated with legitimacy and non-legitimacy, but, because of the sweeping nature of some Otherness instances, such as American, instances may have more than one legitimate or non-legitimate counterpart.
    i. Otherness has 14 sub-branches.
    ii. Legitimacy sub-branches are:
        1. Authenticity
        2. Capitalism and freedom
        3. Christianity
        4. Citizenship and patriotism
        5. Ethnic or racial group

6. Familiarity and known

7. Moderate

iii. Non-legitimacy branches are:

1. Artificiality and unnaturalness

2. Celebrity

3. Socialism

4. Non-Christianity

5. Noncitizenship and non-patriotism

6. Unfamiliarity and unknown

7. Extremist

iv. Sub-branches with potentially more than one opposite sub-branch within Otherness are:

1. *Citizenship and patriotism's* natural non-legitimate sub-branch is *noncitizenship and non-patriotism*, but also include *extremist* and *unfamiliarity and unknown*.

EXAMPLE 18 – *Extremist* as opposite: "There`s a certain portion of the electorate, of <u>American citizens</u> who find the specter of Obama candidacy whether for outright racism, whether for nativism, whether for all sorts of other reasons, profoundly terrifying to their identity as Americans" (Chris

Hayes, MSNBC *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*, October 13, 2008).

a. "American citizens" refers to a cadre of the electorate for which extremist beliefs affect their electoral decisions.

b. This instance is recategorized to *extremism, racism*.

EXAMPLE 19 – *Unfamiliarity and unknown* as opposite: "Americans also don't know very much about Barack Obama" (Bill O-Reilly, Fox *The O'Reilly Factor*, March 17, 2008).

a. In this context, O'Reilly notes "Americans" have a sense of unfamiliarity with Obama.

b. This instance is recategorized to *unfamiliarity and unknown, don't know much about*.

v. *Ethnic or racial group* has no specific non-legitimate (i.e., opposite) counterpart.

1. As noted in **EXAMPLE 13**, instances in the *extremist* sub-branch approximate non-legitimate or opposite instances for this sub-branch (e.g.,

extremism, racism as "opposite" of *ethnic or racial group, African American*).

2. In a select few circumstances, the non-legitimate counterpart for African-American occurs outside the Otherness branch.
    a. **EXAMPLE 19** – ". . . the poll says today only 8% of Americans, that includes a lot of African-Americans, approve of [Reverend Jeremiah] Wright" (Bill O'Reilly, Fox *The O'Reilly Factor*, March 17, 2008).
    b. "African Americans" in this instances does not fall under of the literal or opposite guidelines specified above (similar or dissimilar to candidate, supportive or non-supportive vis a vis a candidate, etc.).
    c. In this context, "African Americans" serve as the subject, with "Americans," to illustrate dissatisfaction with Wright.
    d. Both "Americans" and "African Americans" are recategorized to Empathy, Unempathetic, unlikeable from their respective original Otherness designations,

citizenship and patriotism and *ethnic or racial group*.

10. The last categorization step is assigning the instance as referring to either John McCain or Barack Obama.
    a. Direct references are categorized to the candidates.
        i. **EXAMPLE 20** – "And mocking McCain as <u>out of touch</u>. Voice #2: (From Obama campaign ad) He admits he still doesn't know how to use a computer, can't send an e-mail" (Andrea Mitchell, NBC *The Today Show*, September 15, 2008).
            1. Categorized to Empathy, *unempathetic, disconnect, out of touch*
            2. Denotes non-legitimacy
            3. Refers to McCain
        ii. **EXAMPLE 21** – "I think really what I saw this weekend was sort of the excitement and the <u>passion</u>, and I think it's so great for our democracy, and I think, obviously, Barack Obama has so much to do with that" (Caroline Kennedy, NBC *The Today Show*, November 3, 2008).
            1. Categorized to Leadership, *inspiring, passion*
            2. Denotes legitimacy
            3. Refers to Obama

b. Indirect and related references are categorized to the candidates. Indirect references include instances that refer to items such as, political parties, media, surrogates, and vice presidential running mates.

REFERENCES

Abraham, L. & Appiah, O. (2006). Framing news stories: The role of visual imagery in priming racial stereotypes. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 17, 183-203.

Abramowitz, A.I. & Saunders, K.L. (2008). Is polarization a myth? *The Journal of Politics*, 70, 542-555.

Abramowitz, A.I. (2010). Transformation and polarization: The 2008 presidential election and the new American electorate. *Electoral Studies*, 29, 594-603.

Abrams, J. (2008). African Americans' television activity: Is it related to perceptions of outgroup vitality? *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 19, 1-17.

Abrams, J. (2010). Asian American television activity: Is it related to outgroup vitality? *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34, 541–550.

Abrams, J. & Giles, H. (2007). Ethnic identity gratifications selection and avoidance by African Americans: A group vitality and social identity gratifications perspective. *Media Psychology*, 9, 115-134.

Abrams, J. & Giles, H. (2009). Hispanic television activity: Is it related to vitality perceptions? *Communication Research Reports*, 26, 247-252.

Acetic and Semantic Knowledge. (2014). Getting started with Tropes. Retrieved on December 13, 2014, from http://www.semantic-knowledge.com/doc/V81/text-analysis/quick-guide.htm.

Albarran, A.B. & Umphrey, D. (1993). An examination of television motivations and program preferences by Hispanics, blacks, and whites. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 95, 95-103.

Albert, T.C. & Jacobs, R.D. (2008). Television attitudes and TV types of African-Americans, Latinos, and Caucasians. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 10, 235-246.

Allen, R.L., Dawson, M.C., & Brown, R.E. (1989). A schema-based approach to modeling an African-American racial belief system. *The American Political Science Review*, 83, 421-441.

Allison, P.D. (2014). Measures of fit for logistic regression. *SAS Global Forum – Paper 1485-2014.* Philadelphia, PA: Statistical Horizons LLC and the University of Pennsylvania.

Althaus, S.L. & Coe, K. (2011). Priming patriots: Social identity processes and the dynamics of public support for war. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 75, 65-88.

Appiah, O., Knobloch-Westerwick, S., & Alter, S. (2013). InGroup Consciousness and outgroup derogation: Effects of news valence, character race, and recipient race on selective news reading. *Journal of Communication*, 63, 517-534.

Avery, J.M. & Peffley, M. (2005). Voter registration requirements, voter turnout, and welfare eligibility policy: Class bias matters. *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*, 5, 47-67.

Avram, C.A., Velter, V., & Dumitrache, I. (2014). Semantic analysis applications in computational bibliometrics. *Control Engineering and Applied Informatics*, 16, 62-69.

Baldassarri, D. & Gelman, A. (2008). Partisans without constraint: Political polarization and trends in American public opinion. *American Journal of Sociology*, 114, 408-446.

Bandura, A. (2009). In J. Bryant & M.B. Oliver (Eds.), *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research* (94-124). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlhaum.

Baum, M.A. & Groeling, T. (2008). New media and the polarization of American political discourse. *Political Communication*, 25, 345-365.

Beaudoin, C.E. & Thorson, E. (2005). Credibility perceptions of news coverage of ethnic groups: The predictive roles of race and news use. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 16, 33-48.

Beaudoin, C.E. & Thorson, E. (2006). The social capital of blacks and whites: Differing effects of the mass media in the United States. *Human Communication Research*, 32, 155-177.

Beaudoin, C.E. (2011). News effects on bonding and bridging social capital: An empirical study relevant to ethnicity in the United States. *Communication Research*, 38, 155-178.

Berger, J., Ridgeway, C.L., Fisek, M.H., & Norman, R.Z. (1998). The legitimation and delegitimation of power and prestige orders. *American Sociological Review*, 63, 379-405.

Bobo, L. & Gilliam, F.D. (1990). Race, sociopolitical participation, and black empowerment. The *American Political Science Review*, 84, 377-393.

Busselle, R. & Crandall, H. (2002). Television viewing and perceptions about race difference in socioeconomic success. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 46, 265-282.

CBSNews staff, (2008,November 4). Barack Obama wins presidency. *CBSNews*. Retrieved October 20, 2014 from http://www.cbsnews.com/news/barack-obama-wins-presidency/.

Center for American Women and Politics (2014). *Gender Differences in Voter Turnout*. New Brunswick, NJ: Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University. Retrieved on July 5, 2014, from http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/voters/documents/genderdiff.pdf.

Chen, C. (2002). Robust regression and outlier detection with the ROBUSTREG procedure. Proceedings of the 27th SAS Users Group International Conference, Cary NC: SAS Institute, Inc.

Cohen, E.G. (1982). Expectation states and interracial interaction in school settings. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 8, 209-235.

Colby, S.L. & Ortman, J.M. (2015). Projections of the size and composition of the U.S. population: 2014-2060. *Current Population Reports*, 25-1143. Washington, D.C.: The U.S. Census Bureau.

Conservapedia (2015). Conservapedia: about. Retrieved on August 1, 2015, from (http://www.conservapedia.com/Conservapedia:About.

Correll, S.J., & Ridgeway, C.L. (2003). Expectation states theory. In John Delamater (Ed.), *Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp. 29-51). New York: Klewer.

Correll, S.J., Benard, S., Paik, I., & (2007). Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty. *American Journal of Sociology*, 112, 1297-1338.

Davis, J.L. & Gandy, O.H., Jr. (1999). Racial identity and media orientation: Exploring the nature of constraint. *Journal of Black Studies*, 29, 367-397.

Dawson, M.C. (1994). *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Della Vigna, S. & Kaplan, E. (2007). The Fox News effect: Media bias and voting. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, August, 1187-1234.

Derr, B. (2013). Ordinal response modeling with the LOGISTIC procedure. *SAS Global Forum 2013 – Statistics and Data Analysis*. Cary, NC: SAS Institute, Inc.

Desilver, D. (2013, August 1). Black unemployment rate is consistently twice that of whites. *Pew Research Center: Numbers, Facts and Trends Shaping Your World*. Retrieved on October 1, 2013, from http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/08/21/through-good-times-and-bad-black-unemployment-is-consistently-double-that-of-whites/.

Dilks, L.M., Thye, S.R., Taylor, P.A., & (2010). Socializing economic theories of discrimination: Lessons from Survivor. *Social Science Research*, 39, 1164-1180.

Ditonto, T.M., Lau, R.R., & Sears, D.O. (2013). AMPing racial attitudes: Comparing the power of explicit and implicit racism measures in 2008. *Political Psychology*, 34, 487-510.

Dixon, T.L. (2008). Network news and racial beliefs: Exploring the connection between national television news and stereotypical perceptions of African Americans. *Journal of Communication*, 58, 321-337.

Dixon, T.L. (2007). Black criminals and white officers: The effects of racially misrepresenting lawbreakers and law defenders on television news. *Media Psychology*, 10, 270-291.

Dixon, T.L. & Maddox, K.B. (2005). Skin tone, crime news, and social reality judgments: Priming the stereotype of the dark and dangerous black criminal. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 35, 1555-1570.

Duerst-Lahti, D. (2006). Presidential elections: Gendered space and the case of 2004. In S.J. Carroll & R.L. Fox (Eds.), *Gender and Elections: Shaping the Future of American Politics* (12-42). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Entman, R.M. (1992). Blacks in the news: Television, modern racism and cultural change. *Journalism Quarterly*, 69, 341-361.

Feldman, L. (2011). Partisan differences in opinionated news perceptions: A test of the hostile media effect. *Political Behavior*, 33, 407-432.

File, T. (2013). The diversifying electorate: Voting rates by race and Hispanic origin in 2012 (and other recent elections). *Current Population Survey*, P20-568, 1-13.

Fujioka, Y. (2005). Black images as a perceived threat to African American ethnic identity: Coping responses, perceived public perception, and attitudes toward affirmative action. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 49, 450-467.

Gallup. (2012). Historical presidential candidate support by group. U.S. Presidential Election Center. Retrieved on July 20, 2013, from http://www.gallup.com/poll/154559/us-presidential-election-center.aspx.

Gandy, Jr., O.H., Kopp, K., Hands, T., Frazer, K., & Phillips, D. (1997). Race and risk: Factors affecting the framing of stories about inequality, discrimination, and just plain bad luck. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 61, 158-182.

Gay, C. (2004). Putting race in context: Identifying the environmental determinants of black racial attitudes. *The American Political Science Review*, 98, 547-562.

Gerbner, G. (1998). Cultivation analysis: An overview. *Mass Communication & Society*, 1, 175-194.

Gerbner, G. & Gross, L. (1976). Living with television: The violence profile. *Journal of Communication*, 26, 172-200.

Gerbner, G. , Gross, L., Signorielli, N., & Morgan, M. (1980). Aging with television: Images on television drama and conceptions of social reality. *Journal of Communication*, Winter, 37-47.

Gilens, M. (1996). Race and poverty in America: Public misperceptions and the American news media. Public Opinion Quarterly, 60, 515-541.

Gilliam, F.D. & Iyengar, S. (2000). Prime suspects: The influence of local television news on the viewing public. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44, 560-573.

Gilliam, F.D. & Whitby, K.J. (1989). Race, class, and attitudes toward social welfare spending: An ethclass interpretation. *Social Science Quarterly*, 70, 88-100.

Goar, C. & Sell, J. (2005). Using task definition to modify racial inequality within task groups. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 46, 525-543.

Goldman, S.K. (2012). Effects of the 2008 Obama presidential campaign on white racial prejudice. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 76, 663-687.

Groeling, T. (2008). Who's the fairest of them all? An empirical test for partisan bias on ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox News. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 38, 631-657.

Groseclose, T. & Milyo, J. (2005). A measure of media bias. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, CXXX, 1191-1237.

Groseclose, T. & Milyo, J. (2005). A social science perspective on media bias. *Critical Review*, 17, 305-314.

Guskin, E., Mitchell, A., & Jurkowitz, M. (2013). African American: A year of turmoil and opportunity. *Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, The State of the News Media 2013: An Annual Report of American Journalism*. Retrieved on May 17, 2014, from http://stateofthemedia.org/2013/african-american-2/.

Guskin, E., Moore, P., & Mitchell, A. (2011). African American media: Evolving in the new era. *Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, The State of the News Media 2011: An Annual Report of American Journalism*. Retrieved on May 17, 2014, from http://stateofthemedia.org/2011/african-american/.

Harris-Lacewell, M. & Albertson, B. (2005). Good times?: Understanding African American misperceptions of racial economic fortunes. *Journal of Black Studies*, 35, 650-683.

Harris-Lacewell, M. & Junn, J. (2007). Old friends and new alliances: How the 2004 Illinois Senate race complicates the study of race and religion. *Journal of Black Studies*, 38, 30-50.

Harwood, J. & Roy, A. (2005). Social identity theory and mass communication research. In J. Harwood & H. Giles (Eds.), *Intergroup Communication* (189-211). New York: Peter Lang.

Hawkins, R.P. & Pingree, S. (1981). Using television to construct social reality. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 25, 347-364.

Hehman, E., Gaertner, S.L., & Dovidio, J.F. (2011). Evaluations of presidential performance: Race, prejudice, and perceptions of Americanism. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 47, 430-35.

Highton, B. (2011). Prejudice rivals partisanship and ideology when explaining the 2008 presidential vote across the states. *Political Science*, July, 530-535.

Hoffman, E. (Summer 1992). Racial differences in the feminization of poverty. *The Review of Black Political Economy*, 21, 19-31.

Holian, D.B. & Prysby, C. (2011-2012). Character first: Rethinking John McCain's 2008 campaign strategy. *The American Review of Politics*, 32, 319-342.

Huber, G.A. & Arceneaux, K. (2007). Identifying the persuasive effects of presidential advertising. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51, 957-977.

Hutchings, V.L. (2008). Change or more of the same? Evaluating racial attitudes in the Obama era. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 73, 917-942.

Hutchings, V.L. & Valentino, N.A. (2004). The centrality of race in American politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 7, 383-408.

Jamieson, P.E. and Romer, D. (2015). Cultivation theory and political reality. *Oxford Books Online*, 1-8.

Johnson, C., Dowd, T.J., & Ridgeway, C.L. (2006). Legitimacy as a social process. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 32, 53-78.

Johnson, J.D., Bushman, B.J., & Dovidio, J.F. (2008). Support for harmful treatment and reduction of empathy toward blacks: "Remnants" of stereotype activation involving Hurricane Katrina and 'Lil' Kim. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 1506-1513.

Johnson, K.A., Dolan, M.K., & Sonnett, J. (2011). Speaking of looting: An analysis of racial propaganda in national television coverage of Hurricane Katrina. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 22, 302-318.

Iyengar, S. (1996). Framing responsibility for political issues. *American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 546, 59-70.

Iyengar, S. & Hahn, K.S. (2009). Red media, blue media: Evidence of ideological selectivity in media use. *Journal of Communication*, 59, 19-39.

Kahle, S., Yu, N., & Whiteside, E. (2007). Another disaster: An examination of portrayals of race in Hurricane Katrina coverage. *Visual Communication Quarterly*, 14, 75-89.

Kalmoe, N.P. & Piston, S. (2013). Is implicit prejudice against blacks politically consequential?: Evidence from the AMP. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 77, 305-322.

Kam, C.D. & Kinder, D.R. (2012). Ethnocentrism as a short-term force in the 2008 American presidential election. *American Journal of Political Science*, 56, 326-340.

Katz, E., Blumler, J.G., & Gurevitch, M. (1973-74, Winter). Uses and gratifications research. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37, 509-523.

Kenski, K., Hardy, B.W., & Jamieson, K.H. (2010). *The Obama Victor: How Media, Money, and Message Shaped the 2008 Election*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc.

Kenski, H.C. & Kenski, K. (2005). Explaining the vote in a divided country: The presidential election of 2004. In R.E. Denton, Jr. (Ed.), *The 2004 Presidential Campaign: A Communication Perspective* (301-342). Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Kenski, H.C. & Kenski, K. (2009). Explaining the vote in the election of 2008: The Democratic revival. In R.E. Denton, Jr. (Ed.), *The 2008 Presidential Campaign: A Communication Perspective* (244-290). Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Kenski, H.C. & Kenski, K. (2013). Explaining the vote in the election of 2012: Obama's reelection. In R.E. Denton, Jr. (Ed.), *The 2012 Presidential Campaign: A Communication Perspective* (157-192). Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Kinder, D.R. (1986). Presidential character revisited. In R.E. Lau & D.O. Sears (Eds.), *Political Cognition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlhaum.

Kinder, D.R. & Dale-Riddle, A. (2012). *The end of race?: Obama, 2008 and racial politics in America*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press.

Knobloch-Westerwick, S., Appiah, O., & Alter, S. (2008). News selection patterns as a function of race: The discerning minority and indiscriminating majority. *Media Psychology*, 11, 400-417.

Knuckey, J. (2011). Racial resentment and vote choice in the 2008 U.S. presidential election. *Politics & Policy*, 39, 559-582.

Laswell, H. (1948). The structure and function of communication in society. In L. Bryson (Ed.), *The Communication of Ideas* (37-51). New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Lee, H.S. (2013). Do national economic and political conditions affect ideological media slant? *Political Communication*, 30, 395-418.

Lee, T.T. (2005). The liberal media myth revisited: An examination of factors influencing perceptions of media bias. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 49, 43-64.

Lewis-Beck, M.S., Tien, C., & Nadeau, R. (2010). Obama's missed landslide: A racial cost? *Political Science*, 10, 69-78.

Lichter, R. S. (2014). Theories of media bias. Oxford Handbooks Online, 1-12.

Mackie, D.M., Hamilton, D.L., Susskind, J., & Rosselli, F. (1996). Social psychological foundations of stereotype foundation. In C.N. MacRae, C. Stangor, & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Stereotypes and Stereotyping* (41-78). New York, NY: The Guildford Press.

Mastin, T. (2000). Media use and civic participation in the African-American population: Exploring participation among professionals and nonprofessionals. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 1, 115-127.

Mastro, D. & Tukachinsky, R. (2011). The influence of exemplar versus prototype-based media primes on racial/ethnic evaluations. *Journal of Communication*, 61, 916-937.

Mastro, D.E. (2003). A social identity approach to understanding the impact of television messages. *Communication Monographs*, 70, 98-113.

McKernan, S., Ratcliffe, C., Steuerle, E., & Zhang, S. (2013, April). Less than equal: Racial disparities in wealth accumulation. *Urban Institute*. Retrieved on October 1, 2013, from http://www.urban.org/publications/412802.html.

McClain, P., Johnson Carew, J.D., Walton, Jr., E., & Watts, C.S. (2009). Group membership, group identity, and group consciousness: Measures of racial identity in American politics*? Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 471-485.

Mendelberg, T. (2001). *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Miller, A.H., Gurin, P., Gurin, G., & Malanchuk, O. (1981). Group consciousness and political participation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 25, 494-511.

Moller, S. (2002). Supporting poor single mothers: Gender and race in the U.S. welfare state. *Gender & Society*, 16, 465-484.

Morgan, M. (2009). Cultivation analysis and media effects. In R.L. Nabi & M.B. Oliver (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Media Processes and Effects* (69-82). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Mutz, D. & Soss, J. (1997). Reading public opinion. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 61, 431-451.

Nagourney, A. (2008, November 4). Obama elected president as racial barrier falls. *The New York Times*. Retrieved on October 20, 2013, from http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/05/us/politics/05elect.html?pagewanted=all&_r=2&.

National Center for Education Statistics (2013, October). *Table 104.20 - Percentage of persons 25 to 29 years old with selected levels of educational attainment, by race/ethnicity and sex: Selected years, 1920 through 2013*. Retrieved on July 5, 2014, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_104.20.asp.

News staff (2008, November 5). 5 reasons why the 2008 election is historic. *U.S. News & World Report*. Retrieved on October 20, 2013, from http://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2008/11/05/5-reasons-why-the-2008-election-is-historic.

Ngo, T. (2012). The steps to follow in a multiple regression analysis. *SAS Global Forum 2012 – Statistics and Data Analysis*. La Puente, CA: SAS Institute, Inc.

Oliver, M.B. (1994). Portrayals of crime, race, and aggression in "reality-based" police shows: A content analysis. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 38, 179-192.

Oliver, M.B., Jackson II, R.L., Moses, N.N., & Dangerfield, C.L. (2004). The face of crime: Viewers' memory of race-related facial features of individuals pictured in the news. *Journal of Communication*, 3, 88-104.

Pager, D., & Shepherd, H. (2008). The sociology of discrimination: Racial discrimination in employment, housing, credit, and consumer markets. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 34, 181-209.

Pasek, J., Tahk, A., Lelkes, Y., Krosnick, J.A., Payne, B.K., Akhtar, O., & Tompson, T. (2009). Determinants of turnout and candidate choice in the 2008 U.S. presidential election: Illuminating the impact of racial prejudice and other considerations. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 73, 943-994.

Peffley, M., Shields, T., & Williams, B. (1996). The intersection of race and crime in television news stories: An experimental study. *Political Communication*, 13, 309-327.

Pew Research Center. (2008, November 5). Inside Obama's sweeping victory. *Pew Research Center, Numbers, Facts and Trends Shaping Your World*. Retrieved on October 20, 2013, from http://www.pewresearch.org/2008/11/05/inside-obamas-sweeping-victory/.

Pew Research Center. (2009, November 5). Inside Obama's sweeping victory. *Pew Research Center, Numbers, Facts and Trends Shaping Your World*. Retrieved on October 20, 2013, from http://www.pewresearch.org/2008/11/05/inside-obamas-sweeping-victory/.

Pew Research Journalism Project. (2012). Television News Viewership by Ethnicity. *Numbers, Facts and Trends Shaping Your World*. Retrieved on July 5, 2014, from http://www.journalism.org/media-indicators/television-news-viewership-by-ethnicity/.

Piston, S. (2010). How explicit racial prejudice hurt Obama in the 2008 election. *Political Behavior*, 32, 431-451.

Potter, W.J. (1991a). Examining cultivation from a psychological perspective. *Communication Research*, 18, 77-102.

Potter, W.J. (1991b). The relationship between first- and second- order measures of cultivation. *Human Communication Research*, 18, 92-113.

Rabinowitz, J.L., Sears, D.O., Sidanius, J., & Krosnick, J.A. (2009). Why do white Americans oppose race-targeted policies? Clarifying the impact of symbolic racism. *Political Psychology*, 30, 805-828.

Ramasubramanian, S. (2011). The impact of stereotypical versus counterstereotypical media exemplars on racial attitudes, causal attributions, and support for affirmative action. *Communication Research*, 38, 497-516.

Rastogi, S., Johnson, T.J., Hoeffel, E.M., & Drewery, Jr., M.P. (2011, September). *The Black Population: 2010 Census Briefs*. Retrieved October 20, 2013, from http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-06.pdf.

Ridgeway, C.L. & Berger, J. (1986). Expectations, legitimation, and dominance behavior in task groups. *American Sociological Review*, 51, 603-617.

Ridgeway, C.L. (1991). The social construction of status value: Gender and other nominal characteristics. *Social Forces*, 70, 367-386.

Ridgeway, C.L. (1997). Interaction and the conservation of gender inequality: Considering employment. *American Sociological Review*, 62, 218-235.

Ridgeway, C.L. (2001). Gender, status, and leadership. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57, 637-655.

Ridgeway, C.L. (2011). *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Ridgeway, C.L., Boyle, E.H., Kuipers, K.J., & Robinson, D.T. (1998). How do status beliefs develop? The role of resources and interactional experience. *American Sociological Review*, 63, 331-350.

Ridgeway, C.L., Johnson, C., & Diekema, D. (1994). External status, legitimacy, and compliance in male and female groups. *Social Forces*, 72, 1051-1077.

Right Wing Watch (2012). Christian Broadcasting Network. Retrieved on August 1, 2015, from http://www.rightwingwatch.org/category/organizations/christian-broadcasting-network-0.

Roskos-Ewoldsen, D.R. & Roskos-Ewoldsen, B. (2009). Media priming: An updated synthesis. In J. Bryant & M.B. Oliver (Eds.), *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research* (74-93). New York, NY: Routledge.

Sanchez, G.R. & Morin, J.L. (2011). The effect of descriptive representation on Latinos' views of government and of themselves. *Social Science Quarterly*, 92, 483-508.

Scott, D.K., Chanslor, M., & Dixon, J. (2010). FAIR and the *PBS News Hour*: Assessing diversity and elitism in news sourcing. *Communication Quarterly*, 58, 319-340.

Shelton, J.E. & Wilson, G. (2009). Race, class, and the basis of group alignment: An analysis of support for redistributive policy among privileged blacks. *Sociological Perspectives*, 52, 385-408.

Shrum, L.J. (2004). The cognitive processes underlying cultivation effects are a function of whether the judgments are on-line or memory-based. *Communications*, 29, 327-344.

Simien, E.M. (2005). Race, gender, and linked fate. *Journal of Black Studies*, 35, 529-550.

Statistical Computing Seminar: Proc Logistic and Logistic Regression Models. UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group. Retrieved on July 1, 2015, from http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/sas/seminars/sas_logistic/logistic1.htm.

Stephens-Davidowitz, S. (2012). The effects of racial animus on a black presidential candidate: Using Google search data to find what surveys miss. Retrieved from http://internationalpsychoanalysis.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/RacialAnimusAndVotingSethStephensDavidowitz.pdf on May 4, 2015.

Stroud, N.J. (2011). *Niche News: The Politics of News Choice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Tajfel, H. & Turner, J.C. (1979). *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. New York, NY: Academic Press.

Tan, A., Fujioka, Y., & Tan, G. (2000). Television use, stereotypes of African Americans and opinions on affirmative action: An affective model of policy reasoning. *Communication Monographs*, 67, 362-371.

The New York Times staff. (2012). President Election Polls. *The New York Times*. Retrieved on July 1, 2013, from http://elections.nytimes.com/2012/results/president/exit-polls.

The Sentencing Project. (2013, July). *Facts about prisons and people in prison.* Retrieved on October 20, 2013, from http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/inc_Facts%20About%20Prisons.pdf.

The Sentencing Project. (2014, April). *Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer*. Retrieved on May 20, 2014, from http://www.sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/fd_Felony%20Disenfranchisement%20Primer.pdf.

Webster, Jr., M & Driskell, Jr., J.E. (1978). Status generalization: A review and some new data. *American Sociological Review*, 43, 220-236.

Welch, S. & Sigelman, L. (2011). The "Obama effect" and white racial attitudes. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 634, 207-220.

Zelditch, M. (2006). Legitimacy theory. In P.J. Burke (Ed.), *Contemporary Social Psychology Theories* (324-352). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Zillmann, D. (2002). Exemplification theory of media influence. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research* (19-42). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlhaum.

Zillmann, D. (2006). Dramaturgy for emotions from fictional narration. In J. Bryant & P. Vorderer (Eds.), *Psychology of Entertainment* (215-238). Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlhaum.