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RHETORIC AND CAMPAIGN LANGUAGE: EXPLAINING NEW ELECTORAL SUCCESS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICIANS IN NON-MINORITY DISTRICTS

by

PRECIOUS HALL

Under the Direction of Dr. Sean Richey

ABSTRACT

My dissertation seeks to answer two important questions in African American politics: What accounts for the new electoral success of African American candidates in non-minority majority districts, and is there some sort of specific rhetoric used in the campaign speeches of these African American politicians? I seek to show that rhetoric matters and that there is a consistent post-racial language found in the speeches of successful African American elected officials. In experimental studies, I show that that this post-racial language is effective in shaping perceptions of these politicians and is a contributing factor to their success. In addition, I show that the language found in the speeches of successful African American elected officials is not found in

the speeches of unsuccessful African American politicians running for a similar office. I engage in this research by conducting experiments using campaign speeches from 2010 primary and general election candidates, conducting quantitative text analysis, and performing ethnographical interviewing with successful African American elected officials.

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INDEX WORDS: Rhetoric, Electoral success, African American politicians

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by

PRECIOUS HALL

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2012

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Precious D. Hall
2012

RHETORIC AND CAMPAIGN LANGUAGE: EXPLAINING NEW ELECTORAL SUCCESS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICIANS IN NON-MINORITY DISTRICTS

by

PRECIOUS HALL

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Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies

College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

May 2012

DEDICATION

No child can ever grow into a responsible and productive adult without the guidance of people who love them. I have been fortunate enough to have two parents who love and support me in all that I do. This is dedicated to the two people who love me and showed me the way, both in their successes and mistakes. I am also a believer in the African proverb "It takes a whole village to raise a child." No one gets to where they are by themselves, so this is also dedicated to my village; you all know who you are.

Finally, this is for my grandparents who never went to college, but who worked hard in the generations before I ever existed or was even a thought. If I am standing tall, it is because I am standing on the shoulders of giants. For my giants, I speak your name: Jewel Hall, Martha Hall, and Hilda Yearwood.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I have to recognize the one from whom all blessings flow – God. Thanks for your unspeakable gift. This project could not have been completed without the guidance and suggestions of my committee Dr. Sean Richey, Dr. Lakeyta Bonnette, and Dr. Sarah Gershon. A final thanks to Dr. Carrie Manning, former Graduate Director and current Department Chair.

On a separate note, I must acknowledge that I do not agree with all of the methodological groundings of this research. However, concessions were made in order to progress and introduce a new state of mind to researchers present and to come. It is my sincere hope that the concessions that needed to be made during my journey will not have to be made in the future.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a shift in the racial composition of political leaders. Though the number of Black elected leaders is not even with those of White elected leaders, African Americans have made considerable strides in winning office and paving the way for others to follow behind them (Gillespie 2010). Since the Great Migration of African Americans from the South to the North and the passage of important pieces of legislation including the Voting Rights Act of 1965, African American candidates have left their mark on the electoral scene and have been successful in their bids for office. There is Edward Brooke, the first Black Senator elected in 1966 from Massachusetts; L. Douglas Wilder, the first Black Governor elected in 1990 from Virginia; Carol Moseley-Braun, the first Black woman elected Senator in 1992 from Illinois; Deval Patrick, only the second Black Governor elected in the United States in 2006 from Massachusetts; and Barack Obama, the first Black President elected in 2008. Yet, for every successful African American elected official, there are dozens of unsuccessful candidates who have met defeat. For every Barack Obama, there is a Jesse Jackson, for every Edward Brooke, there is a Harold Ford or Michael Steele, for every Douglas Wilder and Deval Patrick, there is a Kenneth Blackwell or Lynn Swann.

More African American candidates have been unsuccessful than successful which leads to an important question: What accounts for the success of African American elected officials? African American politicians face considerable barriers when seeking election as both Democrats and Republicans are less likely to vote for their party's nominee when he or she is Black (Smith 2009). Therefore, there must be something or some things that contribute to the success of African American politicians. I propose that one important factor for encouraging

White Americans to vote for an African American candidate is the rhetoric that he or she uses during their campaign. Rhetoric is important because through rhetoric, intentions, expertness, and trustworthiness are perceived. As such, this research is guided by two main research questions:

> RQ1: What accounts for the success of African American elected officials?
>
> RQ2: Is the post-racial rhetoric used by African American politicians beneficial to their success?

The State of Black Politics: Past and Present

African American Electoral Success

Since the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, African Americans have enjoyed a considerable increase in winning elected offices. As judicial and executive government branches began to clear the obstacles to minority political participation which granted African Americans new access to the major forums within institutionalized politics, and Black registration grew by more than 20%, so did the number of Black elected officials (Tate 1993, 116; Bullock 1975). Even throughout the 1980s, the number of Black elected officials rose steadily and the high profile candidacy of Jesse Jackson revitalized grassroots enthusiasm for exercising the ballot (Lawson 2009, 258). In addition, in the 1992 election, more African Americans than ever before, 55, campaigned for Congress and of the 39 Democrats and 12 Republicans running, all the Democrats and one Republican won increasing the number of Blacks in Congress from 26 to 40 (Lawson 2009, 273-274). This number further increased in the 2004 elections not only in the House but also in the Senate with the victory of then Senator Barack Obama.

Although, most of the victories of African American candidates have come from minor offices and majority-minority districts, victorious Black candidates have not been restricted disproportionately to minor posts (Bullock 1975). One contributing factor to the success of African Americans running for both major and minor offices is the fact that fifty years ago, national surveys showed that most Whites would not vote for a qualified presidential candidate who happened to be Black; by the 1990s this figure had dropped almost to zero (Hutchings 2009). With more candidates running and winning and more Whites saying that they are willing to vote for a qualified Black candidate, it is not surprising that African Americans today are enjoying more electoral success than in previous years for many public offices, including that of the presidency.

Post-Racial America

Discussions about the election of President Barack Obama have often placed emphasis on the notion that America is now post-racial and that we are now in a world in which race is less salient. Commentary on his election has highlighted two themes: "Obama's success proved that Americans have transcended their history, and wooing White voters must be a keystone strategy in any successful national political campaign, though other racial groups can be secondarily considered" (Novkov 2008). Although this commentary is questionable by many, there is an undeniable reality that has come along with his presidency in that it has engendered a new feeling of optimism across race, class, and gender lines and pressed many to reassess, if not overhaul basic assumptions about the ways that race matters in the 21st century (Teasley and Ikard 2010).

According to Cho (2009) Post-racialism in its current form is a 21st century ideology that reflects a belief that due to the significant racial progress that has been made, the state need not engage in race-based decision-making or adopt race-based remedies, and that civil society should eschew race as a central organizing principle of social action. Post-racialism asserts that racial thinking and racial solutions are no longer needed because the nation has made great strides, achieved a historic accomplishment, and transcended racial divisions of past generations (Cho 2009). She also states that there are four central features to post-racialism, "racial progress, race neutral universalism, moral equivalence and the distancing move" in which practitioners frequently try to distinguish themselves from civil-rights advocates often by using caricature-type attacks (Cho, 2009). Other scholars' discussion of post-racialism mirror many of Cho's assertions, discussing post-racialism as the belief that race is no longer a significant impediment for Blacks seeking employment, higher education, or political office (Metzler 2010). Metzler (2010) asserts, for example, that a White person who has adopted post-racial attitudes is one that,

> "…situates racism in the past; embraces formal equality; believes that America has done so much for Blacks and yet Blacks never seem to think that it is enough; walks on eggshells around Blacks for fear of saying something offensive; believes in interracial dating so long as it is not their son or daughter who is marrying Black; does not see themselves as racialized but basks in White privilege; believes that Blacks use race as an excuse for failure, that Blacks who are successful are the exception; believes that pretending that race does not matter makes it true; and still harbors and makes decisions based on the powerful marker of race that is imbedded in American racial reality." (Metzler 2010, 402)

Thus, post-racialism requires a belief that: (1) racial equality essentially exists, and (2) that race will have little impact on Black American's prospects.

Although post-racialism is touted by many, in America today, there continues to be marked differences between the opinions of Blacks and White. According to Hutchings and

Valentino (2004) differences in opinion between Blacks and White are not small. In fact, differences of over 20% exist on policies, including nonracial ones (general government spending on social services, education, and assistance for the poor). Surveys show that Black Americans disagree with White Americans about whether the economic situation has improved for Blacks, whether there are more opportunities now, whether competition for jobs is fairly handled, and whether racism in this country has decreased (Shaw 1993).

Whites and Blacks continue to disagree by as much as 40-50 percentage points on matters such as which candidates to support, which party to identify with, and whether or not government should intercede on behalf of African Americans in order to safeguard their rights in the labor market and improve their social and economic condition (Hutchings 2009). Such differences in opinion continue to show the difference between Blacks and Whites on whether or not America is now post-racial. In an April 2009 CBS NEWS/New York Times Polls 61% of Blacks agree that real progress has been made compared to 81% of Whites agreeing with that statement (Teasley and Ikard 2010). This poll supports Hutchings (2009) conclusion that the post-racial society many allude to is not evident when observing Black and White Americans' views on policy issues[1]. These differences have important implications for this research as in a post racial society; post racial or non-racial rhetoric would not need to be the focus of a campaign. However, these disparities demonstrate that African Americans still need to remain conscious of the effect that their communicative styles, specifically their rhetoric has on their chances for electoral success.

[1] Affirmative Action, Governmental Aid, and Fair Job Treatment.

Post-Racial Different from Symbolic Racism

The concept of post-racialism is one that has garnered much attention in recent years. With the concept receiving more attention, there are some who argue that post-racialism is the same and can be confused with the concept of symbolic racism. The concept of symbolic racism has received significant attention among political scientists in the last 25 years. Although it has been used to examine many things such as voting behavior and candidate evaluations, symbolic racism is most commonly thought to affect the racial and policy attitudes of Whites.

In their book, *Divided by Color*, Kinder and Sanders (1996) examine the origins of racial resentment and prejudice in modern America. The authors first demonstrate, using 1986, 1988 and 1992 NES survey data, that significant racial resentment still exists, particularly in attitudes towards racial policies or redistributive policies like Food Stamps, in which race is implied. In using symbolic racism to predict policy attitudes, Kinder and Sanders find that not only is symbolic racism predictive of race related policies, but also of race-neutral welfare policies, in which the race of the recipient is implied.

In their 1997 piece "Is It Really Racism?" Sears, Van Laar, Carrillo and Kosterman examine how large a role racism plays in American racial policy and candidate preferences, as well as the most "politically influential" form of racism-symbolic or old fashioned- today. Using data from the 1986 and 1992 NES, the 1995 LACSS, and the 1994 GSS, the authors examine racial attitudes generally, as well as attitudes towards racial policies candidate evaluations. Sears et al find that throughout all the surveys, racial attitudes are strongly correlated with attitudes towards racial policies, and that these racial attitudes are stronger predictors of attitudes towards

racial policies than partisanship. They also find that attitudes towards social welfare are also significantly predictive of attitudes toward racial policies. They further find that symbolic racism is more predictive of attitudes towards racial policies than old fashioned racism. The authors then attempt to examine the origins of symbolic racism and find that anti-African American affect and the perception that African Americans violate traditional nonracial values are highly correlated with their measures of symbolic racism. This study and finding by Sears et al. demonstrates the difference between post-racialism and symbolic racism, as post-racialism asserts that society has moved beyond race as a determining factor or predictor of attitudes.

Kinder and Mendelberg (2000) examine opposition to racial policies in Whites as a function of a combination of anti-African American affect and deeply held beliefs about individualism in "Individualism Reconsidered". They hypothesize that traditional measures of individualism that are often used to explain opposition to racial policies are inadequate for measuring this concept because opposition to racial policies is based on a bundle of racial and individualist attitudes which form symbolic racism. Kinder and Mendelberg find that symbolic racism is strongly related to explicitly racial policies and somewhat predictive of opposition to social welfare policies. Kinder and Mendelberg (2000) found that prejudice in the form of symbolic racism was more often given as a reason for opposition towards government aid to African Americans than biological racism, individualism, beliefs about limited government and equality. The authors conclude that a combination or 'bundle' of individualism and anti-African American affect is behind White opposition to both racial and social welfare policies.

In "Egalitarian Values and Contemporary Politics", Sears, Henry and Kosterman argue that contemporary racism has not disappeared, but has rather been replaced by symbolic racism.

Using NES data from 1986, 1990 and 1992 and LACSS (Los Angeles County Social Survey) data from 1996 and 1997, Sears et al test the power of symbolic racism over traditional forms of prejudice in explaining White policy attitudes. The authors find that anti-African American affect and individualism are significant components of both opposition to racial policies and symbolic racism. The authors conclude that symbolic racism is indeed a combination of anti-African American affect and individualistic values. While symbolic racism acknowledges racial undertones, post-racialism asserts that race is not a factor in determining policies and according to Cho (2009) it proposes a level of race-neutral universalism.

Studies of symbolic racism seek to show how racism, though not in the traditional sense is still a prevalent undertone in society that affects the opinions of Whites, while the notion of post-racialism seeks to move beyond race and into race-neutral territory. Even though Whites may concur that race is no longer a factor for them, the literature asks us to still consider the notion that race still matters, if not traditionally, than symbolically. Acknowledging that race is still a factor in policy preferences, demonstrates the difference between post-racialism and symbolic racism and the post-racial notion that individuals in society have moved beyond race as a factor in policy preferences, where the literature on symbolic racism acknowledges that race still matters. Disagreements over post-racialism and symbolic racism continue to pervade political science research as a consensus has yet to be reached.

Deracialized Campaign Rhetoric

Even though there remains disagreement on post-racialism among Blacks and Whites, the notion of being post-racial has important implications as it levels the discursive playing field and

represents a political retreat from race by redefining the terms for racial politics (Cho 2009). At question here is not whether or not America is now a post-racial society as previous and current studies demonstrate the continued disagreement of this notion. What is at question and what this research proposes to demonstrate is that politicians, who wish to find success outside of majority-minority districts, engage in and use a deracialized form of speech in order to achieve cross-over success.

Campaigns are a main point – perhaps the main point – of contact between officials and the populace over matters of public policy (Riker 1996). Because campaigns are so important and serve as such a vital source of communication between candidates and voters, how a candidate speaks plays a crucial role in his or her success. Riker (1990) maintains that if candidates use a particular technique frequently, we can infer that that this technique is believed to be persuasive. Following Riker's inference, one can see that if successful African American politicians are found to consistently use deracialized rhetoric, then this technique is one that has been found to be persuasive and its sustained use merely reflects the strategic decisions by African American candidates on how best to communicate with voters (Jerit 2004).

Most campaign communication is designed with the goal of building positive images of the candidates, regardless of the ostensible subject (Stuckey and Antczak 1995). One reason that African-American candidates will shy away from racialized speech would be to avoid eliciting negative emotions from their audiences. Jerit (2004) acknowledges that even when citizens are not conscious of them, the impact of emotional memories – especially those relating to fear – can be long-lasting. Candidates knowing the types of appeals that elicit more affect than others will be sure to repeat those appeals during the campaign. In order to maintain or produce credibility,

campaigners must convince the electorate that they are worthy of support by drawing attention to their favorable characteristics (Jerit 2004). African-American candidates know that deracialized speech is favored by the White majority, so in order to build support and credibility, they will engage in deracialized rhetoric during their campaigns for office.

Campaign Appeals

Citizens are called upon to make politically relevant decisions quite often. Whether it is deciding which candidate(s) to represent them or which policies to advocate for, citizens have to make decisions in a world in which they do not have complete information. In the absence of complete information, citizens rely on heuristics much of which are feelings derived from experiences (Marcus 2003). Because citizens use heuristics to engage in decision-making, it makes it possible for emotions or feelings to be used as alternatives to thought in forms of decision-making.

Because the primary goal of a candidate is to win and building a credible image during the campaign is a crucial contributor to winning, it can be argued that a candidate can rise or fall depending on his or her campaign appeals and the way in which those appeals are framed. Framing is "the process by which a communication source, such as a news organization, defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy" (Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley 1997). Those who provide information have a choice on how they will disseminate that information and how they will construct particular images and define issues and controversies. The choice in how issues are framed is a powerful tool for information providers, and can in turn effect how individuals perceive and evaluate particular events. Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley (1997) discuss

three separate models that help explain how viewers process mass media information and how that information affects political opinion. The learning model maintains that mass media messages influence viewer opinion by providing new information about an issue, the cognitive accessibility model maintains that repeated images are relatively accessible to viewers and have greater potential to influence judgment and opinion, and the expectancy value model maintains that different pieces of information carry different weights that correspond to the perceived importance of information (p. 568). Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley (1997) maintain that media frames influence opinions by stressing specific values, facts, or other considerations which gives them greater relevance to the issue than they would appear to have under an alternative frame.

By positioning specific values, facts, or other important considerations, information providers can evoke specific responses from individuals who are charged with making important decisions. Tversky and Khaneman (1981) have proven that citizens avoid risk. When there is a decision problem and one must choose among a set of options while considering the possible outcomes or consequences and the probabilities that relate to these choices, the decision is usually what will assume the least amount of risk (Tversky and Kahneman 1981). Knowing that citizens are risk averse, helps those who frame information, because they know that framing information in a particular way can evoke a specific response. When relating framing and risk avoidance to African American politicians, one can see how these politicians would be conscious of positioning certain values or issues above others, particularly issues that may evoke racial animosity thus translating into losing potential votes from the White majority. A politician in a majority Black district would not have to consider his or her race as a determining factor in

gaining or losing votes, like an African American candidate seeking to win a majority White district.

Campaigns speak to the underlying emotions of citizens. Emotional experiences can occur during public events and public events help to shape the public mood which has an effect on individual capacities for political information processing. The possession of information is important when engaging in decision-making because the more information that one has, the less effect mood or emotion has on an individual engaged in decision-making (Rahn 2000). Because most citizens engage in decision-making without complete knowledge or information, they rely on emotions such as the public mood shaped by public events. In politics, salient issues gain more attention from the public. Though some may say that a candidate's race is not a salient issue, it is however, a salient characteristic that cannot be ignored. Because we do not live in a color-blind society, it is quite possible that citizens already form judgments around the race of a candidate, therefore pushing the candidate to be even more non-racial in their rhetoric. African Americans campaigning with a White majority must cultivate their campaign style, much like Fenno describes the homestyles of members of Congress.

Hypotheses

In 2008, the Presidential election took an interesting turn when Hilary Clinton accused Barak Obama of stealing words from Deval Patrick, by the newly elected Governor of Massachusetts. In February 2008 after Barack Obama had won 8 consecutive primaries, the Clinton Campaign tried to discredit him by calling into question the origin of his oratory. Howard Wolson, Clinton's chief spokesperson said, "Senator Obama's campaign is largely premised on the strength of his rhetoric and his promises, because he doesn't have a long record

in public life. When the origin of his oratory is called into question, it raises questions about his overall candidacy." In response to Clinton's accusation, Obama responded, "Deval and I trade ideas all the time. He has occasionally used lines of mine and at the dinner in Wisconsin[2] I used some words of his". As Senator Clinton continued to point to Obama's words as "empty rhetoric", this research aims to prove that then Senator Obama, was not stealing words, but rather was following an electoral strategy of using deracialized speech.

This research aims to prove that in addition to other factors that make for a successful campaign for African-American candidates, in this supposedly new post-racial environment there is a specific style of speech employed by African-American politicians who want to be successful. Campaign communication should be deracialized and consistent in this deracialized style in order for African-Americans to achieve success from the White majority. This research aims to demonstrate that the instance of Senator Clinton accusing Senator Obama of plagiarism was simply her pointing to the rule that African-American politicians must follow in order to be successful: A deracialized form or code of speech.

One contribution or factor for successful African American politicians is that of running a deracialized campaign. In today's political climate, it is often the norm for Black candidates to depoliticize race so that they can appeal to White voters (Lewis 2009). McCormick and Jones (1993) describe the electoral strategy of a deracialized campaign as,

> Conducting a campaign in a stylistic fashion that defuses the polarizing effects of race by avoiding explicit reference to race-specific issues, while at the same time emphasizing those issues that are perceived as racially transcendent, thus mobilizing a broad segment of the electorate for purposes of capturing and maintaining public office.

[2] Obama was speaking at a Gala for the Wisconsin Democratic Party.

McCormick and Jones describe what African American politicians must engage in for their campaigns to attain the crossover success needed in order to help them win elections. One way that African American candidates achieve this success is through their communication as candidates must make arguments that connect with their base constituencies and "at least enough of the electorate as a whole" (Stuckey et. al 2010). For minority candidates, such as African Americans, they must walk a fine line when constructing their public ethos or character as a candidate, who is also a minority, can have their minority status be a pivotal element of their character (Stuckey et. al 2010). By definition, minority candidates challenge the status quo. It seems that the "trick" to their success is doing so while remaining below the radar. They walk a fine line in that they cannot deny their minority status, but they also must avoid being reduced to it as well (Stuckey et. al 2010). As part of a deracialized campaign, the use of rhetoric must be deracialized as well, as it helps to transcend race. Though these politicians may believe in their deracialized rhetoric, it does not take away from the fact that they recognize it has an impact on electoral success and is therefore a wise rhetorical strategy. I argue that communication matters, and seek to prove three hypotheses:

> H1: Rhetoric matters: There is a specific language that is consistently found in the speeches of successful African American elected officials.
>
> H2: The language used is effective in shaping perceptions and help African American politicians achieve success.
>
> H3: The language found in successful African American elected officials will not be found in the speeches of unsuccessful African American politicians running for the same office.

Operationalization

Data Availability

This study analyzes the campaign communication of both successful and unsuccessful African American politicians running for office during the 2010 primary and general election season. Ideally, I would have liked to conduct this research by using a sample of all successful politicians dating back to Edward Brooke who was the first African-American Senator elected to the Congress in 1966 from the state of Massachusetts up to the 2008 election of Barack Obama. This historical sample would have included the speeches of not only Edward Brooke and Barack Obama, but also Carol Moseley Braun, Alan Wheat, Harold Ford, L. Douglas Wilder, Deval Patrick, Kenneth Blackwell, Jesse Jackson, Alan Keyes, and Al Sharpton to name a few. All of these are politicians who have run successfully and unsuccessfully for offices including President, Senator, and Governor. Due to issues of availability and record keeping, I was not able to use this historic sample. Due to the large availability of campaign speeches, press releases, and other biographical information standard on most campaign sites today, I used 2010 primary and general election campaign communication. The use of the 2010 primary and general election communication allows me to demonstrate and investigate the political world from a contemporary perspective.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, there are a few terms and expectations that need to be explained in order to have an accurate understanding of the study and its results.

1. Post-racial Language

McCormick and Jones (1993) describe the electoral strategy of a deracialized campaign as,

> Conducting a campaign in a stylistic fashion that defuses the polarizing effects of race by avoiding explicit reference to race-specific issues, while at the same time emphasizing those issues that are perceived as racially transcendent, thus mobilizing a broad segment of the electorate for purposes of capturing and maintaining public office.

Based on McCormick and Jones' description of a deracialized campaign, the term post-racial language refers to deracialized speech or speeches that avoid direct reference to race-specific issues. By definition, minority candidates challenge the status quo. It seems that the "trick" to their success is doing so while remaining below the radar. They walk a fine line in that they cannot deny their minority status, but they also must avoid being reduced to it as well (Stuckey et. al 2010). As part of a deracialized campaign, the use of rhetoric must be deracialized as well, as it helps to transcend race.

Post-Racial language in this sense refers to the type of language and words used, specifically the post-racial language. My research will look for specific words, phrases, and issues that are found to be used more frequently by successful African American candidates and their White counterparts and unsuccessful African American candidates.

2. Communication

Specifically, the form of campaign communication used came from candidate websites. This includes home/main pages, candidate biographies, issue pages, press releases, and blogs. A biography is a way for candidates to communicate their accomplishments and to gain some sort of credibility. Press releases are a way for candidates to keep their constituents informed of what they are doing in and for their electoral districts. Most websites also have the candidate stance on the issues. In rendering their position on important issues, African-American candidates can

choose to place an emphasis on racial issues, or they can choose to express their views in a manner that deemphasizes race and emphasizes the community as a whole. A candidate's position will allow him or her the opportunity to use particular phrases and styles of speech. Candidate positions will be a great source to identify non-racial or racial campaign communication and whether or not wining candidates avoid racial rhetoric more than losing candidates.

3. Success

For the purposes of this research, the definition of a successful politician is operationalized in terms of winning the general election. In this instance, success means that they have been elected to office at least once. Though some may argue that success comes after the election in terms of the policies created by these politicians, Mayhew (1974) argues that politicians are single-minded seekers of election and re-election. Even if politicians are not single-minded seekers of re-election, the fact remains that in order to affect policies, you must be elected to office first. Winning elections is a necessary pre-condition for everything else that follows.

Data Collection and Sample

This research only considers those politicians running for Governor, Senate, and the House in non majority-minority districts. Gubernatorial and Senatorial races are included because these statewide races necessitate that in order for an African American politician to win, he or she has to achieve support from the White majority. All states will be considered as no state has had an African American majority population since the Great Migration of African

Americans from the South to the North in the 1940s. Also, because crossover success achieved through the use of deracialized campaign communication is what I am studying, only those House races being conducted outside of majority-minority districts will be considered. Because I am interested in crossover success, it was not be useful for me to include those districts that have a majority African American population, as being in a majority-minority district would allow for an African-American candidate to only have to appeal to African-American voters in order to achieve success.

As stated before, data was collected from the candidates running in the 2010 primary and general elections. Although I am interested in the speeches of African American politicians, I also included the speeches of the White opponents for each race in which there is an African American candidate. For the purposes of analysis, including the White opponents served as my control group. In order to arrive at my sample of African American candidates, I went through a listing of each state and went to the campaign websites of all the candidates to see a picture of the candidate to determine his or her race. This sample is further reduced only to the major party candidates as all 3rd party candidates have been eliminated.

Methods of Analysis

This research utilizes mixed methods approach in which three methods of analysis were used. The first method is a statistical text analysis of the collected forms of campaign communication from the politicians being studied. This method of analysis helped me achieve external validity for my findings. In order to conduct the text analysis, I used QDA Miner and its content analysis component WORDSTAT. This software allowed me to test for frequencies of

words and phrases and for similarities and differences between texts. The text analysis offers me a statistical approach in this research in that I could discover words or clusters of words that "win" and "lose". This approach included text mining which used a Chi-square based analysis in order to identify words and phrases that are indentified with successful and unsuccessful African American candidates. The text analysis allowed me to find how often particular styles of rhetoric were used by successful and unsuccessful African-American candidates and also allowed me to see the differences in the use of these phrases. The analysis was conducted in two waves: First the primary data was analyzed and studied for frequency of words used by African American winners and losers and their White counterparts followed by the general data being analyzed separately using a dictionary created from the preliminary text analysis results.

The second research method is that of an experiment. I conducted an on-line experiment on the campus of Georgia State University with students enrolled in an Introduction to American Government course. The experiment helped me achieve internal validity for my findings. During the experiment, participants were randomly assigned to read either a non-racial message or a racial message. In addition, it was varied whether or not the message they read was given by a White or Black candidate[3]. After they finished reading the speech, participants were asked standard questions about how likely they were to vote for the candidate, a thermometer rating of the candidate, and candidate affect. This experiment allowed me to test my hypotheses by investigating if the White participants like the candidate more after reading the post-racial speech.

[3] A picture will be affixed at the top of the message.

The third method of research is qualitative. I realize that a possible critique of this study may be that communication is more than written text. In an effort to get to the motivations behind different forms of rhetoric, I interviewed fourteen African American state legislators from the Georgia Senate and Georgia House of Representatives. These hour long interviews consisted of open-ended questions about the candidate's political history, style of speech, intended audiences, goals, and the current and future state of Black politics.

Overview of Findings

After using all 3 methods of analysis, my findings as a whole suggest that there are differences in the way African American candidates who win and lose use rhetoric. The text analysis confirms that there are differences in rhetoric between winners and losers. The experiments confirm that the rhetoric that is used is successful in shaping voter perception and that racial rhetoric can be harmful for electoral success. Finally, the qualitative interviews reveal specific differences from actual successful politicians and dives into the debate on the current and future state of Black politics in America.

Contribution

This research seeks to add a valuable contribution in multiple fields of political science research. First, it will add to the field of political communication as it aims to demonstrate the ways in which electoral success can be achieved using a specific style of speech and language. This research also contributes to the field of race and politics. While a great deal of the literature on Black politicians studies those politicians in majority Black districts (Tate 1993, 2001; Swain 1995; Canon 1999), this research studies Black politicians in majority White districts. It

acknowledges the fact that Black candidates are doing better electorally in majority White districts and the post racial America that some believe we are in, but it also shows how different politicians have to adjust in order to achieve electoral success with the White majority. In addition, unlike Canon (1999), Swain (1995), and Tate (1993) who study Black politicians and how they engage in representation after they achieve electoral success, this work assesses what these politicians do before they reach office. Overall this research reiterates the importance of campaign rhetoric and how it intersects with race and politics.

Finally, this research points to the implications of such campaign communication. What exactly are these politicians doing once they arrive in office? Are they advocating for racialized policies, even though their success was built upon a deracialized form of speech? These will be serious questions that need to be addressed as possible implications of finding that it is in fact a particular style of speech that helps politicians win election with the support of a white majority.

Outline of this Study

This study proceeds as follows: Chapter 2 delves deeper into the related literature on this topic by exploring the effects of the Great Migration of politics in America, African American political generations, mainstreaming minority candidates, and framing. In addition, chapter 2 also builds and explains the theory that guides this research and further sets up the framework for this study. Chapter 3 investigates hypotheses one and three through the use of textual analysis at the candidate level by analyzing the collected campaign communication from the 2010 mid-term elections. Chapter 4 utilizes experiments to investigate the third hypothesis at the constituent level to determine if rhetoric affects voter perception of a candidate. Chapter 5 utilizes

ethnographical interviews with current African American officials of the Georgia General Assembly. Finally, chapter 6 postulates the general conclusions of this research and the broader implications for African American politicians in today's political climate along with suggestions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORY

Throughout the history of the United States, there has been a struggle by the African American community to obtain legitimacy in different spheres of life. From slavery, to voting rights, to equality, the African American community has fought to obtain acceptance, influence, and acknowledgement of their expressions of will through democratic forms of government and democratic norms. The struggles within this community have been consistent, and not without its victories.

Great Migration

For much of American history, the African American population has been thought of as a permanent underclass. Whether or not you agree with this view of African Americans does not negate the fact that at different points in history, African Americans have helped to shape and in many ways change the political landscape. One such time in which the political landscape was changed was that of the Great Migration of African Americans from the South during the twentieth century.

In his article, "The African American Great Migration and Beyond", Stewart Tonlay studies what he calls "one of the most significant events to occur in the U.S. during the twentieth century." The Great Migration produced a dramatic geographic distribution of the Black population: while 2.5 million Blacks lived outside the South by 1950 that number had reached to over 4 million by 1980 (Tonlay 2003). "Throughout the 20th Century, geographic mobility was an important strategy that African Americans employed as they continued their quest for better living conditions and more-promising opportunities for themselves and their children" (Tonlay 2003). Moore (1991) maintains that migration was part of an "ongoing black strategy for

obtaining greater economic and social opportunity in the urban industrial workforce and gaining power in their [African American] lives". This perspective of the Great Migration is one that demonstrates the strategic desires of African Americans to gain power in their lives. The Great Migration remains a singular convergence of agricultural and industrial trends that empowered southern Blacks and made their entries to urban centers during that era truly remarkable (Gottlieb 1991). Since the Great Migration of African Americans to the North from the South, no state has had an African American majority population.

The Great Migration started approximately in 1910 and even though it was motivated primarily by economic concerns (Tonlay 2003), it had significant political implications as Northern and Western cities had a generally small black population, pre-migration; post-migration say the increase in political clout of blacks in these same cities as many of them were successful in obtaining political seats in several major cities (Tonlay 2003). The Migrations helped to shift racial tensions from mainly just the South but to the North as well. The presence of more African Americans in the North made the rest of the country more aware of African American culture than it had ever done before. But instead of forming the proverbial "melting pot", Lemann (1991) maintains that the Great Migration did not create a racially synthesized country. Lemann (1991) argues that the millions of Black who migrated did so in order to have lives more like most other Americans. But instead of finding lives like most other Americans, migrants found themselves on the margins of society. Lyndon Johnson was even quoted as saying, "The black problem remains what it has always been, the simple problem of being black in a white society" (Lemann 1991). Even with leaders such as Lyndon Johnson acknowledging

that African Americans had such a problem, there were still racial breakthroughs made because of sustained efforts.

Yes, the Black Migration was at best, a complicated process, but it was a process that allowed for greater power economically, politically, and socially. The Great Migration lessened the concentration of Blacks in the South and created large African American urban centers in the North. This process of Migration helped to make race a national issue in the second-half of the century. According to Lemann (1991), race became an "integral part of the politics, the social thought, and the organization of ordinary life in the United States." The Great Migration helped to weave racial issues into the fabric of the 20th century as by the time Migration was over, race relations stood out nearly everywhere as the one thing most plainly wrong in America, "the flawed portion of the great tableau" (Lemann 1991).

When thinking about the history of American race relations, as Lemann (1991) admits, it can easily give rise to bitterness. But he also admits that "it is encouraging to remember how often in the past a hopeless situation, which appeared to be completely impervious to change, finally did change for the better". The Great migration was a time in which African Americans left the South in large numbers seeking more opportunity economically and socially. This was the beginning of major change and brought not only economic and social opportunities, but political opportunities as well. African Americans as a result of the Great Migration found ways to access political life. Though during this time, they were mainly relegated to minor county or city posts, change began to occur and strides were made in terms of winning major offices. With the migration of African Americans to Northern cities, it was inevitable that black candidates would not only emerge, but also begin to win elections (Lemann 1991). The Great Migration

was the beginning of major and sustained efforts in the 20th century of African Americans striving for better lives and more equality.

Political Generations

Though the Great Migration allowed for progress to be made economically, socially, and politically for African Americans, the 20th century was not the first time that African Americans were successful in gaining political offices. In 1836, Vermont was the first to elect an African American to public office[4], from 1870 to the turn of the century, 22 African Americans served in Congress, and at the federal, state, and local levels, about 2,000 black officials were elected between 1860 and 1877 (Lusane 1996). Even before the Great Migration, African Americans were successful in being elected to office.

Through the Great Migration and the Civil Rights movement, African American politicians have been linked to those aspirations and struggles for equality. However, we see the new generation of African American politicians changing and becoming more and more removed from that of the Civil Rights movement. In fact, only 9% of black elected officials 18-40 years old were active in the Civil Rights movement as opposed to 68% of the politicians who came before them (Ifill 2009). Each generation carries with it its own baggage (Ifill 2009), yet we see that African American politicians are becoming increasingly more successful, due in large part to those who have come before them. As David Axelrod, campaign advisor, to President Obama, acknowledges, "When people vote for an African American candidate, I think it makes it easier for the next African American candidate" (Ifill 2009). The success of previous African

[4] Alexander Lucius Twilight, believed to be the first African American to graduate from an American university, was elected to the State Legislature.

Americans has brought the success of the new generation of African American politicians thus contributing to the fact that African Americans have begun to establish enduring legacies. These legacies have been crafted in part by their rhetorical strategy and style.

Theory Formulation

Togetherness and Commonality vs. Separateness

In 2008, 43% of White Americans voted for Senator Barack Obama to become their next president (Ifill 2009). Many have questioned how he was able to garner such a large number being that he is the first African American presidential candidate who has made it to the general election. Yes, it is true that more White Americans today than fifty years ago are willing to vote for a qualified African American (Hutchings 2009), but even with more saying that they would be willing to vote, the question of "why?" still remains.

Some may argue that the reason more Whites say they are willing to vote for a qualified African American is due to social pressures or anticipated social desirability. Research has demonstrated that there exists a gap between private opinion and public utterance which is most likely the result of social desirability (Berinsky 1999). Social desirability concerns a desire of individuals to cloak attitudes that society as a whole might deem unacceptable for fear of social sanctions. Most people want to avoid not only the public perception that they are racist, but also thinking of themselves as racist (Mendelberg 2001) therefore allowing self-reports of any socially sensitive topic, including race, to be subject to social desirability pressures (Krysan 2000). Social pressures have been proven to exist and impact public utterance of opinion, but not always private use of one's vote as it is possible for individuals to still classify based on race

or some other category that aligns with their personal scale of what is and is not acceptable. Even with the questions of social desirability, data shows that Obama was able to garner a large percentage of votes from White Americans. This research proposes a strategy for how this was achieved.

Barriers to inclusion are most vulnerable when they are least perceptible (Stuckey et. Al 2010). In this research, race would be the barrier to being included in mainstream politics and the way to navigate this barrier is for the candidate's race to be least perceptible, meaning absent from the forefront of their campaign. I propose that one important factor for encouraging White Americans to vote for an African American candidate is the rhetoric that he or she uses during their campaign. As Canon (1999) noted, White candidates can ignore Black voters, but Black candidates cannot ignore White voters. Rhetoric steps in and allows voters to identify what a candidate grants attention to. Rhetoric is important because through rhetoric, intentions, expertness, and trustworthiness are perceived. This is where "source credibility" is obtained as a candidate relies on public speeches and other rhetorical devices to re-create personal image (Stuckey et. al 2010). In order to win an election, you need an absolute majority of the votes. And in a majority White electorate, that means that you need the votes of those who may be the toughest to win.

When discussing the Obama campaign, Gwen Ifill (2009, 54) observed that "the toughest votes to win would come from those who might overlook or distrust him (Obama) because of something he could not control – the color of his skin". When campaigning with a majority White electorate, you cannot alienate yourself from that majority and appear separate from them. Maintaining a notion of separateness can lead to adverse electoral effects. In order to create a

winning electoral coalition, African American candidates have to "expand our understanding of national identity to include them as centrally representative of the whole, rather than marginal to it" (Stuckey et. al 2010). In order to refrain from being on the margins of the electorate, African American candidates have to speak to issues and use communication in a manner in which they emphasize commonality and avoid divisiveness with the White majority.

The use of the different modes of communication is not effective if an individual feels that their obstacles in life so affectively distinguish them from others. If this is their perception, then coming together on equal grounds for any type of deliberation or government action is not possible. This is why communication through strategic rhetoric, that may at times include narratives, is important for any politician, but specifically for an African American politician who needs support from White voters in order to be successful.

Iris Marion Young, in her book *Inclusion and Democracy*, discusses different modes of communication and how they can be used to broaden the inclusion of minority groups. Young has a deep belief that the appropriate and best way to conduct political action, to influence others, and make public decisions is through the use of different modes of communication, specifically, greeting, rhetoric, and narrative. For Young (2002), greeting is public acknowledgement where a subject directly recognizes the subjectivity of others thereby fostering trust and allowing recognition to work as a starting point for political action and contest. Rhetoric is the ways that political assertions and arguments are expressed, or the various ways something can be said. Rhetoric can also shape the meaning of discourse and has three positive functions: First, rhetoric helps to get an issue on the agenda, second, rhetoric fashions claims and arguments in ways

appropriate to a particular public in a particular situation[5], and third, rhetoric motivates the move from reason to judgment. For Young, rhetoric is a powerful tool .

The third mode of communication is narrative. Narrative empowers a group to assert themselves publicly and also offers means by which people share experiences (Young 2002). Additionally, it seeks to make a point and facilitates local publics and articulates collective affinities. It also helps understanding the experience of others and counters pre-understandings while revealing the source of values, priorities, or cultural meanings (Young 2002). As Darsey (2009) took note of in his research, President Obama was very skillful in not only his use of narrative, but his ability to weave his story into the American landscape.

Obama was very successful in maintaining a notion of togetherness and commonality during his 2008 presidential campaign. He was successful in making his campaign a journey that coincided with a collective journey of America, thus making his campaign not about the race of one man for the presidency of the United States but a vehicle for common striving toward a common destiny – the American Dream (Darsey 2009). Obama sought to transcend the limits of racial identification and to identify himself with the American narrative (Darsey 2009). This strategy was not only effective for President Obama, but also for Deval Patrick, the first African American governor of Massachusetts elected in 2006. According to Gwen Ifill (2009), "Patrick was a black man that didn't scare anyone." Patrick, much like Obama, was able to put people at ease on the question of race before he could even start to talk about what he was doing. Neither

[5] In this sense, rhetoric works almost as a translator of specific arguments to specific groups or populations.

of these candidates denied their race, but they generally did not bring it up either[6]. These two successful politicians can be viewed as the trendsetters for strategic non-racial campaigns that further permeate the campaigns of other African American politicians today.

According to Young, inclusive political communication through greeting, rhetoric, and narrative offers a way to express shared experiences. Young (2004) explains that "the primary purpose of political communication…remains to change enough minds about what is wrong and what should be done about it, and then, one hopes to do something together to make the social less unjust". For Young, it is the notion of having a shared experience that brings commonality to the forefront, not divisive issues or characteristics.

When politicians are known for their advocacy of causes associated with their social group, candidates who speak primarily as African Americans will have trouble setting their minority status aside (Stuckey et. al 2010). Candidates in a real sense have to be what Canon (1999) posits as the "color-bind" model of the Black politician in which they look for commonalities, as opposed to being "difference-oriented" in which they view their primary responsibility to their race. Although Mendelberg (2001) finds that there are strong incentives for candidates in the modern era to capitalize on racial cleavages and employ racial appeals in order to build support among Whites, I argue that this incentive only applies to White, not Black politicians. Because Mendelberg's argument singularly applies to White politicians, Black

[6] These candidates did talk about their race, but in a defensive manner. When the issue of their race was brought to them by opposing candidates, it opened the door for them to discuss their race, but without having to bring it up first, thus allowing them to remain a candidate who happened to be Black, not the Black candidate.

candidates have to find a way to deactivate the power that their race can have on electoral success.

In order to "set aside" one's race as a dominant consideration, campaigns have to be strategically run. According to Gronbeck (1978), campaigning creates second-level or meta-political images, persona, myths, associations, and social-psychological reactions which may even be detached or at least distinct from particular candidates. Because campaigns create reactions that may be separate from the actual candidate, African American candidates have to be particularly careful as not to be reduced not just to their race, but to the images of those who have come before them. In an interview with Gwen Ifill, Kendrick Meek acknowledged that the current generation of African American politicians are being measured to a standard. He says, "America outside of black America is looking at us and saying, 'Can I trust them? 'Do they carry that anger?'" Current African American politicians must separate themselves from the image of anger and separateness in order to achieve success as Whites have proven to be more comfortable with Black candidates who do not seem to carry "that anger" (Ifill 2009). For many, including an Obama campaign worker, it was reasoning that "a black man cannot be President. However, an extraordinary, gifted, and talented young man who happens to be black can be president" (Ifill 2009).

Rhetoric matters and so does race. Sometimes race helps, sometimes it hurts, but it always matters (Ifill 2009). For African American politicians who have to resist being reduced to their race, they have to come to the realization that to a certain extent, it does not matter how black your skin is, it is how black your politics are (Ifill 2009). As Michael Steele explains to Gwenn Ifill (2009), "You've got to be able to speak about these things more broadly, because

you don't want white folks to think you are a single-issue or single-race individual, which most people aren't." The question "Is he too black?" can cost mainstream candidates an election. The notion of having Black politics is one that comes from the rhetoric that is used. This is why in order to avoid having only Black politics, you must avoid divisive rhetoric that separates and use inclusive rhetoric that brings about the idea of commonality thus helping candidates to achieve mainstream status.

Mainstreaming Minority Candidates

It would be unfair to acknowledge all the attention surrounding the issues of race during the 2008 presidential election. Although there was a candidate who was careful not to make his race a defining issue, there were other elites who did not shy away from talking about his race. Yet, President Obama is not the first African American politician who has made a conscious decision not to make his race a defining issue. L. Douglas Wilder, the first African American Governor elected in the United States from the state of Virginia downplayed his race and the fact that if he won, he would be the first African American elected governor in U.S. history (Lusane 1996). Even with such a historic victory as being elected the first African American governor, Wilder has openly admitted, "Racism is never going to go away, and we shouldn't convince ourselves that it could" (Ifill 2009, 10). Therefore, it is quite clear that a central problem for a minority candidate, even today, is balancing his or her minority status with the need to articulate national appeals, to represent the entire nation (Stuckey et. al 2010).

If racism is never going to go away, then how can an African American politician achieve success outside of a majority-minority district? An African American candidate does this by depoliticizing his or her race. Stuckey, et al (2010) acknowledge that "Understanding the limits

of whom a nation will accept as ‘presidential’ or ‘electable’ can tell us a great deal of how the nation understands itself”. Politicians today understand the limits of their “blackness” and therefore in achieving cross-over success with the White majority, they run deracialized campaigns. Campaigns must avoid racial rhetoric because the ability to overcome minority status is the greatest when that status is the least relevant to the campaign (Stuckey et al 2010).

The common strategy found today is that of a deracialized campaign. Having a deracialized campaign means that candidates have to somehow stop being representative of their group and become national – not only speak for one interest, but for a broad coalition of interests (Stuckey et.al 2010). I theorize that candidates do this today by emphasizing commonality as opposed to a notion of separateness or from being set apart from the majority. Stuckey and her colleagues admit that minority candidates can and do attain the mainstream and they believe that the first requirement is a structural context that offers an opportunity for a minority candidate to make an argument that he or she represents national rather than parochial interests (2010, p. 416). In order to represent themselves and issues in a particularly way, candidates are strategic in their use of frames.

Framing

We exist in a world in which just about everything we encounter and understand is dependent upon the frame that accompanies it. There are a multitude of frames that define, diagnose, and inform the viewer of the dominant messages and/or themes. Framing is critical for the success of any campaign, but particularly for an African American campaigning with a White majority, as it must be possible for the candidate to frame the issues in such a way that those issues diminish rather than highlight the candidate’s minority status (Stuckey et. al 2010). This is

of particular importance when it comes to mainstreaming a minority candidate, as a candidate must have a particular kind of identity and be able to frame that identity in terms of issues that do not reinforce minority status to the exclusion of other elements of public character (Stuckey et al. 2010). Framing is essential to a campaign as voters have been shown not to have one true preference, but rather recent considerations or responses that emanate from the top of their head (Zaller 1992, Althaus 1998). Because voters do not have true preferences, candidates must use particular care in ensuring that messages are consistent, specifically consistent in distancing themselves from racial rhetoric.

In "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm", Robert Entman offers a clear definition of frames, how they work, and the benefits of using them. His main argument is that framing involves selection and salience in which in order to construct dominant messages or themes, you have to "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem, definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 52). Entman points out that by highlighting certain pieces of information, salience is actually elevated thus making certain aspects of information more noticeable or memorable to audiences. Accenting and placing more prominence on particular elements is essentially how frames work, and this can be achieved by placement, repetition, or association with common societal symbols. Through the strategic placement of words, text formatting, and repetitive language, frames can be manipulated and altered to convey the desired message, theme, or representation. Frames are not random, and in his article, Entman (1993) shows that frames involve deliberate choices. This research demonstrates that the deliberate choice of African American candidates is to use

rhetoric and frame issues in such a way that they are considered part of the White majority, not separate from them.

In addition to offering a definition of frames, Entman (1993) also compiles and identifies four functions of framing: They define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies (p. 52). These functions inform the viewers of what the problem is and the costs associated with that particular problem, they make known the forces behind that problem, they evaluate the current and possible effects of the problem, and offer solutions to the problem and the effects of those solutions. Because frames call attention to certain aspects, while ignoring others, politicians compete over frames and presentation. The competition over frames plays a big role in the use of political power and the identity of actors and interests. Entman (2003) identifies framing as "the central process by which government officials and journalists exercise political influence over each other and over the public" (p. 417). This influence that is exercised involves highlighting some aspect of events or issues and making connections between them to promote a particular interpretation. By promoting a particular interpretation or evaluation of certain events or issues, the magnitude with which the audience resonates with that particular issue or event is of great value to government and political actors. In this case, the particular interpretation that remains a constant goal is that of commonality.

Frames construct meanings, they do not invent them. They take the pieces of information that already exist and build meaning around it. When it comes to campaigning and creating a favorable image, it is those political issues that are most salient or accessible in a person's memory that will most strongly influence perceptions of political actors and figures (Scheuffle 2000). When it comes to race being a salient characteristic, candidates to an extent must set

aside their race so that it is not a salient memory that will determine an individual's vote choice. Even though frames are powerful and can have influence over the public, they must however have some familiarity with the society, so as to reinforce what is already embedded in the culture. Because frames act on what already exist within the culture, it has been argued that the media fosters an environment in which individuals can develop politically. Without some sort or resonance with the public, a frame cannot be effective. Because resonance is needed for effectiveness, frames are not independent agents, but rather used in connection with the elements that already exists in society. This is to say that frames will be consistent and not used in a manner to confuse the public or present a façade. Framing is based on subtle nuances in wording and syntax that have most likely unintentional effects or at least effects that are hard to predict (Scheufele 2000). The framing of an issue is important for African American candidates campaigning for cross-over success as racial rhetoric can influence a voter's interpretation of the issues and thus ultimately affect vote choice.

Conclusion

There is a reason why successful African American politicians do not follow the same rhetorical styles as Al Sharpton, or even Jesse Jackson. This is because successful politicians, or those who seek to become successful, understand that divisive rhetoric that separates them from the majority as opposed to uniting or reinforcing bonds of commonality will not bring enough White voters in to win an election. The overall goal of a serious campaign is to win. As history and previous research demonstrates, in order for African American candidates to become successful outside of majority-minority districts, they need the support of White voters. This strategy has proven to be successful not only for President Obama, but for other successful

politicians who have come before him including Deval Patrick and L. Douglas Wilder. The current African American political landscape gives us an emerging breed of politicians who have set trends unlike their predecessors. The current trend is that of a commitment to deracialized styles of speech that reinforce ideas and symbols of commonality, not one of separateness.

In the current political landscape arguments continue as to whether or not race still matters or if we are now in a post-racial society in which race no longer holds importance. The current literature would have you to take one side or the other. On one hand you have those who say that race matters. On the other hand, you have those who say that today, it does not matter. I however am endeavoring to prove that you do not have to choose one side or the other as both sides can be right, or conversely, both can be wrong. I propose that race matters in subtle ways that can be traced through the use of the campaign communication of current politicians and in studying the effects that communication and rhetoric has on shaping voter perception of these politicians.

This research proceeds to demonstrate the rhetorical strategy of African American politicians in three ways: First, a text analysis of campaign communication from the 2010 mid-term elections was conducted in order to trace key issues and specific rhetorical styles used not just by African American politicians, but their White counterparts as well. Second, an experiment was conducted in which participants evaluated a candidate based on both his race and rhetoric and determined their feelings toward the candidate, likelihood of voting for the candidate, and their levels of trust toward the candidate. Finally, qualitative interviews were conducted with African American state legislators in Georgia asking about their key issues,

campaign strategies, and thoughts on post-racialism and the current African American political landscape.

The proceeding chapters will demonstrate that the rhetorical strategies of winning and losing African American politicians and how these strategies can help to shape voter perceptions.

3. TEXT ANALYSIS RESULTS

Since the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, African Americans have enjoyed a considerable increase in winning elected offices. Although, most of the victories of African American candidates have come from minor offices and majority-minority districts, victorious Black candidates have not been restricted disproportionately to these posts (Bullock 1975). One contributing factor to the success of African Americans running for both major and minor offices is the fact that fifty years ago, national surveys showed that most Whites would not vote for a qualified presidential candidate who happened to be Black; by the 1990s this figure had dropped almost to zero (Hutchings 2009). With more candidates running and winning and more Whites saying that they are willing to vote for a qualified Black candidate, it is not surprising that African Americans today are enjoying more electoral success than in previous years for many public offices, including that of the presidency.

What accounts for the success of African American elected officials from majority White electorates? Is the language that is used by these politicians effective in helping them achieve electoral success outside of their race? This research as a whole seeks to answer these questions, and this chapter specifically seeks to answer these questions using textual analysis of campaign communication from the 2010 Primary and General mid-term elections. This chapter explores the first and third hypotheses of this research:

> H1: Rhetoric matters: There is a specific language that is consistently found in the speeches of successful African American elected officials.
>
> H3: The language found in successful African American elected officials will not be found in the speeches of unsuccessful African American politicians running for the same office.

Goals of the Chapter

This chapter aims to prove that in addition to other factors that make for a successful campaign for African-American candidates, in this controversial new post-racial environment there is a specific style of speech employed by African-American politicians who desire to be successful[7]. One contribution or factor for successful African American politicians is that of running a deracialized campaign. In today's political climate, it is often the norm for Black candidates to depoliticize race so that they can appeal to White voters (Lewis 2009). McCormick and Jones (1993) describe the electoral strategy of a deracialized campaign as,

> Conducting a campaign in a stylistic fashion that defuses the polarizing effects of race by avoiding explicit reference to race-specific issues, while at the same time emphasizing those issues that are perceived as racially transcendent, thus mobilizing a broad segment of the electorate for purposes of capturing and maintaining public office.

McCormick and Jones describe what African American politicians must engage in for their campaigns to attain the crossover success needed in order to help them win elections. One way that African American candidates achieve this success is through their communication as candidates must make arguments that connect with their base constituencies and "at least enough of the electorate as a whole" (Stuckey et. al 2010). For minority candidates, such as African Americans, they must walk a fine line when constructing their public ethos or character as a candidate, who is also a minority, can have their minority status be a pivotal element of their character (Stuckey et. al 2010).

[7] For the purpose of this research, as noted in Chapter one, success is defined as elected to office at least once.

By definition, minority candidates challenge the status quo. It seems that the "trick" to their success is doing so while remaining below the radar. They walk a fine line in that they cannot deny their minority status, but they also must avoid being reduced to it as well (Stuckey et. al 2010). As part of a deracialized campaign, the use of rhetoric must be deracialized as well, as it helps to transcend race. This research is not proposing that candidates do not believe in their deracialized rhetoric, but rather that there is a recognition that their rhetoric has an impact on electoral success and therefore, using rhetoric in the correct manner is a wise electoral strategy.

In 2008, 43% of White Americans voted for Senator Barack Obama to become their next president (Ifill 2009). Many have questioned how he was able to garner such a large number being that he is the first African American presidential candidate who has made it to the general election. Yes, it is true that more White Americans today than fifty years ago are willing to vote for a qualified African American (Hutchings 2009), but even with more saying that they would be willing to vote, the question of "why?" still remains.

I propose that one important factor for encouraging White Americans to vote for an African American candidate is the rhetoric that he or she uses during their campaign. Rhetoric is important because through rhetoric, intentions, expertness, and trustworthiness are perceived. This is where "source credibility" is obtained as a candidate relies on public speeches and other rhetorical devices to re-create personal image (Stuckey et. al 2010). In order to win an election, you need an absolute majority of the votes. And in a majority White electorate, that means that you need the votes of those who may be the toughest to win.

When campaigning with a majority White electorate, you cannot alienate yourself from that majority and appear separate from them. Maintaining a notion of separateness can lead to adverse electoral effects. In order to create a winning electoral coalition, African American candidates have to "expand our understanding of national identity to include them as centrally representative of the whole, rather than marginal to it" (Stuckey et. al 2010). In order to refrain from being on the margins of the electorate, African American candidates have to speak to issues and use communication in a manner in which they refrain from using explicit racial language that separates them from the majority.

Rhetoric matters and so does race. Sometimes race helps, sometimes it hurts, but it always matters (Ifill 2009). For African American politicians who have to resist being reduced to their race, they have to come to the realization that to a certain extent, it does not matter how black your skin is, it is how black your politics are (Ifill 2009, 161). The question of "Is he too black?" can cost mainstream candidates an election. The notion of having black politics is one that comes from the rhetoric that is used. This is why in order to avoid having only Black politics, you must avoid divisive racial rhetoric that separates to achieve mainstream status because being perceived as divisive can ultimately lead to electoral failure.

Text Analysis Design and Methodology

The previous chapters have been devoted to developing and explicating my theory on the success of African American politicians from majority White electoral consistencies. To test this theory, this chapter seeks to prove two of my three hypotheses: That there is a specific language that is consistently found in the campaign communication of successful African American elected officials and that the language found in the communication of successful elected officials

is not found in the communication of unsuccessful elected officials. These hypotheses are tested through the use of textual analysis.

Content analysis offers practical applicability. It is a form of research that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text. This analysis allows me to classify textual material, reducing it to more relevant, manageable pieces of data (Weber 1990). This method of analysis also helps this research achieve external validity for its findings. In order to conduct the text analysis, QDA Miner and its content analysis component WORDSTAT were used. This software allowed me to test for frequencies of words and phrases and for similarities and differences between texts. The text analysis offers me a statistical approach in this research. This approach included text mining which used a chi-square based analysis in order to identify words and phrases that are indentified with successful and unsuccessful African American candidates.

In order to complete this portion of research, over 2500 pieces of campaign communication from African American candidates and their White opponents running in majority White constituencies in the 2010 Primary and General mid-term elections were collected. Campaign communication was collected from the websites of the candidates[8]. In order to collect the campaign communication, each candidate's website/web pages were downloaded and saved. Downloading their websites meant that home/main pages, the candidate's biography, the candidate's issues page(s), press release(s), blog(s)[9], and any other

[8] Using candidate websites proved to be useful for this research as websites have become an important forum for political communication between candidates and the electorate as voters more so today turn to websites for quick accessible information.

[9] Though blogs are a relatively new "phenomenon", I decided to save them as a form of campaign communication because in most instances, the websites claim that the blogs were written and posted by the candidate him or herself.

pages of direct communication including testimonials, newsletters, accomplishments, and resume`s were saved[10]. In order to access the campaign communication, I made a decision to go two levels deep on any one particular website/webpage[11].

The following are summary statistics on the data collected for African American candidates in the 2010 mid-term elections:

Table 3.1 Sample of African American Candidates in the 2010 Primary election

Type of Race	Number of Candidates[12]	Number of States	Number of Incumbents	Number of Republicans	Number of Democrats	Number of candidates being studied[13]
Governor	16	13	1	1	4	5
Senate	17	12	0	4	6	10
House	63	19	16	23	30	53
Total	96	44	17	28	40	68

In this sense, blogs are the closest I can get to actual speeches, as most are claimed to come directly from the candidate.

[10] Some websites had all of the aforementioned pages, some did not. For every site, I downloaded what was available. This differed based on the level of website sophistication.

[11] Going two levels deep indicates that on any particular webpage, if there was a link directing me to another page (for example, an issue or press release), I would only click on the link taking me to the next page. Where ever the link took me would be counted as the second layer or second "level". Thus, whatever content that was on the second level was also saved, but nothing deeper than the second level was included.

[12] Including 3rd Party candidates.

[13] Excluding 3rd Party candidates.

Table 3.2: Sample of the African American Candidates in the 2010 General election

Type of Race	Number of Candidates Being Studied	Number of States	Number of Incumbents	Number of Republicans	Number of Democrats
Governor	1	1	1	0	1
Senate	3	3	0	0	3
House	35	14	16	7	28
Total	39	18	17	7	32

Table 3.3: Breakdown of Communication Data

Page Type	Percent of Sample
Home/Main	8%
Blogs	9%
Candidate Biography	10%
Issue Pages/Positions	33%
Press Releases	3%
Primary Election N=1,852 General Election N=844	

After all data was collected, it was then imported in the text analysis software, QDA Miner. After importing the data into the program, each piece of data was coded[14]. After all of the data was coded, a dictionary was formulated for the software to use in order to read the documents. Formulating the dictionary for the software was done in two ways as using the text

[14] The following variables were coded for each piece of data: Candidate Name, Office (Governor, Senate, House), Incumbency, Race of Candidate (African American, White, etc.), Type of election (Primary or General), Electoral Success (Winning or losing the election), Gender, Party ID (No 3rd party candidates are included), and Page Type (Home, Issues, Bio, Press Release, etc.).

analysis allowed this research to be both inductive and deductive. Inductively, I used the text analysis software on the data collected from the primary elections to "mine" any differences between African American candidates and White candidates. Once observations were made based on word frequency and chi square analysis that there were statistically discernible differences between African American candidates and White candidates running for the same office, and between African American candidates who won and lost, I was able to focus attention on data from the General election. Though the primary data yielded more pieces of communication, a decision was made to only use the General election data for the final results as the audience for the primary election is narrower than the audience for the general election. Also, it is possible that within the primary election, an African American candidate though seeking to win in a majority White district could still only have to appeal to African Americans in order to secure a Primary win, but appealing to this same audience may not be enough to achieve success in the General election.

Once discernible differences were observed in the primary data, the General data was then used to find words that were statistically different between African American winners and African American losers[15]. Results were generated around words that were found to be statistically different for winners and losers based on frequency of the word and chi square analysis[16].

[15] Only Democrats were used for the analysis because the goal is to determine a difference in rhetoric not based on ideology. In addition, there was not a significant amount of African American Republicans running to glean any substantial results.

[16] List of words is located in the Appendix.

The words that were found to be statistically different from one another in and of itself mean nothing. They only indicate that these words are what the software found to be statistically different from African American winners and losers in the General election. Once these differences were found, the dictionary was created for the software to use in the final analysis. The dictionary was created after analyzing key words in context[17]. The first section of the dictionary is based on the inductive knowledge gained from the preliminary analysis. The inductive method demonstrated that a majority of the words that are statistically significant for showing differences are based around larger general issues. From this method, a list of issues to be used for the final analysis was developed in which only those words/issues that were found to be statistically different are included and those things that are in common are excluded. This is because this research is concerned with those things that distinguish the candidates from each other, not what they have in common. The initial list of issues can be found in table 3.4.

[17] QDA Miner's text analysis component WORSTAT allows users to not only find differences in text, but to also observe the keyword in context. The software allows the user to choose any word and go back to the keyword in the actual text itself. This allows the user to discern how the word is used and in what manner the word is used.

Table 3.4: Issues Listed in Initial Dictionary

Crime	Healthcare
Darfur	Housing
Economic Employment	Immigration
Economic Growth	Same Sex Marriage
Economic Justice	Seniors
Education	Taxes
Environment	Transportation
	Veterans

The second category of the dictionary was for style of speech. This method of analysis was done deductively. This second part of the text analysis is driven by my theory of candidates needing to avoid racially explicit rhetoric in order to achieve electoral success. Based on my theory, a list of words was developed that indicate racially explicit language and/or references. These words are in table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Dictionary Words that Indicate Racial Rhetoric

Black	My Community
Affirmative Action	NAACP
African American	Negro
Confederate	Profiling
Ethnic	Racial
Farrakhan	Racism
Hitler	Racist
Jesse Jackson	Segregation
Jim Crow	Skin Color
Minorities	Slavery

Following the creation of the issues and styles within the dictionary, the validity of the dictionary was tested using independent coders. Coders read a random sample of 30 documents and were asked to indicate on each document if a particular issue was mentioned and whether or not they thought that piece of communication was in a racial style. After the coders read and coded each document, validity tests were performed and a grounded truth was developed in order to compare the results of the text analysis software and the accuracy of the dictionary that was initially created[18].

For each issue and style, the performance rate was calculated for false positives, false negatives, and accuracy[19]. False positives indicate the computer identifying the discovery of the

[18] Inter-coder reliability was measured at 81%

[19] Equations for performance rate measures can be found in the appendix.

issue or style, when my grounded truth (based on my independent coders) indicated that nothing should have been found. False negatives indicate the computer indicating the particular issue or style was not found when it should have been picked up based on grounded truth. Accuracy is the overall accuracy of the issue and style being picked up by both the computer and the grounded truth created from the independent coders. Though overall accuracy initially was 86% which under ordinary circumstances would be considered quite good, it was decided that the dictionary could be further improved. After improvements were made to the dictionary, performance measures increased for all the issues with false positive and false negative rates remaining below the .10 mark, with many of them reaching the level of 0, and accuracy increasing for each issue to at least 89%, with some issues reaching 100% accuracy rates. While issues enjoyed some of the highest accuracy rates, the racial style category had an accuracy reading of 86% with a rate of 0 for false positives and .18 for false negatives. Table 3.6 identifies the final list of issues in the dictionary.

Table 3.6: Issues Listed in Final Dictionary

Crime	Immigration
Darfur	Same Sex Marriage
Economy	Seniors
Education	Taxes
Environment	Transportation
Healthcare	Veterans
Housing	

Once performance measures improved to a higher level of satisfaction, a final analysis was conducted on all of the data to determine what the differences were, if any, between winning and losing African American democratic candidates in the 2010 General elections. The rest of the chapter will proceed with the findings of the text analysis and a discussion on the implications of these findings.

Discussion and Findings

The first analysis of this chapter investigates the differences between all African American Democrats running in the General election. Results based on case occurrence, proportional mentions, and chi square analysis reveal that when it comes to those African American candidates who won the General election and those who lost, there are differences in issues mentioned. The issues that distinguished the winners from the losers were crime, housing, healthcare, education, veterans, transportation, Darfur, and same-sex marriage. Issues that were not distinguishable between the winners and losers were the economy, immigration, seniors and the environment. Interestingly, what the results also display is that when it comes to using racially explicit language, winners were found to use racially explicit language more than the losers were. However, this difference was not statistically significant[20].

[20] Statistical significance as measured at the .05 level.

Table 3.7: African American Democrats – Winners vs. Losers

	Winners	Losers	Chi2	P (2-tails)
CRIME	94	17	18.205	0
HOUSING	91	14	21.504	0
HEALTH_CARE	136	28	29.485	0
EDUCATION	130	28	24.451	0
VETERANS	97	17	20.08	0
TRANSPORTATION	93	9	33.276	0
DARFUR	22		10.15	0.006
TAXES	78	19	7.378	0.025
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	14		6.272	0.043
ECON	155	58	2.697	0.26
IMMIGRATION	12	9	1.814	0.404
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**56**	**18**	**1.47**	**0.479**
SENIORS	60	20	1.262	0.532
ENVIRONMENT	39	12	1.196	0.55
Total N=292	N=207	N=85		

While table 3.7 displays the case occurrences for issues and the racial style between African American Democrats who won and lost the General election, table 3.8 displays the proportion of the mentions of these issues and styles. Proportions are shown because case occurrence counts simply say that one group has more case occurrences, but this is only on appearance. However, when the proportion of case occurrences to number of campaign communication is considered, it is possible that proportionately, an issue or style could be mentioned in greater or lesser proportion than case occurrence. The number of mentions does not indicate how much an issue or style is discussed by a particular group, but the proportion does. This is important for my theory because proportions of speech indicate level of attention to a particular issue or style. Table 3.8 demonstrates the difference between case occurrence and proportion. Based on proportionate mentions, table 3.8 reveals that although the case occurrence for racially explicit language is shown to be three times more for the winners than the losers, its

true usage is only 2% more than the losers. In addition, on the issue of immigration, case occurrence is more for the winners, but proportionately higher for the losers.

Table 3.8: African American Democrats – Winners vs. Losers (Proportionate Mentions)

	Winners	Losers	Chi2	P (2-tails)
CRIME	.46	.20	18.205	0
HOUSING	.43	.16	21.504	0
HEALTH_CARE	.65	.32	29.485	0
EDUCATION	.62	.32	24.451	0
VETERANS	.46	.20	20.08	0
TRANSPORTATION	.44	.10	33.276	0
DARFUR	.10		10.15	0.006
TAXES	.37	.22	7.378	0.025
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	.06		6.272	0.043
ECON	.74	.58	2.697	0.26
IMMIGRATION	**.05**	**.68**	**1.814**	**0.404**
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**.27**	**.21**	**1.47**	**0.479**
SENIORS	.28	.23	1.262	0.532
ENVIRONMENT	.18	.14	1.196	0.55
Total N=292	N=207	N=85		

The initial analysis demonstrated that there were issue differences found among African American Democratic candidates in the General election. To further investigate these differences and possible causes for these differences, a second analysis was conducted on democratic candidates who were both African American and White to see if there were any discernible differences based on race. Based on case occurrence, proportionate mentions, and chi square analysis, results demonstrate that there was only one issue used more by White candidates than Black candidates. The issue that was used at a higher occurrence was immigration. This issue was mentioned at a higher occurrence among White candidates and also among African American winners as shown in table 3.7. In addition to revealing this difference in issues between African American and White candidates, table 3.9 reveals, as expected that

racially explicit language was used at a higher occurrence by African American candidates than their White counterparts. This is not to say that racially explicit language was not used at all by Democratic candidates, but that it was used significantly more by the African American Democratic candidates.

Table 3.9: General Election Winners – African Americans vs. White

	AA	White	Chi2	P (2-tails)
CRIME	111	9	17.459	0
HOUSING	105	5	23.504	0
ECON	214	73	24.8	0
EDUCATION	159	72	49.056	0
VETERANS	114	73	86.858	0
HEALTH_CARE	164	73	49.283	0
IMMIGRATION	**21**	**50**	**140.066**	**0**
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**74**	**4**	**13.712**	**0.001**
DARFUR	22	-	5.853	0.054
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	14	-	3.64	0.162
TAXES	98	19	1.522	0.467
TRANSPORTATION	103	24	0.148	0.929
SENIORS	80	21	0.055	0.973
ENVIRONMENT	51	12	0.043	0.979
Total N=365	N=292	N=73		

Table 3.10 examines the differences in issue and style mention based on proportion. This table demonstrates that based on case occurrence, the only issues mentioned more by Whites than African Americans was immigration. However, when proportionate mentions are accounted for, it is revealed that the issues of education, veterans, and health care were mentioned in proportionately higher numbers by White candidates who won, than African

American candidates who won. It also reveals that immigration was mentioned proportionately higher by African American winners than White winners. In regard to racially explicit language, African American candidates use racially explicit rhetoric at a proportion that is five times more than White candidates.

Table 3.10: General Election Winners – African Americans vs. White (Proportionate Mentions)

	AA	White	Chi2	P (2-tails)
CRIME	0.38	0.12	17.459	0
HOUSING	0.35	0.06	23.504	0
ECON	0.73	1	24.8	0
EDUCATION	**0.54**	**0.98**	**49.056**	**0**
VETERANS	**0.39**	**1**	**86.858**	**0**
HEALTH_CARE	**0.56**	**1**	**49.283**	**0**
IMMIGRATION	**0.07**	**0.02**	**140.066**	**0**
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**0.25**	**0.05**	**13.712**	**0.001**
DARFUR	0.07	-	5.853	0.054
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	0.04	-	3.64	0.162
TAXES	0.33	0.26	1.522	0.467
TRANSPORTATION	0.35	0.32	0.148	0.929
SENIORS	0.27	0.28	0.055	0.973
ENVIRONMENT	0.17	0.16	0.043	0.979
Total N=365	N=292	N=73		

Gubernatorial and Senate Races

This research uses data from Gubernatorial, Senate, and House races. In 2010, there was only one African American candidate in the General gubernatorial election. That candidate was Deval Patrick, who was elected 4 years earlier as the first African American Governor of Massachusetts. Looking at this race between Patrick and his Republican opponent Charlie Baker,

shows that there was one issue that was demonstrated to be statistically different between them[21]. However, when it came to the use of racially explicit rhetoric, though Patrick is shown to have a higher case occurrence than Baker, this difference does not reach a level of significance. These findings show that racial rhetoric was used by both Patrick and Baker, but the use of this style of rhetoric was not statistically different. When proportionate mentions are measured, table 3.12, reveals that both Patrick and Baker engaged in racial rhetoric at almost the same rate, 20% and 18% respectively.

Table 3.11: Gubernatorial Race: Patrick vs. Baker

	Deval Patrick (D)	Charlie Baker (R)	Chi2	P (2-tails)
EDUCATION	23	3	5.665	0.059
TRANSPORTATION	11	-	4.657	0.097
HEALTH_CARE	23	4	3.372	0.185
VETERANS	7	-	2.625	0.269
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	6	-	2.188	0.335
CRIME	6	-	2.188	0.335
HOUSING	4	-	1.382	0.501
ENVIRONMENT	9	2	0.26	0.878
SENIORS	5	2	0.105	0.949
TAXES	11	3	0.066	0.968
IMMIGRATION	4	1	0.045	0.978
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**6**	**2**	**0.008**	**0.996**
ECON	22	7	0.006	0.997
Total N=42	N=32	N=10		

[21] Education is the statistically different issue.

Table 3.12: Gubernatorial Race: Patrick vs. Baker (Proportionate Mentions)

	Deval Patrick (D)	Charlie Baker (R)	Chi2	P (2-tails)
EDUCATION	0.71	0.3	5.665	0.059
TRANSPORTATION	0.34	-	4.657	0.097
HEALTH_CARE	0.71	0.4	3.372	0.185
VETERANS	0.21	-	2.625	0.269
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	0.18	-	2.188	0.335
CRIME	0.18	-	2.188	0.335
HOUSING	0.12	-	1.382	0.501
ENVIRONMENT	0.28	0.2	0.26	0.878
SENIORS	0.15	0.2	0.105	0.949
TAXES	0.34	0.3	0.066	0.968
IMMIGRATION	0.12	0.1	0.045	0.978
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**0.18**	**0.2**	**0.008**	**0.996**
ECON	0.68	0.7	0.006	0.997
Total N=42	N=32	N=10		

Turning attention to the Senate races, findings reveal differences between those who won and those who lost the Senate election. There were 3 African American Democratic candidates running for Senate in the 2010 General election – Thurbert Baker (Georgia), Alvin Greene (South Carolina), and Kendrick Meek (Florida) – and all three candidates lost[22]. The results for the text analysis demonstrate that the issues that distinguish the winners from the losers are housing, education, and taxes. Taxes and education had higher case occurrences by the winners of the Senate elections, while Hosing was higher for the losers of the election. When it comes

[22] In addition to all three candidates losing their Senate race, all three were non-incumbents, running for the Senate for the first time. With the exception of Alvin Greene, the candidates had previous electoral victories to lower government posts.

to the use of racially explicit rhetoric, the findings reveal that the winners of the Senate elections had higher occurrences than African American losers. But table 3.14, shows that in terms of proportionate mentions, the losers of the election, which were all African American used racially explicit language at a rate of 5%, to 3% of the winners. However, with these differences, the use of this rhetoric is not a statistically significant difference between the winners and the losers.

Table 3.13: Senate Race – Winners vs. Losers

	Losers	Winners	Chi2	P (2-tails)
HOUSING	8	7	30.077	0
EDUCATION	9	17	17.498	0
TAXES	3	83	10.577	0.005
ECON	12	67	2.684	0.261
IMMIGRATION	-	16	2.202	0.332
ENVIRONMENT	-	15	2.051	0.359
HEALTH_CARE	6	31	1.304	0.521
SENIORS	1	20	0.968	0.616
TRANSPORTATION	2	9	0.612	0.736
VETERANS	3	16	0.493	0.781
CRIME	3	17	0.363	0.834
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**1**	**5**	**0.201**	**0.905**
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	-	1	0.125	0.939
Total N=164	N=19	N=145		

Table 3.14: Senate Race – Winners vs. Losers (Proportionate Mentions)

	Losers	Winners	Chi2	P (2-tails)
HOUSING	0.42	0.04	30.077	0
EDUCATION	0.47	0.11	17.498	0
TAXES	0.15	0.57	10.577	0.005
ECON	0.63	0.46	2.684	0.261
IMMIGRATION	-	0.11	2.202	0.332
ENVIRONMENT	-	0.1	2.051	0.359
HEALTH_CARE	0.31	0.21	1.304	0.521
SENIORS	0.05	0.13	0.968	0.616
TRANSPORTATION	0.1	0.06	0.612	0.736
VETERANS	0.15	0.11	0.493	0.781
CRIME	0.15	0.11	0.363	0.834
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**0.05**	**0.03**	**0.201**	**0.905**
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	-	0.006	0.125	0.939
Total N=164	N=19	N=145		

House Races

In addition to isolating the Gubernatorial and Senate races, I also investigated the differences, if any among candidates running for the House of Representatives in 2010. When looking at the African American Democrats, table 3.15 reveals differences between the winners and losers in the election. Results show that the issues of crime, housing, education, veterans, healthcare, transportation, and immigration were all statistically significant differences. Based on case occurrence, immigration was shown to be the only issue that was mentioned more by those who lost their House race in 2010. When it comes to racially explicit rhetoric, table 3.15 reveals that the use of racially explicit rhetoric, although occurring more by winners, is not statistically significant. Table 3.16 confirms this finding. The proportionate use of racial

rhetoric remains higher for winners than losers, although by only 3% and again, not a significant difference.

Table 3.15: House Race – African American Winners vs. Losers

	Losers	Winners	Chi2	P (2-tails)
CRIME	14	88	17.163	0
HOUSING	5	89	38.407	0
EDUCATION	20	107	19.024	0
VETERANS	13	91	21.007	0
HEALTH_CARE	22	113	19.784	0
TRANSPORTATION	7	82	27.623	0
DARFUR	-	22	9.265	0.01
IMMIGRATION	9	8	5.825	0.054
TAXES	16	67	4.462	0.107
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	-	8	3.168	0.205
ECON	45	135	2.532	0.282
SENIORS	18	56	0.602	0.74
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**17**	**50**	**0.248**	**0.884**
ENVIRONMENT	12	30	0.02	0.99
Total N=242	N=67	N=175		

Table 3.16: House Race – African American Winners vs. Losers (Proportionate Mentions)

	Losers	Winners	Chi2	P (2-tails)
CRIME	0.2	0.5	17.163	0
HOUSING	0.07	0.5	38.407	0
EDUCATION	0.29	0.61	19.024	0
VETERANS	0.19	0.52	21.007	0
HEALTH_CARE	0.32	0.64	19.784	0
TRANSPORTATION	0.1	0.48	27.623	0
DARFUR		0.12	9.265	0.01
IMMIGRATION	0.13	0.04	5.825	0.054
TAXES	0.23	0.38	4.462	0.107
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE		0.04	3.168	0.205
ECON	0.67	0.77	2.532	0.282
SENIORS	0.26	0.32	0.602	0.74
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**0.25**	**0.28**	**0.248**	**0.884**
ENVIRONMENT	0.17	0.17	0.02	0.99
Total N=242	N=67	N=175		

Although there were not a significant amount of cases in which African American candidates ran against each other in the 2010 House elections, there was one particular case that put two African American women against each other. This is the race between Laura Richardson, the Democratic incumbent and Star Parker, the Republican challenger in California's 37th Congressional District. The text analysis between these two women demonstrates that these two candidates had no statistically significant differences between them. Although, not statistically significant, both candidates were found to use racially explicit rhetoric. Even though the use of racial rhetoric was not a statistical difference, the analysis shows that Parker, the Republican who was defeated in this race, had a higher case occurrence of racial rhetoric, however, Richardson,

the Democratic incumbent used racial rhetoric at a higher proportion than Parker. Even though these differences were not statistically significant, it is possible that in this case, and for the cases before, the incumbency advantage was too strong for Parker to overcome in this solid Democratic district[23].

Table 3.17: Star Parker vs. Laura Richardson

	Star Parker (R)	Laura Richardson (D)	Chi2	P (2-tails)
SENIORS	-	1	3.949	0.139
TRANSPORTATION	-	1	3.949	0.139
ECON	9	1	2.715	0.257
EDUCATION	9	1	2.715	0.257
IMMIGRATION	1	1	1.131	0.568
TAXES	7	1	0.884	0.643
HEALTH_CARE	2	-	0.636	0.727
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	1	-	0.294	0.863
HOUSING	1	-	0.294	0.863
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**3**	**1**	**0.042**	**0.979**
Total N=14	N=11	N=3		

[23] California's 37th District has a Cook PVI of D+26.

Table 3.18: Star Parker vs. Laura Richardson (Proportional Mentions)

	Star Parker (R)	Laura Richardson (D)	Chi2	P (2-tails)
SENIORS	-	0.33	3.949	0.139
TRANSPORTATION	-	0.33	3.949	0.139
ECON	0.81	0.33	2.715	0.257
EDUCATION	0.81	0.33	2.715	0.257
IMMIGRATION	0.09	0.33	1.131	0.568
TAXES	0.63	0.33	0.884	0.643
HEALTH_CARE	2	-	0.636	0.727
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	0.18	-	0.294	0.863
HOUSING	0.09	-	0.294	0.863
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**0.27**	**0.33**	**0.042**	**0.979**
Total N=14	N=11	N=3		

Discussion and Implications

Overall, the results reveal that as a whole, African Americans who won and lost races in the General election used racially explicit language. Although the use of this language was found to be used at a higher case occurrence by the African American winners of the General election as a whole, when looked at in terms of respective office, this same result does not hold. Those who lost the Gubernatorial and Senate races were found to have used racial rhetoric at a higher rate proportionately, while those who won their House races, were found to have used racial rhetoric more, though not at a significant difference.

The results show that at some point in time, all candidates, White or Black, winners and losers, Republicans and Democrats have engaged in some type of racial language. What these results reveal is that racially explicit rhetoric appears to be part of the campaign environment for both Whites and Blacks. These results indicate that it is possible that the political landscape has

changed and the racial rhetoric is no longer faux pas in general, but can only be used after credibility is achieved. Because most of the African American candidates were incumbents and pieces of campaign communication from incumbents outweighed pieces of communication from non-incumbents, it is not unreasonable to operate on the premise that they have already built credibility through previous elections. This also makes it possible to operate on the assumption that it is candidate credibility that neutralizes the affect of racial rhetoric in the campaign environment allowing it to be used without punishment.

Incumbents vs. Non-incumbents

Table 3.19 investigates the differences in rhetoric between incumbents and non-incumbents. When it comes to amount of communication, it is clear that incumbents as a whole have more pieces of campaign communication than non-incumbents. Based on case occurrence and proportionate mentions, there are differences in mentions of issues. The issues that distinguish incumbents from non-incumbents are housing, veterans, transportation, education, Darfur, healthcare, and crime. All of these issues were mentioned more by the incumbents. Issues that do not distinguish incumbents from non-incumbents are same-sex marriage, the economy, seniors, immigration, and the environment. In regard to use of racial rhetoric, though not statistically significant, case occurrence and proportional mentions show that incumbents use racial rhetoric more than non-incumbents. In terms of proportional mentions, incumbents use racial rhetoric twice as more as non-incumbents. Though not a statistical difference, these results demonstrate a level of comfort with incumbents when it comes to using racial rhetoric.

Table 3.19 African American Democrats: Incumbents vs. Challengers

	Incumbents	Challengers	Chi2	P (2-tails)
HOUSING	92	13	42.591	0
VETERANS	96	18	36.052	0
TRANSPORTATION	88	15	34.33	0
EDUCATION	116	43	14.806	0.001
DARFUR	22	-	13.965	0.001
HEALTH_CARE	118	46	12.823	0.002
CRIME	83	28	10.628	0.005
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	11	3	1.527	0.466
ECON	138	76	0.745	0.689
SENIORS	53	27	0.495	0.781
IMMIGRATION	12	9	0.335	0.846
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**48**	**26**	**0.146**	**0.93**
ENVIRONMENT	32	19	0.002	0.999
Total N=292	N=184	N=108		

Table 3.20: African American Democrats: Incumbents vs. Challengers

	Incumbents	Challengers	Chi2	P (2-tails)
HOUSING	.31	.04	42.591	0
VETERANS	.32	.06	36.052	0
TRANSPORTATION	.30	.05	34.33	0
EDUCATION	.39	.14	14.806	0.001
DARFUR	.07	-	13.965	0.001
HEALTH_CARE	.40	.15	12.823	0.002
CRIME	.28	.09	10.628	0.005
SAME-SEX_MARRIAGE	.03	.01	1.527	0.466
ECON	.47	.26	0.745	0.689
SENIORS	.18	.09	0.495	0.781
IMMIGRATION	.04	.03	0.335	0.846
RACIAL - EXPLICIT	**.16**	**.08**	**0.146**	**0.93**
ENVIRONMENT	.11	.06	0.002	0.999
Total N=292	N=184	N=108		

Racial Word Use

The final analysis of this chapter looks specifically at the racial-explicit category and the words contained within the category in order to investigate which words were used more by African American Democrats in the 2010 General election. Table 3.21 reveals which words in the racial dictionary are used more by winners and losers. A majority of the words in the dictionary were used more by the winners of the General election; however, there were some words used more by the losers of the election. Words and phrases used more by the losers were Hitler, and my community. What these results reveal is that even though most candidates use racial rhetoric, there may still be some terms that are off-limits and will induce electoral punishment.

Table 3.21: African American Racial Word Usage

	Losers	Winners	Chi2	P (2-tails)
HITLER	5	-	12.537	0.002
NAACP	-	7	2.911	0.233
ETHNIC	-	7	2.911	0.233
RACIAL	-	6	2.486	0.289
MY_COMMUNITY	2	1	2.109	0.348
PROFILING	-	4	1.646	0.439
AFRICAN_AMERICAN	4	18	1.323	0.516
JESSE_JACKSON	-	3	1.23	0.541
SEGREGATION	-	3	1.23	0.541
MINORITY	4	17	1.063	0.588
RACIST	-	2	0.817	0.665
NEGRO	-	1	0.407	0.816
CONFEDERAT*	-	1	0.407	0.816
AFFIRMATIVE_ACTION	-	1	0.407	0.816
SLAVERY	-	1	0.407	0.816
BLACK	5	16	0.282	0.869
MINORITIES	2	6	0.06	0.971
Total N=292	N=85	N=207		

Table 3.22: African American Racial Word Usage (Proportionate Mentions)

	Losers	Winners	Chi2	P (2-tails)
HITLER	0.05		12.537	0.002
NAACP		0.03	2.911	0.233
ETHNIC		0.03	2.911	0.233
RACIAL		0.02	2.486	0.289
MY_COMMUNITY	0.02	0.004	2.109	0.348
PROFILING		0.019	1.646	0.439
AFRICAN_AMERICAN	0.04	0.08	1.323	0.516
JESSE_JACKSON		0.01	1.23	0.541
SEGREGATION		0.01	1.23	0.541
MINORITY	0.04	0.08	1.063	0.588
RACIST		0.009	0.817	0.665
NEGRO		0.004	0.407	0.816
CONFEDERAT*		0.004	0.407	0.816
AFFIRMATIVE_ACTION		0.004	0.407	0.816
SLAVERY		0.004	0.407	0.816
BLACK[24]	0.05	0.07	0.282	0.869
MINORITIES	0.02	0.02	0.06	0.971
Total N=292	N=85	N=207		

Conclusion

These findings confirm my hypotheses: there is a specific language that is consistently found in the speeches of successful African American elected officials and the language is unique to winners and losers running for the same office. Although my theory of winning candidates avoiding racially explicit rhetoric has not been borne out completely, nonetheless, there is consistency found in the language of these politicians. In the above analyses, I have

[24] In the dictionary, the word "Black" was not looked for by itself, it was looked for in conjunction with the words Caucus, Disenfranchise, Community(ies), Discrimination, Family(ies), Latino, Panther, Student, and Youth.

speculated as to why the findings indicate that both winners and losers use racial rhetoric with winners using it as a higher rate. These findings, I believe, contribute to the understanding of candidate credibility and the incumbency advantage. These findings do not nullify my theory, but rather narrowly confine it to the new crop of African American politicians who will be seeking electoral success from majority White constituencies. These findings show demonstrate the possibility that racial rhetoric should be more of a concern for non-incumbents rather than incumbents.

The next chapter investigates my second hypothesis and seeks to find if racial rhetoric can shape voter perceptions of a candidate. In this chapter, experiments will help to attain new levels of understanding when it comes to racial rhetoric and if the use of racial rhetoric is something that voters punish new candidates for.

4. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

Does campaign rhetoric help to influence a politician's success? Is rhetoric successful in shaping constituent perceptions of African American politicians? This analysis will answer both of these questions. This chapter explores the second hypothesis of this research: The language used by African American politicians is effective in shaping perceptions and helps African American politicians achieve electoral success.

Campaigns are a main point – perhaps the main point – of contact between officials and the populace over matters of public policy (Riker 1996). Because campaigns are so important and serve as such a vital source of communication between candidates and voters, how a candidate speaks plays a crucial role in his or her success. Riker (1990) maintains that if candidates use a particular technique frequently, we can infer that that this technique is believed to be persuasive. Following Riker's inference, one can see that if successful African American politicians are found to consistently use deracialized rhetoric, then this technique is one that has been found to be persuasive and its sustained use merely reflects the strategic decisions by African American candidates on how best to communicate with voters (Jerit 2004).

Most campaign communication is designed with the goal of building positive images of the candidates, regardless of the ostensible subject (Stuckey and Antczak 1995). One reason that African-American candidates will shy away from racialized speech would be to avoid eliciting negative emotions from their audiences. Jerit (2004) acknowledges that even when citizens are not conscious of them, the impact of emotional memories – especially those relating to fear – can be long-lasting. Candidates knowing the types of appeals that elicit more support will be sure to

repeat those appeals during the campaign. Based on my theory, African-American candidates know that deracialized speech is favored by the White majority, so in order to build support and credibility, they will engage in deracialized rhetoric during their campaigns for office.

Campaign Appeals

Citizens are called upon to make politically relevant decisions quite often. Whether it is deciding which candidate(s) to represent them or which policies to advocate for, citizens have to make decisions in a world in which they do not have complete information. In the absence of complete information, citizens rely on heuristics much of which are feelings derived from experiences (Marcus 2003). Because citizens use heuristics to engage in decision-making, it makes it possible for emotions or feelings to be used as alternatives to thought in forms of decision-making. Because the primary goal of a candidate is to win and building a credible image during the campaign is a crucial contributor to winning, a candidate can rise or fall depending on his or her campaign appeals and the way in which those appeals are framed. Those who provide information have a choice on how they will disseminate that information and how they will construct particular images and define issues and controversies. The choice in how issues are framed is a powerful tool for information providers, and can in turn effect how individuals perceive and evaluate particular events and people.

Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley (1997) maintain that media frames influence opinions by stressing specific values, facts, or other considerations which gives them greater relevance to the issue than they would appear to have under an alternative frame. By positioning specific values, facts, or other important considerations, information providers can evoke specific responses from

individuals who are charged with making important decisions. Tversky and Khaneman (1981) have proven that citizens avoid risk. When there is a decision problem and one must choose among a set of options while considering the possible outcomes or consequences and the probabilities that relate to these choices, the decision is usually what will assume the least amount of risk (Tversky and Kahneman 1981). Knowing that citizens are risk averse, helps those who frame information, because they know that framing information in a particular way can evoke a specific response. When relating framing and risk avoidance to African American politicians, one can see how these politicians would be conscious of positioning certain values or issues above others, particularly issues that may evoke racial animosity thus translating into losing potential votes from the White majority.

Campaigns speak to the underlying emotions of citizens. Emotional experiences can occur during public events and public events help to shape the public mood which has an effect on individual capacities for political information processing. Because most citizens engage in decision-making without complete knowledge or information, they rely on emotions such as the public mood shaped by public events. In politics, salient issues gain more attention from the public. Though some may say that a candidate's race is not a salient issue, it is however, a salient characteristic that cannot be ignored. Because we do not live in a color-blind society, it is quite possible that citizens already form judgments around the race of a candidate, therefore pushing the candidate to be even more non-racial in their rhetoric. African Americans campaigning with a White majority must cultivate their campaign style, much like Fenno describes the homestyles of members of Congress.

Affect: An important factor in Vote Choice

In the absence of complete information, citizens rely on heuristics, one of which can be their emotions. Many question the role of emotion in politics and government. Some argue that emotion makes reason incapable or undermines it, while others maintain that emotion is an aid that helps citizens make judgments about candidates and policy issues (Rahn 2000). Whichever side you identify with, it bolsters the inescapable fact that emotion affects how government and politics work and how political actors interact with citizens. Emotions help citizens make judgments.

Historically, emotion has been considered separate from reason, but recent research has explored what effect emotion has on decision-making. Emotional experiences can occur during public events and public events help to shape the public mood which has an effect on individual capacities for political information processing. When citizens make use of their emotions, those emotions are attached to significant features of experience in that once those emotions are formed; they control one's reactions and dispositions toward persons, events, or objects (Marcus 2003). Citizens attach emotion to significant experiences and once these emotions are formed, they lend itself to the utilization of emotion or feeling based heuristics.

Emotions attribute to the use of heuristics. In the valence model/approach to emotion, all negative emotions should be associated with increased vigilance and avoidance of danger (Huddy, Feldman, & Cassese 2007). This model/approach most commonly relates to the negative emotions of anger and anxiety. This research shows that emotions are not only used to make judgments, but that the type of emotions that are elicited from citizens can determine how

they will perceive risk. If particular emotions are able to affect how risks are perceived, then emotion is a critical factor in politics and government and the decision-making of citizens. Because citizens use heuristics, the application of emotion to politics shows that when trying to appeal to citizens, striking chords of emotion are often more effective than appealing only to one's reason. Because appealing to emotions can be more effective, African American candidates must be careful not to appeal to negative emotions as this can be effective in shaping negative perceptions of them, which can cause them to lose votes.

We live in a world in which most citizens make decisions without the benefit of complete information. In order to aid in the decision-making process, citizens use emotions to compensate for the lack of information. Though the ideal would be for everyone to obtain complete information, this ideal is not accomplished by most citizens, so emotions step in to fill the gap and aid citizens in making decisions. When the importance of emotions is considered, one can see how rhetoric can be effective in shaping the emotions of citizens, which can translate into votes.

Experimental Design and Methodology

The previous chapter demonstrated through text analysis that my first hypothesis is confirmed: There is a specific language that is consistently found in the speeches of successful African American politicians. To further develop this research, this chapter demonstrates and confirms my second hypothesis: The language used by politicians is effective in shaping voter perceptions and in helping African American politicians achieve success. This hypothesis was confirmed through the use of experiments. According to Scheufele (2000), experimental

research has shown that how a decision-making situation is framed will affect what people believe will be the outcome of selecting one option over the other. My experiment conducted with 226 participants reinforces his argument.

This experiment was conducted with three different undergraduate classes with different instructors. These on-line experiments were done with students enrolled in an Introduction to American Government course[25]. Because this course is mandated by the state of Georgia, it allowed me my best option of a diverse student sample. The participants in this experiment included 145 women and 81 men. The majority of participants were under the age of 25 (195), but included 26-30 year olds (10), 31-45 year olds (17), and 2 participants who were over the age of 45. Much like the text analysis helped me to achieve external validity; the experiments helped me to achieve internal validity. Internal validity is assumed because of randomization as well as differentiation in results. In addition, it can be inferred that the independent variables (Candidate Race and Style of Rhetoric) and dependent variables (Likelihood of Vote, Feelings, and Trust) are causally related. This experiment contributes to the larger argument of rhetoric and its effect on voter's perceptions.

During the experiment, participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions and asked to read a brief campaign advertisement given by a fictional candidate[26]. After reading the advertisement, participants were asked standard demographic questions and questions about

[25] There may be some external validity issues using undergraduate students, yet a great number of previous experimental designs have used undergraduates as subjects. This study seeks to explore the effect of rhetoric on voter perceptions and electoral success, not classroom learned information. Therefore, there is a negligible intended effect of course information on the responses of the participants.

[26] The Institutional Review Board at Georgia State University approved this experiment and no identifying information was collected from the participants that could connect them to their responses.

how likely they were to vote for the candidate, a thermometer rating of the candidate, and candidate affect, specifically whether or not they can trust the candidate[27]. In addition, participants were asked symbolic racism questions based on the 2000 Symbolic Racism scale provided by Henry and Sears (2000). This experiment allowed me to test my hypothesis by investigating to see if the White participants like the candidate more after reading the post-racial speech. The following are the four conditions that participants were randomly assigned to:

Condition 1: White Post Racial

> Participants were asked to read a campaign message in which the candidate giving that message was White and the style of the message was post racial[28].

Condition 2: Black Post Racial

> Participants were asked to read a campaign message in which the candidate giving that message was African American and the style of the message was post racial.

Condition 3: White Racial

> Participants were asked to read a campaign message in which the candidate giving that message was White and the style of the message was racial.

Condition 4: Black Racial

> Participants were asked to read a campaign message in which the candidate giving that message was African American and the style of the message was racial.

[27] See Appendix for experiment stimuli and exact question wording.

[28] A picture of the candidate is affixed at the top of each condition.

Type of Message	Race of Candiate: Black	Race of Candiate: White
Racial	Black Racial	White Racial
Post Racial	Black Post Racial	White Post Racial

Figure 4.1 Experiment Conditions

In conditions one and two, participants received the same non racial campaign message that included a brief introduction of the candidate, his background, and issues[29] that he would fight for if given a chance to be their U.S. Representative, from either a White or African American candidate. In conditions three and four participants received the same racial campaign message that included the same brief introduction and background given by either a White or African American candidate. However, in this condition, the candidates specifically referenced the "Black community" that would benefit most from improving the economy[30]. After reading

[29] The issues were jobs and the economy.

[30] As Mendelberg (2001, 134) acknowledges, crafting an appeal to White voters requires great care and subtlety as racial language could denote that special favors should be granted to that community. Although research exists on implicit racial messages, most notably from Mendelberg (2001), a valid critique of her research lies in the fact that it would be hard to measure implicit racial language as according to Mendelberg, implicit messages have no explicit verbal reference to race. This creates measurement issues as it relates to this research, thus this experiment deals specifically with an explicit racial message.

the assigned campaign message by the assigned candidate, participants asked to indicate how likely they were to vote for that candidate, their feelings about the candidate using a thermometer rating in which they could rate the candidate on a scale of 1-100 with higher scores indicating "warmer" feelings toward the candidate, and how much of the time they thought they could trust the candidate to do what is "right"[31].

Using difference or means tests and ordered logit regressions, I tested whether or not the African American or White candidate delivering either the non-racial or racial message were more likely to be voted for and more likely to be trusted. By using an experiment and random assignment of participants into the four conditions, all other variables (including characteristics such as partisanship) are controlled. Since each participant has the same chance of being in each group, it is not necessary to control for particular characteristics of the participants. The results demonstrated differences in preferences among the race of the respondents and the importance of rhetoric as opposed to race.

Summary Statistics

The following figures demonstrate the basic demographic characteristics of the participants in the experiment. Figure 4.2 shows the ethnicity, which mostly consisted of African American and White respondents respectively. Figure 4.3 shows the gender breakdown of the participants and figure 4.4 shows how many participants were assigned to each condition. Though the goal with random assignment is to have equal distribution among all conditions, figure 4.4 shows that at a minimum each condition had at least 53 participants.

[31] The wording for these questions was taken from the National Election Study

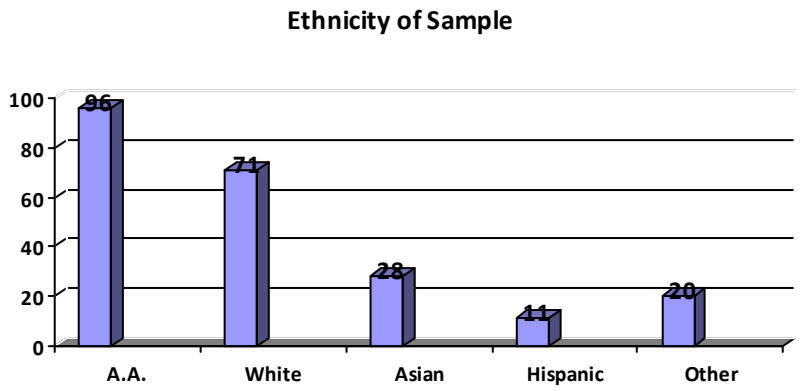

Figure 4.2 Ethnicity of Sample

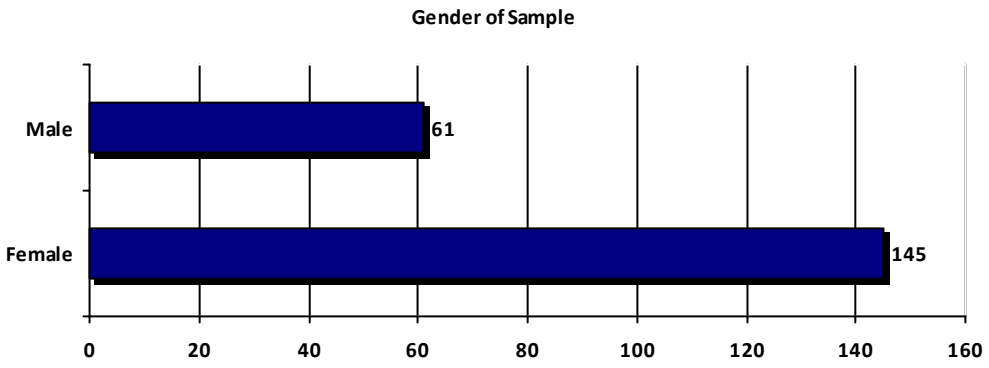

Figure 4.3 Gender of Sample

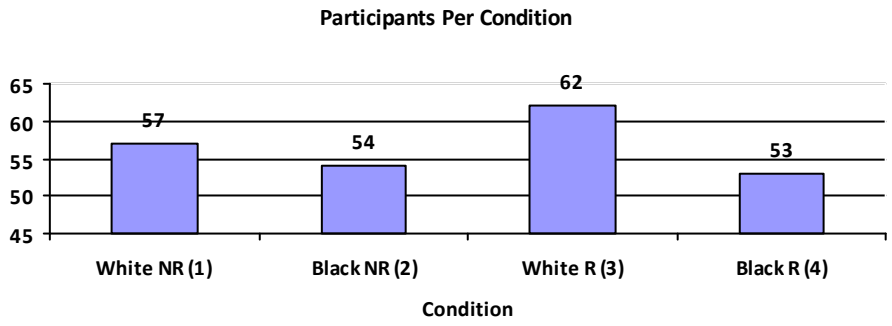

Figure 4.4 Distribution of Participants Per Condition

Discussion and Findings

Likelihood of Voting for the Candidate

The first analysis of this chapter examines candidate race and rhetoric and the effect on vote choice. Results for difference of means tests show that among all respondents, Condition 2, the Black non-racial candidate, was preferred more and rated as more likely to be voted for. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 break down the mean statistics for each condition among all respondents and then among the White respondents only. Findings demonstrate that for all respondents and the White respondents, the highest rated candidate in terms of likely vote was not just the non-racial candidate, but specifically the Black non-racial candidate. On a scale of one to five with one representing “not at all likely” and five representing “very likely”, the Black non-racial candidate’s mean was 2.9 among all respondents and 2.79 among just the White respondents. When it comes to the candidate who received the lowest rating in terms of likelihood of voting for that particular candidate, the findings demonstrate that all the respondents and the White

respondents rated the Black Racial candidate the least with 2.5 and 2.2 respectively with the White respondents having a lower score.

These findings demonstrate that White respondents actually "punished" Black candidates who use racial rhetoric more than the White candidate who uses racial rhetoric. The combination of the candidate's race and rhetoric decreases perceptions of the candidate, specifically the probability of their vote share. With the findings demonstrating the notion of "punishment", one can further see how the optimal strategy for a Black candidate who needs votes from White constituents in order to win an election, uses non-racial rhetoric or rhetoric that does not separate him or her from the majority, but rather reinforces commonality and togetherness.

Table 4.1: Likely Vote - All Respondents

Condition	Likely Vote (All respondents)
White Non-Racial (1)	2.614
Black Non-Racial (2)	**2.981**
White Racial (3)	2.677
Black Racial (4)	2.509
Total	2.694

For the White respondents, the top two candidates who were more likely to receive their vote were the Black non-racial and White non-racial candidates respectively. These findings indicate that when it comes to White constituents, it is not always a matter of race, but of rhetoric that is most important.

Table 4.2: Likely Vote - White Respondents

Condition	Likely Vote (White Respondents)
White Non-Racial (1)	**2.666**
Black Non-Racial (2)	**2.791**
White Racial (3)	2.333
Black Racial (4)	2.25
Total	2.562

When investigating a comparison between all respondents and only Black respondents, the results differ. Among all respondents, as noted above, the candidate with the highest means in terms of likely vote choice was the Black non-racial candidate. This is similar when the Black respondents are separated from the rest of the respondents. Like all respondents combined, the Black respondents preferred the Black non-racial candidate the most and with a higher mean rating than all respondents. Black respondents gave the Black non-racial candidate a mean rating of 3.2 as opposed to 2.9 for all respondents combined. Unlike the rest of the respondents who preferred the Black non-racial, White non-racial, White racial, and Black racial candidates respectively, the Black candidates have a different preference.

Results demonstrate that when it comes to the Black respondents, the candidate that was preferred the least was the White non-racial candidate with a mean of 2.8. Based on these results, I can infer that the Black participants in this study identified most with the Black candidate and those candidates who took up racial issues within the Black community than the White non-

racial candidate. It appears that Black constituents, unlike White constituents are more in favor of candidates who narrowly define issues in terms of race. Unlike the White respondents who "punished" for racial rhetoric, Black respondents in effect reward for racial rhetoric, that reward being their likely vote. Of course, these preferences are after the Black non-racial candidate as interestingly, both the White respondents and Black respondents when separated are more likely to vote for this candidate. These results indicate a clear difference between the preference of White respondents and Black respondents. Whereas Black respondents are less receptive to racial rhetoric, Black respondents are more accepting and more likely to vote for a candidate, Black or White that engages in racial rhetoric than one who engages in non-racial rhetoric.

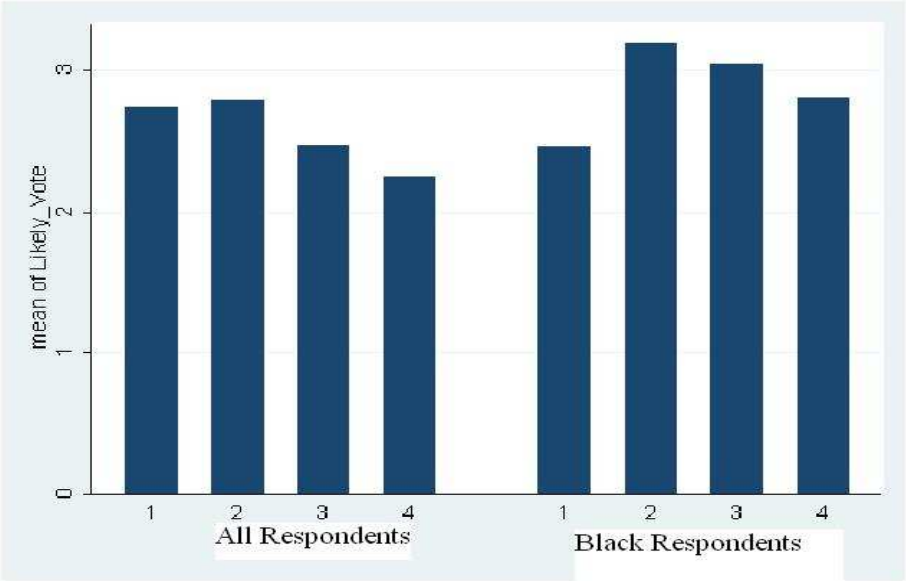

Figure 4.5: Likely Vote – Black Respondents

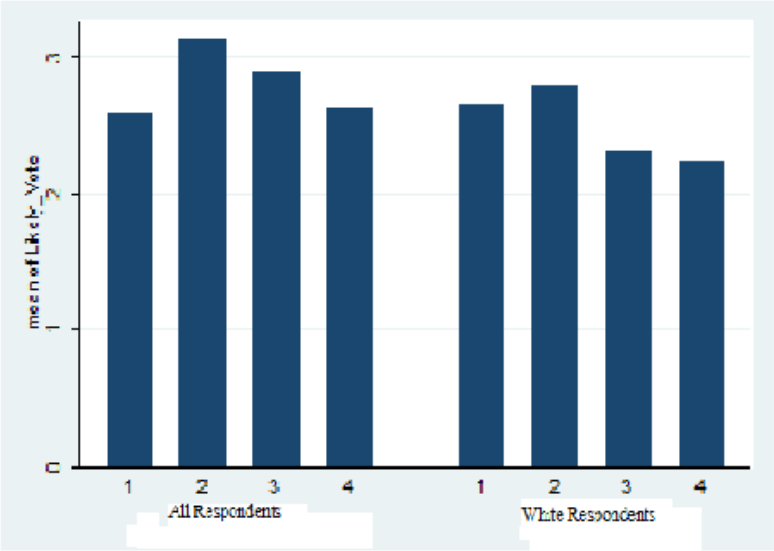

Figure 4.6: Likely Vote – White Respondents

The previous results are derived from difference of means tests. However, in addition to the results of all respondents preferring the Black non-racial candidate being demonstrated through means testing, it is also demonstrated through statistical analysis, specifically ordered logit regression.

The results for the ordered logit regression further demonstrate the significance of non-racial rhetoric and its effect on the likely success of an African American candidate needing votes from White constituents. Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 below demonstrate that in terms of how likely the participant is to vote for the candidate that they read about, the Black non-racial condition is both positive and statistically significant. In fact, it is the only condition that is

statistically significantly different from the Black racial omitted category[32]. This ordered logit model confirms what was found in the difference of means test: Among all respondents, the candidate that respondents were most likely to vote for was the Black non-racial candidate. These statistically significant results express the benefit of engaging in non-racial rhetoric, specifically when it comes to gaining possible votes. This is an important factor and important finding as candidates seeking to gain electoral office are reliant on voters. One way to obtain more votes is by engaging in non-racial unifying rhetoric while campaigning.

Table 4.3: Ordered Logit Regression - All Respondents

Likely Vote	Coefficient	Standard Error	z	P>z
Black non-racial	**.841**	**.358**	**2.34**	**.019**
White non-racial	.196	.342	.57	.566
White Racial	.337	.337	1.00	.317
N=226				
LR chi^2 = 6.08				

[32] For this model, the reference category is the Black Racial condition.

Table 4.4: Ordered Logit Regression - White Respondents

Likely Vote	Coefficient	Standard Error	z	P>z
Black non-racial	.768	.589	1.30	.192
White non-racial	.587	.687	.85	.393
White Racial	.061	.569	.11	.914
N=76				
LR chi^2 = 2.61				

Table 4.5: Ordered Logit Regression - Black Respondents

Likely Vote	Coefficient	Standard Error	z	P>z
Black non-racial	.830	.539	1.54	.124
White non-racial	-.614	.525	-1.17	.242
White Racial	.421	.529	.80	.426
N=98				
LR chi^2 = 8.18				

Feeling Thermometer

Results for the feeling thermometer demonstrate that candidates who engage in non-racial rhetoric are rated more favorably by respondents. Participants were asked to rate the candidate with a feeling thermometer from 0-100 with favorability increasing with the numbers[33]. For the

[33] The specific question was: "I'd also like to get your feelings about this candidate. Please rate him with what we call a feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degress-100 degrees mean that you feel favorably towards the candidate; ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorably towards the candidate and that you don't care too much for him. If you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the candidate you would rate them at 50 degrees."

White non-racial candidate the range was from 1-88 with the average being 53.4 among all respondents. For the Black non-racial candidate, the range was from 10-95 with the average being 60.8. For the White racial candidate the range was from 0-80 with the average being 51.6 among all respondents. And for the Black racial candidate, the range was from 0-100 with the average being 50.5 among all respondents. Just like all respondents were more likely to vote for the Black non-racial candidate more than the other candidates, results of the feeling thermometer demonstrate that the Black non-racial candidate had the higher average on the feeling thermometer than all the other candidates. While the average for the other candidates hovered mostly around the neutral range, the average for the Black racial candidate was 60.8. The participants on average had more feelings of warmth for the Black non-racial candidate followed by the White non-racial, White racial, and Black racial, respectively. These results demonstrate further that the combination of being a Black candidate, who also engages in racial language, not only turns away voters, but also affects their feelings toward that particular candidate as well. These findings comport with my theory that non-inclusive rhetoric, or rhetoric that separates as opposed to reinforcing commonality can have a negative backlash on African American candidates, particularly among White voters.

The previous results are derived from the average feeling thermometers for the candidate in each of the four conditions. However, in addition to the results of all respondents rating the Black non-racial candidate higher on the feeling thermometer, it is also demonstrated through statistical analysis. The results for the regression further demonstrate the significance of non-racial rhetoric and its effect on the voter perception of candidates. Tables 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8 demonstrate that in terms of the feeling thermometer regressed on condition; the Black non-

racial condition is both positive and statistically significant. In fact, it is the only condition that is statistically significant compared to the White non-racial and White racial category. This model confirms what was found by simply looking at the average feeling thermometer rating for each candidate: Among all respondents, the candidate that respondents were likely to give higher ratings on the feeling thermometer was the Black non-racial candidate. The regression shows that the Black non-racial candidate is rated at least 9.0 points higher than any other candidate in the other conditions among all respondents.

When the Black and White respondents are separated, there is a noticeable difference in the feelings of these respondents to the candidates in the different conditions. Interestingly, the results of the regression shows that the White respondents not only rate the Black non-racial candidate higher in terms of the feeling thermometer, but their rating is higher than all respondents combined and even that of the Black respondents. Unlike all respondents whose coefficient was 9.0, the coefficient for the White respondents was 13.9. Like all respondents the Black non-racial condition is the only statistically significant condition for this question. The results for only the Black respondents reveal that none of the conditions are statistically significant. Even though the model reveals that the Black non-racial candidate is rated highest and the White non-racial candidate is rated the lowest, none of the conditions reached the level of statistical significance. These results show that for Black respondents, neither racial rhetoric nor the race of the candidate has an effect of their feelings toward the candidate. Overall, these results express the benefit of engaging in non-racial rhetoric, specifically when it comes to shaping voter perceptions. This is an important factor and important finding as candidates seeking to gain electoral office are reliant on voters and previous research has shown that voters

in many instances rely on their feelings to help them arrive at a vote choice. Using non-racial rhetoric increases the warmth of feelings toward a candidate, which can translate into votes and ultimately electoral success.

Table 4.6: Feeling Thermometer - All Respondents

Feelings	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>t
Black Non-Racial	**9.087**	**3.841**	**2.37**	**.019**
White Non-Racial	1.681	3.790	.44	.658
White Racial	-.605	3.716	-.16	.871
Constant	51.283	2.728	18.79	.000
N = 226				
R^2 = .036				

Table 4.7: Feeling Thermometer - White Respondents

Feelings	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>t
Black Non-Racial	**13.604**	**6.004**	**2.27**	**.026**
White Non-Racial	6.520	7.105	.92	.362
White Racial	8.062	6.004	1.34	.184
Constant	44.062	4.651	9.47	.000
N=76				
R^2 = .067				

Table 4.8: Feeling Thermometer - Black Respondents

Feelings	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>t
Black Non-Racial	9.4	5.589	1.68	.096
White Non-Racial	-5.858	5.535	-1.06	.293
White Racial	-5.410	5.777	-0.94	.351
Constant	54.32	3.952	13.74	.000
N= 98				
R^2 = .092				

Perceived Trust

Both of the previous models on likely vote and the feeling thermometer have demonstrated that non-racial rhetoric not only helps to achieve more votes, but also influences voter affect. The next model demonstrates whether or not the type of rhetoric used is effective in shaping voter perceptions, specifically in terms of trust. Not only were participants asked how likely they were to vote for the candidate in the condition they were assigned to, and asked to rate their feelings about that same candidate, they were also asked to say how much of the time they could trust the candidate[34].

Participants were asked if they could trust the candidate “Just about always”, “Most of the time”, “Only some of the time”, “Almost never”. Much like the results of the previous two

[34] The specific question asked: “How much of the time do you think you can trust Owen Burrows to do what is right?”

questions pointed towards favorability of the Black non-racial candidate, the results of this question are similar. The candidate who all respondents seemed to indicate that they could trust "most of the time" was the Black non-racial candidate with 55.9% of respondents in that condition indicating trusting him most of the time. When that number is combined with those who can trust him just about always, that number increases to 57.4%. More than half of the respondents assigned to the Black non-racial condition think that they can trust him to do what is "right". For the other three conditions, a majority of the respondents in each group thought that they could only trust their candidate "some of the time". When it came to distrust of the candidate, the candidate with the highest rating of respondents indicating that they could trust him "almost never" was the White non-racial candidate, with a rating of 13.8%. However, when the levels of distrust are combined ("only some of the time" and "almost never") the results of table 4.10 reveal that the White racial candidate is the most distrusted candidate of the four conditions with 74.3% of respondents in that condition distrusting this candidate.

Table 4.9: Candidate Trust - All Respondents

	White Non-Racial	Black Non-Racial	White Racial	Black Racial
Just About Always	0	1.5%	0	6.5%
Most of the Time	41.4%	**55.9%**	25.8%	33.9%
Only some of the time	**44.8%**	39.7%	**68.2%**	**46.8%**
Almost Never	13.8%	2.9%	6.1%	12.9%

In addition to the results of a higher percentage of respondents trusting the Black non-racial candidate more to do what is “right”, statistical analysis demonstrates this as well. The regression in tables 4.10, 4.12, and 4.12 below reveal that when trust is regressed on the different conditions, the Black non-racial candidate is again, the only condition that is statistically significant, pointing to higher levels of trust. The statistical model confirms what the raw percentages show: Among all respondents, the candidate that respondents are more likely to trust is the black-nonracial candidate. When the Black and White respondents are separated, the results differ. The results for the White respondents reveal that none of the conditions reach the point of statistical significance. Though none of the conditions are significant the results show that the White respondents are more likely to trust the Black non-racial candidate.

When looking at the Black respondents, the results demonstrate that unlike all respondents and the White respondents, two conditions are statistically significant and related to trust. For Black respondents, both the Black non-racial and Black racial conditions were significant. This finding indicates that for Black voters, the race of the candidate, specifically when the candidate is of the same race as them, yields higher levels of trust. These higher levels of trust carry implications for warmer feelings and likelihood of voting for a particular candidate. For the Black respondents, it came down to race, not rhetoric. The results for trust taken as a whole reveal that rhetoric and in the case of the Black respondents, race, does have an effect on perceived trust in a candidate.

Table 4.10: Trust - All Respondents[35]

Trust	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>t
Black Non-Racial	**-.310**	**.125**	**-2.47**	**.014**
White Racial	.037	.121	.31	.759
Black Racial	-.114	.126	-.90	.368
Constant	2.736	.087	31.17	.000
N = 226				
R^2 = .040				

Table 4.11: Trust - White Respondents

Trust	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>t
Black Non-Racial	-.25	.221	-1.13	.262
White Racial	-.041	.221	-.19	.851
Black Racial	.187	.238	.079	.435
Constant	2.75	.180	15.24	.000
N = 76				
R^2 = .063				

[35] Due to reverse coding, negative coefficients on all trust models indicate a willingness to trust and positive coefficients indicate levels of distrust.

Table 4.12: Trust - Black Respondents

Trust	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P>t
Black Non-Racial	**-.561**	**.191**	**-2.93**	**.004**
White Racial	-.188	.197	-.95	.342
Black Racial	**-.681**	**.191**	**-3.56**	**.001**
Constant	2.961	.133	22.11	.000
N= 98				
R^2 = .147				

Conclusions

These findings confirm my second hypothesis and contribute to the literature by demonstrating that the language African American politicians use during their campaigns is effective in shaping the perceptions of voters and helps them to achieve electoral success. Specifically it demonstrates that language is effective in shaping voter's feelings toward the candidate and the voter's perception of trust of the candidate. Overall, these findings confirm that deracialized rhetoric is less threatening and contributes to the success of African American candidates in majority White districts. This contributes to our understanding of candidate perception among voters and to the understanding of the campaign environment. Based on these findings, one can understand why the best campaign for an African American candidate, particularly a non-incumbent, is to run is that of a deracialized campaign in which the rhetoric that is used is non-racial. By using rhetoric that does not explicitly emphasize separateness, but implies a notion of togetherness, African American politicians can more easily influence voter

perception and increase their chances of receiving votes from the White majority. This chapter demonstrates why candidates, specifically African American candidates should be careful to craft their campaign rhetoric in a deracialized manner.

The next chapter looks at the strategic campaign environment from the perspective of successful African American politicians. Communication is more than just written text. The next chapter will go into the successful politicians understanding of what it takes to have a successful campaign and how they go about promoting particular issues for particular constituencies.

5. ETHNOGRAPHIC QUALTITATIVE INTERVIEWS

The final section of this research uses a qualitative methodology, specifically ethnographic interviews to investigate just how much rhetoric matters to successful politicians. The ethnographical interviews contribute to this research because communication comes in many forms and it is more than just written text. In an effort to get to the motivations behind different forms of rhetoric and to investigate the rhetorical strategies used by African American politicians, I interviewed fourteen African American state legislators from the Georgia General Assembly[36]. These hour long semi-structured interviews consisted of open-ended questions about the candidate's political history, style of speech, intended audiences, and goals[37].

This analysis engages successful African American elected officials and allows me to conduct more in-depth research into the phenomena of campaign rhetoric and its effect on electoral success. This type of research will allow me to evaluate whether the make-up of an electoral district has an effect on the type of issues that are discussed by politicians and whether or not the make-up of the district has an effect on the consistency of messages given by a candidate[38]. These ethnographical interviews will not only look at the theoretical connections between my variables, rhetoric and electoral success, it will actually view how these variables play themselves out in the real world (Bayard de Valo and Schatz 2004).

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[36] The Georgia General Assembly is one of the largest state legislatures in the nation and consists of two chambers: The House of Representatives and the Senate.

[37] Exact questions can be found in the appendix.

[38] Make-up of district is in terms of constituency and whether or not the constituency of the district is Majority Black, Majority White, or evenly-split.

Data and Summary Statistics

There are some scholars who criticize qualitative research for its inability to be applied to a more complete or overarching picture. I attempt to minimize these criticisms by combining interviews with other methodologies (text analysis and experiments) to provide insight into the effects of campaign rhetoric on African American electoral success. While experimental designs offer greater internal validity for learning what the effects of a particular treatment are, ethnographic methods offer greater insights into why the effects are produced (Sherman and Strang 2004). Insider perspectives are important for many reasons including providing an agent-centered examination of my research questions, helping to explain behavior outcomes, and helping outsiders to understand what it means to be part of a particular group or culture (Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004).These interviews are providing more insight to my research and provide first-hand knowledge and strategies into the nature of the campaign environment for African American elected officials.

Though much of the literature in this research comes from that of campaigns, the population in this study concerns those successful African American politicians who have won their campaigns. I am focusing on those who have been successful, because we often hear of the perpetual campaign. Meaning that even though a candidate may have one an office, they are aware that the rhetoric that they use while in office can help or hinder them when it comes time for reelection. Thus, the permanent campaign remains in effect[39].

[39] Members of the Georgia General Assembly face election every two years on even years (2010, 2012, 2014, etc.) Per the state Constitution, there are no term limits for members of the legislature (http://www.legis.ga.gov/en-US/default.aspx).

I collected data through interviews with fourteen African American state legislators in the Georgia General Assembly in the Spring of 2011. African American state legislators from the Georgia General Assembly are used in this study because these politicians were easily accessible and the Georgia General Assembly is one of the largest state legislatures in the nation with a total of 236 members (http://www.legis.ga.gov/en-US/default.aspx)[40]. Years of service for my participants in the General assembly range from less than one year to eighteen years.

Semi-structured interviews were the best method to use for this portion of the research because they can provide detail, depth, and an insider's perspective while at the same time allowing hypothesis testing and quantitative analysis of interview statistics if so desired (Leech 2002). This style is often used when interviewing elites, which were the population of interest for this research and in particular the ethnographic interviews. Thirteen interviews were conducted in person at the State Capitol, mostly in the legislator's office, with two conducted in the hallway of the Congressional chambers[41]. Though an hour was requested by me, the average interview lasted about 25 minutes. Fifty-three state legislators were recruited via email and in person yielding a response rate of 26%[42]. Of the fourteen state legislators interviewed, two were from the State Senate, with the remaining twelve coming from the House[43]. The two Senators were women; for the Representatives, four were women and eight were men. Of fourteen

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[40] The State Capitol where the General Assembly meets is less than a mile from Georgia State University in the heart of Downtown Atlanta.

[41] One interview was requested to be completed by hand. I gave the legislator a typed copy of the questions and he returned them to me the next day.

[42] Script of email can be found in the appendix.

[43] There are a total of 56 State Senators, 13 are African American; There are a total of 180 members of the House or Representatives, 41 are African American

Georgia state legislators, six represented a district of less than 55% African American voting age population (VAP), and 8 represented a district with more than 55% African American VAP. One representative, was however elected from a district of only a 28% African American VAP, making him the only African American state legislator in my sample who was elected with a majority White constituency. When asked about plans for higher office, six legislators admitted to having plans for higher office, five said they had no plans, and the remaining four were ambiguous. All legislators came from the Democratic Party[44].

Table 5.1: Summary Statistics

	Mean	Standard Deviation
African American Population in District	57.5	11.9
Time in current position	7	4.9
Plans for higher office[45]	.85	.86
Gender[46]	.42	.51
N=14		

Findings and Results

The relationship between campaign rhetoric and African American electoral success frames this study. My research questions are: What accounts for the success of African

[44] Although a majority of the members in the Georgia General Assembly are members of the Republican party, all African American Georgia State legislators are elected from the Democratic party.

[45] Code: 0=No, 1=Yes, 2 Maybe

[46] Code: 0=Male, 1=Female

American elected officials and Is the post-racial rhetoric used by African American politicians beneficial to their success? My generalized hypothesis is that rhetoric matters and that there is a specific language that is consistently found in the communication of successful African American elected officials. These qualitative interviews will help me to answer these questions on a deeper level than the text analysis and the experiments.

The ethnographic style of interviews tries to enter the world of the respondent by appearing to know very little (Leech 2002). According to Wingfield (2009), the researcher's race and gender has the ability to shape interviews. As an African American woman, it is possible that I shaped my rapport with the interactions with interview respondents. Social desirability may compel respondents, particularly men to phrase responses that might sound harsh in ways that will not be offensive or problematic to the interviewer. However, one of the benefits of the interview method is that it allows respondents to clarify comments diplomatically while still giving honest answers (Wingfield 2009). Although my gender may have shaped my rapport, it is possible that shared racial status also facilitated a level of comfort, particularly as we discussed issues of post-racialism and the current and future state of black politics.

The state legislators who were interviewed were asked eighteen open-ended questions about their districts, years or service, key issues, campaign messages, and the state of Black politics in America. This chapter will focus on their responses to these questions. This rest of this chapter proceeds as follows: The results for the key issues will be discussed, followed by the results for their campaign messages, then the results for the current and future state of Black politics. Finally, this chapter will end with a brief Discussion and Conclusion.

Key Issues

In addition to the preliminary text analysis confirming support for my theory and hypotheses, the qualitative interviews conducted with Georgia State legislators also reveal that, African American candidates in majority Black districts and majority White districts use different forms of speech. The responses from the legislators reveal that there is some disparity among key issues and the type of district a legislator represents.

Each legislator was asked, "What are your key issues?[47]" Findings show that the top three issues for those who had an African American population in their district of 55% or less (slight majority districts) and those who had an African American population of 56% or more (solid majority districts) were different. For those five legislators who came from a slight majority African American district (55%or less), their top three issues were Education, Transportation, and the Economy/Jobs respectively. For those eight legislators who came from a solid African American district, their top three issues were Education, the Economy/Jobs, the Environment, and Transportation, respectively. Although, the one legislator who comes from a majority white district is considered an outlier in the sample, this legislator's key issues were Economic Development (employment, jobs, labor), Healthcare, and Veterans Affairs. A key difference between the legislator from the majority White district and the other legislators who have some type of African American majority is that of his key issues: there was no mention of

[47] According to Leech (2002) this questions represents what she terms a "grand tour" questions. These questions ask respondents to give a verbal tour of something they know well. The major benefit is that it gets respondents talking, but in a focused way.

Education. Education, particularly in the South has been a contentious racial issue[48]. However, in this case, what is observed is the African American candidate from a majority White district deciding not to make education one of his key issues. Another interesting observation is that in districts with a solid African American majority, and even though not in the top three issues, legislators also mentioned that they are concerned about the Environment and Tax Reform, neither of which were mentioned by those legislators with a slight African American majority nor from a majority White district. In terms of issues, there is disparity among legislators representing a majority White constituency and those representing a majority African American constituency.

Campaign Messages and Style

In addition to being asked about their key issues, each legislator was also asked about their campaign messages. Specifically, legislators were asked, "Do you have any specific phrases or slogans that you use consistently throughout the campaign?" and "Do these phrases or slogans change based on the audience?" The purpose of these questions is to identify if messages are consistent depending on the type of district a legislator represents. Based on the legislators' responses, there is a clear difference in consistency of messages based on the type of district a legislator comes from.

Previous research on post-racial politics shows that in order for an African American politician to depoliticize his or her race when dealing with a White majority, he or she must be

[48] Not only has the issue of education been a contentious racial issue in the South, but it has been a constantly debated issue in the state of Georgia. Having most legislators mention education as a top issue is not surprising due to the major changes that were on the legislative agenda for Georgia's HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally) program during the 2011 legislative session.

consistent in his or her messages and consistent in emphasizing togetherness and commonality as opposed to separateness. If a politician is found to have different messages based on different audiences, particularly in terms of race, it implies a notion of separateness that can have a negative backlash in terms of voting. Therefore, it is not surprising that the one legislator who represents a majority White district with only a 28% African American population stated, "When it comes to Black and White, there is no big difference [in speech]…It's all about helping the people where they are." With such a small African American population, his message has to be consistent wherever he is and with whomever he is speaking to. This is necessary in order to remain consistent with the notion of togetherness. In addition to the legislator representing the majority White district, four out of five legislators who represent a slight majority African American district also acknowledge that their messages are consistent. Legislators have said,

> No, my message stayed the same throughout my campaign. I believe my message was pretty steady. I did not waver too much on what I wanted to project in terms of my message.
>
> [My message] It does not. I have a very base community and what you see on one side, you will see on the other. I would rather say one thing to everyone…than say [one thing] to one person and have them think that I lied. Yes, I am very consistent. Everyone should hear the same message – 'Opportunity for all'
>
> "I have a steady message and do not have to change –"_____for the people.[49]"
>
> "My message does not change - Everyone has a certain kind of values and morals."

Only one legislator from a slight majority African American district admitted to changing his message based on the audience. He said,

[49] These interviews were done anonymously: "_____" represents the legislator's name.

> No question about it, it is what it is. [You] have to change message based on audience because you don't have a lot of time. We do cater…No one remembers everything… [people] will remember issues that are important to them. Different communities [are] interested in different issues. There is a different kind of standard for African Americans – constituents are not just in district[s].

Most legislators who represent a solid African American district have claimed the opposite of legislators with only a slight majority. Most of these legislators have admitted that in some way their message changes based on the audience. Legislators from solid majority districts have said,

> "[I do] target marketing. Social groups tell you what you want to hear."
>
> [I am] conscious of audience]. [I am] pretty much consistent. [There is] change in cadence – Black people have a rhythm of speech. White people are monotone. [I] might change one or two words. I speak a different language in the church.
>
> "[You] must know your audience for anything. Content the same, delivery is different. Narrowness of group equals narrowness of message."
>
> I wouldn't necessarily switch the statement of it, more the way I said it. So something might have more of a rally cry type tone to it. DeKalb I give more of a rally tone. Rockdale, I give more finesse[50]. I wouldn't change what I was saying, but the further South I went the more it had to be altered. The different areas had different ideas and different backgrounds.
>
> The message is consistent, but the emphasis might be different. If I am talking about business people, I am still talking about being caring, capable, and committed, but more centered on job creation, job development, etc. If I am talking to senior citizens, it might be more about health care or transportation, issues that are more important to them[51].

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[50] According to the 2010 U.S. Census, DeKalb County is a majority African American district with a 54.3% African American Population. Rockdale County on the other hand only has a 46.4% African American Population. According to the U.S. Census, DeKalb County is the second most affluent county with an African American majority in the United States.

[51] This legislator spoke of emphasis in terms of issues, based on the text analysis, it is clear that even the issues that are discussed are different when observing candidates who won in a White majority district and candidates who lost in a White majority district.

Most of the legislators who admit to changing their messages, admit that it is a necessity. While there are three legislators from a solid majority African American district who claim to keep their messages consistent (They have admitted, “It is very disingenuous to change messages. Everyone should hear the same message”, “My message does not change for the audience”. “I stay consistent”), the answers to these questions reveal that legislators who have more of an African American constituency freely admit that based on their audience, their message changes in some way – whether based on cadence or content. This is not to say that the other legislators do not change their messages, but rather, it is those legislators who have more of an African American constituency who feel comfortable admitting that their messages change.

The Current and Future State of Black Politics and Post Racial America

Discussions about the election of President Barack Obama have often placed emphasis on the notion that America is now post-racial and that we are now in a world in which race is less salient. Commentary has highlighted two themes: “Obama’s success proved that Americans have transcended their history, and wooing white voters must be a keystone strategy in any successful national political campaign, though other racial groups can be secondarily considered” (Novkov 2008). Although this commentary is questionable by many, there is an undeniable reality that has come along with his presidency in that it has pressed many to reassess, if not overhaul basic assumptions about the ways that race matters in the 21st century (Teasley and Ikard 2010).

According to Cho (2009) Post-racialism in its current form is a 21st century ideology that reflects a belief that due to the significant racial progress that has been made, the state need not

engage in race-based decision-making or adopt race-based remedies, and that civil society should eschew race as a central organizing principle of social action. Post-racialism asserts that racial thinking and racial solutions are no longer needed because the nation has made great strides, achieved a historic accomplishment, and transcended racial divisions of past generations (Cho 2009). She also states that there are four central features to post-racialism, "racial progress, race neutral universalism, moral equivalence and the distancing move" in which practitioners frequently try to distinguish themselves from civil-rights advocates often by using caricature-type attacks (Cho, 2009). Other scholars' discussion of post-racialism mirror many of Cho's assertions, discussing post-racialism as the belief that race is no longer a significant impediment for Blacks seeking employment, higher education, or political office (Metzler 2010). Post-racialism requires a belief that: (1) racial equality essentially exists, and (2) that race will have little impact on black American's prospects.

Although post-racialism is touted by many, in America today, there continues to be marked differences between the opinions of Blacks and White. According to Hutchings and Valentino (2004) differences in opinion between Blacks and White are not small. In fact, differences of over 20% exist on policies, including nonracial ones (general government spending on social services, education, and assistance for the poor). Whites and Blacks continue to disagree by as much as 40-50 percentage points on matters such as which candidates to support and which party to identify with (Hutchings 2009). Such differences in opinion continue to show the difference between Blacks and Whites on whether or not America is now post-racial. These differences have important implications for this research as in a post racial society, post racial or non-racial rhetoric would not need to be the focus of a campaign. However, these

disparities demonstrate that African Americans still need to remain conscious of the effect that their communicative styles, specifically their rhetoric has on their chances for electoral success.

In order to further validate my theory that African American politicians in the current campaign environment need to avoid racialized rhetoric when seeking votes from a White majority, I asked the interview participants about the current state of Black politics in America. In addition to being asked questions about the make-up of their districts, key issues, and campaign rhetoric, the legislators who were interviewed were also if there was a linked fate among them and other African American elected officials, what they felt about the election of President Obama, and what a post-racial society is and whether or not they feel we are moving toward this notion of a post-racial society[52]. These questions are important because, if Black politicians believe we are in a post-racial society, then a concerted effort to decracialize rhetoric would not be needed. However, if there is broad agreement that we are not in a post-racial society and varying definitions of what it means to be post racial, then there is a demonstrated need for strategic avoidance of racial rhetoric in the current campaign environment.

As Gwen Ifill (2009) pointed out, "post-racial conveniently means different things to different people. I interviewed fourteen state legislators, and when I asked them to define post-racial, I received fourteen different definitions:

"It's hard to define post-racial. Equal administration in the law."

[52] Legislators were asked five different questions on the state of Black politics today. They were: Do you feel that the successes or failures of other black politicians have an effect on your electoral success? Do you feel that the election of President Obama has had an effect on your ability to gain further electoral success? Many have argues that we are moving toward a post-racial society. Do you feel this is true? How would you define post-racial? Is this a worthy goal to strive for>

"Not letting race be a deciding factor"

When you think about post, you think about something after…I am from the old school where we had segregation, we had that already. I would not like for things to go back to that because there have been so many strong people to make sure we don't go backwards. So I'm hoping that does not happen

"Progress between culture [sic] groups in our society. It doesn't mean we have achieved everything that we have hoped for, but things are better."

Humans use markers to determine value and submission. They use the marker of gender, height, attraction, or race. Again, disingenuous is probably the nicest way to say it. Human development does that, you figure out what is different from you to allocate your resources. That's just how we operate. We happen to use race because race in this country typically is the least evilly hidden marker…If you no longer use race to determine electoral capacity or political capacity, the financial acumen of a candidate, that is very different. This is not post-racial, that is just the start of not being prejudice or racist. I don't believe there will ever be a time we don't use race as a marker.

Race becomes an insignificant factor in decision making regarding a person's character. Race should have little to do with job interviews, little to do with physicians. Racism is learned. If you want to see a post-racial society, go to kindergarten.

"Race doesn't matter; Don't even mention race"

"It will never be; racism is alive and well in Georgia and the United States."

"We will never know. There is no such thing. That could be a utopian society. Race, class, and culture will always define us."

"[Post-racial is a] Made up term; cannot define. It would assume we are blind in every way – race, gender, orientation, religion. We may not want a post-racial environment."

"When race is not an issue and we are defined by character. When we are truly integrated – we have been desegregated, but not integrated."

"Truly like infants. Would have to see everyone as a playmate or friend – like children play."

You will never see color go away. There's a new battle/war. It's all about money and power. Must make sure classism is working well. Mobility in the class system for blacks is not there."

I think a post-racial society would be one in which race is not a defining factor or issue. Race is not something we can hide from, but when we can come to a point as Americans or politicians to make decisions based on merit and things, race doesn't have to be one of the things that are a deciding factor.

Having such disparity over the definition of what it means to be post-racial does not in and of itself present a problem. However, a problem arises when you are able to verbalize a definition, but you do not believe that what you have defined is possible or even on the horizon of coming to fruition. Each legislator was asked if they agreed with the much talked about sentiment that America was now in a post-racial society after the election of President Obama. Out of the fourteen legislators interviewed, eleven of them gave responses that indicated "no". Interestingly, the one Black legislator from a majority White district was among those who said that we are not in a post-racial society. These legislators admitted,

> "There will be no such thing anytime soon. [Racism] is more hidden."
>
> "Hell No."
>
> "Racism is instilled in different people in different ways. Racism has gone nowhere."
>
> "No Way. That's BS. Rhetoric is dangerous, it gives validation to racism."
>
> "I wouldn't say we are moving into a post-racial society."
>
> "First, I don't agree because I don't understand what post-racial means. I don't think we will ever be out of a situation that is post-racial."

The fact that there is such agreement on the idea that we are not post-racial, even sentiments of dangerous racism that still exists today, bolsters my theory that African American politicians are aware of their constraints, or the "rules of the game" in which they choose to play. Those rules being to shy away from divisive rhetoric that separates and to maintain a deracialized campaign that talks about commonality and togetherness. Though most of these legislators at the time agreed that we are not in a post-racial society, a majority of them (nine out of fourteen) agree that being post-racial is a worthy goal to strive for that one day may be

accomplished. We may not be in a post-racial society, but in order for an African American candidate to win an election with White voters, he or she needs to appear to be post-racial. Rhetoric helps them to accomplish that.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this chapter support my overall hypothesis and give an affirmative answer to my research questions. Even though the sample for this research is small, the interviews conducted reveal that there are differences in the way African American state legislators in Georgia use rhetoric to gain and to stay in office. There are differences in key issues, and in the consistency of messages that these legislators use with their constituents. Rhetoric in all stages of a politician's career is important. It can bring electoral success or failure. The way that these state legislators communicate within their districts, demonstrates how rhetoric is important for Black legislators seeking to get into office and stay there.

This chapter has sought to show that the way in which African American state legislators communicate is vital to their electoral success and subsequent success in office. Depending on the composition of a district, different issues must remain in the forefront and choice in rhetorical style should remain consistent, particularly in a district in which the African American population is only a slight majority. Yes, it is true that in recent years, African American candidates are doing better electorally, particularly among White constituents, and this is due in part to the rhetorical techniques used by African politicians, particularly, that of avoiding racial rhetoric.

These findings expand the literature by further demonstrating the importance of campaign rhetoric and the strategic decisions that African American politicians must make in seeking support from White voters. In this final method of analysis, all of my hypotheses have been confirmed through different modes of testing and have been reinforced through these qualitative interviews. In addition, these findings continue to show the debate that exists, even among successful African American politicians, on the current and future state of Black politics in America.

The next chapter provides a conclusion on the findings as a whole and offers suggestions about the impacts of this study as well as proposals for future research and future campaign environments.

6. CONCLUSION

In March of 2009 I was fortunate to be able to attend a Navajo Code Talkers seminar on the campus of Georgia State University. While listening to the granddaughter of one of the code talkers, the foundation of my dissertation began to form. Just like the Navajo talkers contributed to the United States victory in World War II by using what was natural to their way of life, so too have African Americans been willing and able to contribute to a country that had largely disenfranchised them from every area of life and advantages of citizenship that this country had to offer. While listening to stories of how they were recruited and how many volunteered to fight in the war, I wondered, do African American politicians use a code of their own? How are African American politicians able to achieve success outside of African American voters? What is the "trick" to the success of people such as President Obama and Deval Patrick? How do African American politicians work on behalf of their base constituents, without turning away larger segments of the population?

This dissertation has been about trying to figure out that code, if any. Through text analysis, it was revealed that there is a specific language that is consistently found in the communication of African American elected officials and that language is unique to winners and loser running for the same office. Although, the text analysis did not fully comport with my theory of winning candidates avoiding racially explicit rhetoric, nonetheless, there was consistency found in the language of these politicians. These findings amplified the effects of candidate credibility and how racial rhetoric should be more of a concern for non-incumbents rather than incumbents.

In addition to the text analysis, experimental data revealed that the language that African American politicians use during their campaigns is effective in shaping the perceptions of voters and helps them to achieve electoral success. Specifically, the experimental studies showed that rhetoric is effective in shaping a voter's feelings toward a candidate and the voter's perception of trust in the candidate. Overall, these findings indicate that deracialized rhetoric is less threatening and contributes to the success of African American candidates in non majority-minority districts. These findings contribute to our understanding of candidate perception among voters in the campaign environment and how voters can be persuaded at a greater level by African American politicians.

The qualitative interviews served as a means of supporting the conclusions of the text analysis and experiments. Interviewing successful politicians revealed that there are differences in the way politicians use rhetoric to gain and stay in office. Much like the text analysis showed, the qualitative interviews confirmed that there are differences in key issues, and in the consistency of messages that legislators use with their constituents. These interviews also demonstrated the continuing debate that exists, even among successful African American politicians on the current and future state of Black politics in America.

This research has demonstrated what is already known and has been proven in a broad sense: Rhetoric is an important factor in achieving and maintaining electoral success. In a narrower framework, this research has demonstrated that there is a consistent language in successful African American politicians from majority White constituencies. On the candidate level, racial rhetoric appears to be a punishable offense for non-incumbents, while incumbents have been shown to use this rhetoric more. At the constituent level, racial rhetoric causes a

candidate to lose votes and be trusted less by his or her constituents, particularly White constituents.

Contributions to the Field

Campaign Communication and Candidate Credibility

This study has further contributed to the findings of campaign communication and its effect on electoral success. Through text analysis and experimental studies, it has demonstrated the ways in which electoral success can be achieved by distancing one's self from a particular type of speech. Though results of the text analysis were not fully supportive of my hypotheses, it did show that there is a certain language that should be used in order to gain electoral success for a particular type of candidate, specifically a non-incumbent. Going into this research, there was a known possibility that my expectations would not be confirmed. Though it was not confirmed in the ways that I anticipated, this research has demonstrated that there are additional factors contributing to the electoral success of African American politicians, besides their rhetoric.

In addition to the text analysis, experimental studies have shown that racial rhetoric is something that turns voters "off" or away from candidates who do not already have credibility with his or her constituents. Unexpectedly, a byproduct of this research has been the light it has shed on the importance of candidate credibility as through this research, candidate credibility has been shown to have a neutralizing effect on the use of racial rhetoric. I suspect that this is due to the process of motivated reasoning.

Voters do not operate independent of experience, so when they are called upon to make decisions regarding candidates or policies, they bring with them preconceptions that help them to

arrive at some sort of judgment. This method of decision-making allows voters to take action and make decisions in partisan or biased ways. Motivated reasoning is retrospective evaluation at its best.

To some extent, all reasoning is motivated which helps citizens to be goal oriented. This motivation can lead to either accuracy or partisan goals (Taber and Lodge 2006). While accuracy goals motivate citizens to seek out and consider relevant evidence in order to reach a correct decision, partisan goals motivate citizens to apply their reasoning in defense of a prior, specific conclusion (Taber and Lodge 2006). Partisan goals quite possibly could be the reason that incumbents are able to use racial rhetoric at a rate that is twice as high as non-incumbents.

Citizens are emotionally driven which is why they engage in motivated reasoning. For Taber and Lodge (2006) these mechanisms do not point to close-minded people who are consciously deceiving themselves, but to people who are largely unaware of the power of their prior beliefs and the effect that it has on political decision-making. Not being aware of the power of prior beliefs leaves a citizenry at risk for extremism or polarization in attitudes. Attitude polarization places decision-making in an affective or emotional state, which takes any assumptions of rationality out of the equation.

Proponents of rationality argue that voters consider new information in light of prior preferences and accurately update their preferences by lowering evaluations upon receiving negative information and increasing evaluations when receiving positive information (Redlawsk 2002). To show the negative effects of motivated reasoning, Redlawsk (2002) applies motivated reasoning to candidate evaluation and demonstrates that when affect or emotion interacts with

cognition, it actually reinforces feelings about candidates rather than revising them because of the new information received. I argue that this reinforcement of feelings about the candidate is what allows the incumbent to engage in more racial rhetoric as voters are relying on their previous evaluation of the candidate. If voters have elected a particular candidate before, than it would take a lot more than increased racial rhetoric to negate prior approval. Redlawsk (2002) shows that voters are affectively driven, and that using motivated reasoning means processing information based on how one feels.

Voters use a mix of cues to arrive at a voting decision. While using motivated reasoning and relying on affect or emotion when making a decision may work in positive ways. One has to acknowledge that it is easy for a line to be crossed in which one becomes resistant to change and intolerant. While this research makes no claims that voters are making the wrong choices when it comes to selecting government officials, it does recognize that motivated reasoning combined with the incumbency advantage can be harmful for democratic politics and decision-making.

Race and Politics

In addition to establishing new findings in the fields of political communication, this research has tunneled deeper into the field of race and politics. This research started with acknowledging the premise that the concept of being in a post-racial America is something that varies widely across different segments of the population. The results of the ethnographic interviews have established that successful African American politicians today still have broad disagreements over the notion of being post-racial and the ways in which they adjust to this variation in order to achieve and maintain electoral success varies.

Overall, this research has reiterated the connection between race and politics, specifically, race and electoral success. Although the finding of the text analysis did not bear exactly what my theory and hypotheses predicted, it did however provide new insight and more questions that are worth granting attention and seeking to answer. Much like Gwen Ifill proclaimed in her book *The Breakthrough*, "maybe a wholesale shift in racial understanding was too much to hope for in a single electoral cycle[53]." Undoubtedly, it was too much to hope that all answers would be found in this single piece of research. Yes, in a sense, we now know that certain types of politicians use racial rhetoric more, we also know that voters punish politicians for racial language, and we know that current politicians today differ on their views of race in America and race in the political world today. But certainly, there are more questions that need answering and more avenues for research.

Implications Post Election

Perhaps, one of the biggest questions still lingering, and one that this research has not attempted to answer is what happens after electoral victory is achieved? This research focuses on what happens prior to winning and taking office. More specifically, it investigates factors that contribute to gaining office. But what happens when these politicians who use wise rhetorical strategy actually win the election and assume office? Is there any sort of accountability for making good on campaign promises? Is there any accountability for making policies that match a candidate's rhetoric once an elected official begins his or her tenure in office? What are the implications of being elected with non-racial or even a racial style of rhetoric? What exactly are these politicians doing once they arrive in office? Are they advocating

[53] Referring to the 2008 Presidential electoral cycle.

for racialized policies, even though their success was built upon a deracialized form of speech? These are serious questions that still need to be addressed as policy making necessarily follows electoral success.

Leadership cannot be judged based on a campaign as winning an election and governing are two separate entities. Charisma can garner a lot of followers. As Corey Booker told Gwen Ifill in 2009, "The real test of leadership has never been who can get people to follow them. We've got charismatic leaders who get followed a lot. The real test of leadership is to motivate people to be leaders themselves and to carry the burden." What burden do these politicians carry after winning an election? How are they motivating people to shoulder their individual burdens? Are policies being created to put responsibility back on the voters? After all, voters are the ones who exercise the ultimate choice over who represents our interests.

Accountability after the election is a question that needs to be answered. However, what campaign rhetoric actually translates into once in office is not the focus of this dissertation. We know that in the political world, the number of campaign promises that are actually kept are small. However, I agree with Gronbeck when he acknowledges that the legitimacy of acting in the name of campaign promises, on the basis of a hard won mandate is unquestionable. Therefore, it is important for scholars in the field of political science to continue to ask these questions, so that we may continue to discover what actions are taken by those who represent our interests under the cloak of an electoral mandate.

Future Research

Based on this research project, there are vast possibilities for future research. Here are some concrete ideas for my future research goals and interests that still need to be addressed after

completing the project. First and foremost, I plan on investigating the roots of the incumbency advantage even more. This research has allowed me to speculate that there are more benefits to being an incumbent than previously proposed, particularly, that of engaging in a more racialized form of speech. As the field of African American politicians running in majority White constituencies expands, there will be more data to analyze and in which to make comparisons between African American incumbents and non-incumbents. In this same vein, I also plan on conducting more experiments, to investigate if there is a difference in how participants rate incumbents and non-incumbents.

In addition, based on the findings of this research, it will be particularly interesting to investigate White politicians who campaign for the votes of African Americans. This would be particularly interesting if they were doing so in majority Black districts. Do White politicians engage in more racial rhetoric when talking to a majority minority audience? How do Black voters perceive White politicians who engage in racial rhetoric? The results of the experiments show that Black constituents do not have favorable ratings in terms of likelihood of voting and perceived candidate trust when it comes to White candidates who use racial rhetoric. A text analysis on these politicians would allow for deeper analysis into the rhetorical strategies of White politicians and how their rhetoric changes when campaigning for the Black vote.

In order to continue using the text analysis, I will have to reformulate and rework the dictionary that I use. While the dictionary used for this dissertation was a great first attempt, there are areas that need to be improved, particularly a way to more closely measure what it means to use racial rhetoric. Reformulating the dictionary can only enhance what I find in future waves of this study.

Ultimately, my future research goals are to continue this research but to improve it and make it better by reformulating the dictionary and expanding the sample. Not only will the data need to be expanded in numbers, but also in type. For this research, campaign communication was obtained from candidate websites. However, a more precise portrayal of candidate communication would be to obtain transcripts of actual speeches given before actual voters.

For the text analysis, I intend on doing studies across multiple years in order to track changes in rhetoric. This election was a mid-term election, which is known for having lower voter turnout than first-order or presidential elections. It is possible that candidates have different expectations of voters during the m id-term elections than they have during presidential elections. Will candidates increase in their racial rhetoric in future elections, both Presidential and mid-term? Will it decrease? Will the language change? Will what it means to be racial change in the future? These are all questions that I will seek to answer. Currently, I suspect that the language will indeed change, as White politicians are setting the pace and direction for what it means to be non-racial. I suspect that African American politicians have learned and are learning to navigate the political world. As Tonlay (2003) wrote, the experiences of African Americans have been shaped by their position in the racial and ethnic hierarchy. There is a necessary fluidity that permeates the Black political world and as such, I believe that future waves of this study will reveal a shift in rhetoric. As the motto of the Congressional Black Caucus states, “Black people have no permanent friends, no permanent enemies, just permanent interests.” Though the interests may remain the same, the way to achieve these interests may change.

Final Thoughts

In 2010 Gyasi Foluke was interviewed by the *Atlanta Voice* about his feelings towards President Obama's race neutral stance toward the economy. Mr. Foluke said, "If you have a Black agenda, you cannot get elected in this country." Many people would agree with his statement. However, this research has shown that there are mitigating factors that contribute to electoral success. The type of agenda you have is only a small piece of the puzzle.

The title of this dissertation indicates that I would explain the new electoral success of African American politicians in non-minority districts. So how do I explain the success of these politicians? I explain it by connecting the bridge of two camps: One that says on face value, race matters, and the second that says it does not. I am connecting these two camps as I believe that race matters, but in more subtle ways as to a certain extent, the effects of race can be neutralized.

I started this chapter, by referring to the inception of the idea for this project. Quite naturally, this is where this project will end. I think that I was fascinated with the history of the Navajo code talkers because the journey of African Americans in this country strikes a resembling parallel: Relegated to the fringes of society by those who fear rather than embrace what they do not understand. But what also strikes a parallel between these two disenfranchised groups is something even more amazing: The willingness to serve and fight for a country that at many times to its own admission and fault could not, did not, would not, and will not fight for them. In a real sense, the Navajo code talkers' event pointed to something unique about America and one that gives it moments of greatness: The willingness of those to serve a country that has underserved them. America is unique in that sense, as eventually, there are some moments that

seem to right its wrongs. Yet as we know, since the election of President Obama for every moment of triumph, there are moments of shame that seem to remind us that there is still yet work to do.

Yes, there is still work to do. In a country laden with problems and racial overtones, it is an act of courage to stand up and say, “I want to work for you.” But that is what African American politicians are doing every day. Some win and some lose. If nothing else, this dissertation has shed a light on those who are at least trying to win office, and based on what African Americans have been through in this country, I feel confident in saying, the victory is certainly in the trying.

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APPENDIX A

Text Analysis Preliminary Dictionary and Equations for Performance Measures

Words found to be statistically different between African American winners and African American losers

Word	Winners	Losers	Chi^2	P value (2 tails)
Health	102	21	16.71	0
Education	120	27	18.84	0
Environment	57	4	20.06	0
Veterans	90	9	30.99	0
Energy	82	12	19.44	0
Crime	50	4	16	0
Housing	91	11	27.37	0
Transportation	83	5	35.29	0
Bailouts	1	15	32.94	0
Services	63	8	15.55	22
Healthcare	61	8	14.46	0.001
Agriculture	42	3	13.71	0.001
Families	72	13	12	0.002
Hitler	0	5	11.93	0.003
Colonize	0	5	11.93	0.003
Nuclear	1	6	10.52	0.005
Drilling	1	6	10.66	0.005
Defense	50	7	10.5	0.005
Foreclosures	5	10	10.2	0.006
Darfur	22	0	10.15	0.006
Employment	35	3	10.1	0.006
Appropriations	21	0	9.652	0.008
Community	85	20	9.226	0.01
Seniors	32	4	6.918	0.031
Tax	71	17	6.736	0.034
Opportunity	41	7	6.432	0.04
Domestic	23	2	6.257	0.044
N=292				

Performance Measures

		Computer's Finding	
		Yes	No
Grounded Truth	Yes	A	B
	No	C	D

False Positive Rate= C/ (A+C)

False Negative= B/ (B+D)

Accuracy= (A+D)/ (A+B+C+D)

APPENDIX B

Experiment Stimuli

White Post Racial Message (Experiment Stimuli 1)

Greetings,

My name is Owen Burrows and I am running to be your representative in the United States House of Representative. Since my days at our local university and graduating from law school, I have been committed to serving those around me. As a first time candidate for Congress, I consider myself a man of the people and aware of the issues and circumstances that face our communities and communities around the country today. As I look around today, I do not see prosperity. As your representative I will continue fight to strengthen and add jobs to our economy.

I would love to have your vote come election time. Remember, as a man of the people, I will work for you.

Black Post-Racial Message (Experiment Stimuli 2)

Greetings,

My name is Owen Burrows and I am running to be your representative in the United States House of Representative. Since my days at our local university and graduating from law school, I have been committed to serving those around me. As a first time candidate for Congress, I consider myself a man of the people and aware of the issues and circumstances that face our communities and communities around the country today. As I look around today, I do not see prosperity. As your representative I will continue fight to strengthen and add jobs to our economy.

I would love to have your vote come election time. Remember, as a man of the people, I will work for you.

White Racial Message (Experiment Stimuli 3)

Greetings,

My name is Owen Burrows and I am running to be your representative in the United States House of Representative. Since my days at our local university and graduating from law school, I have been committed to serving those around me. As a first time candidate for Congress, I consider myself a man of the people and aware of the issues and circumstances that face our communities and communities around the country today. As I look around the community, I do not see prosperity. As your representative I will continue fight for the economy as we need relief in the communities that need it the most, especially the black community.

I would love to have your vote come election time. Remember, as a man of the people, I will work for you.

Black Racial Message (Experiment Stimuli 4)

Greetings,

My name is Owen Burrows and I am running to be your representative in the United States House of Representative. Since my days at our local university and graduating from law school, I have been committed to serving those around me. As a first time candidate for Congress, I consider myself a man of the people and aware of the issues and circumstances that face our communities and communities around the country today. As I look around the community, I do not see prosperity. As your representative I will continue fight for the economy as we need relief in the communities that need it the most, especially the black community.

I would love to have your vote come election time. Remember, as a man of the people, I will work for you.

APPENDIX C

Experiment Questions

Georgia State University
Department of Political Science
Survey Instrument

Title: Rhetoric and Campaign Language: Explaining New Electoral Success of African American Politicians

Please choose the answer that closely matches your opinion on the candidate of whose speech you just read.

1. How likely you are to vote for this candidate?

Not at all likely	Somewhat likely	Not Sure	Likely	Very Likely
1	2	3	4	5

2. I'd also like to get your feelings about this candidate. Please rate him with what we call a feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees-100 degrees mean that you feel favorably and warm toward the candidate; ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorably towards the candidate and that you don't care too much for him. If you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the candidate you would rate them at 50 degrees.

3. How much of the time do you think you can trust Owen Burrows to do what is right?

Just about always	Most of the time	Only some of the time	Almost never
1	2	3	4

The following questions concern your opinion on a variety of matters. Your task is to indicate the strength of your agreement with each statement. Please select the answer that best suits you.

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

<1> Strongly agree

<2> Somewhat agree

<3> Somewhat disagree

<4> Strongly disagree

5. Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same.

<1> Strongly agree

<2> Somewhat agree

<3> Somewhat disagree

<4> Strongly disagree

6. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

<1> Strongly agree

<2> Somewhat agree

<3> Somewhat disagree

<4> Strongly disagree

7. Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve.

<1> Strongly agree

<2> Somewhat agree

<3> Somewhat disagree

<4> Strongly disagree

8. Over the past few years, blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve.

<1> Strongly agree

<2> Somewhat agree

<3> Somewhat disagree

<4> Strongly disagree

9. How much of the racial tension that exists in the United States today do you think blacks are responsible for creating?

<1> All of it

<2> Most

<3> Some

<4> Not much at all

10. How much discrimination against blacks do you feel there is in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead?

<1> A lot

<2> Some

<3> Just a little

<4> None at all

11. Some say that black leaders have been trying to push too fast. Others feel that they haven't pushed fast enough. What do you think?

<1> Trying to push very much too fast

<2> Going too slowly

<3> Moving at about the right speed

12. What is you Gender? 1. Male 2. Female

13. How old are you? _____

14. What do you describe yourself as?

1. American Indian/Native American 2. Asian 3. Black/African American 4. Hispanic/Latino 5. White/Caucasian 6. Other

15. What is your annual Family Income?

1. $0 – $20,000 2. $20,000 – S40, 000 3. $40,000 - $60,000
4. $60,000-$80,000 5. $80,000 – $100,000 6. Above $100,000

16. What is your major? _____

17. How would you classify your ideology?

Liberal 2. Moderate 3. Conservative 4. None

18. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself to be a (n):

1. Strong Democrat 2.Democrat 3. Independent leaning Democrat 4. Independent 5. Independent leaning Republican 6. Republican 7. Strong Republican

19. What is your religious preference?

1. Protestant 2. Catholic 3.LDS/Mormon 4. Jewish 5. Muslim 6. No Preference/Religious Affiliation 7. Prefer not to answer 8. Other

20. How active do you consider yourself in the practice of your religious preference?

1. Very Active 2. Somewhat Active 3. Not Very Active 4. Not Active 5. Does Not Apply/Prefer not to Say

APPENDIX D

Qualitative Interview Questions

Interview Questions for the Rhetoric and Campaign Language Study

1. How would you describe your constituents?
   (Prompt, if needed: Mostly women, men, black, white, diverse, upper class, lower class, religious, non-religious?)

2. How long have you been in public office?

3. How long have you been a State Senator?

4. How long do you see yourself being a State Senator?

5. Do you have plans of running for a higher office?

6. What policies (that you either support or oppose) do you want voters to know are foremost in your thinking and day-to-day activities?

7. What are you key issues?

8. How important is the voter's perception of you?

9. What messages do you try to promote?

10. What are some of the images you want the voters to see of you? (Prompt if needed: How do you want voters to perceive you as a candidate?)

11. What are some things that you do during the campaign to make sure you are portraying those images?

12. Do you have any specific phrases or slogans that you use consistently throughout a campaign?

13. Does these phrases or slogans change based on the audience? (Class, Religion, Gender)

14. Do you feel that the successes or failures of other black politicians have an affect on your electoral success?

15. Do you feel that the election of President Obama has had an affect on your ability to gain further electoral success?

16. Many have argued that we are moving toward a post-racial society. Do you feel this is true?

17. If so, how would you define post-racial?

18. If not, is this a worthy goal to strive for?

APPENDIX E

Recruitment Email for Interviews

Greetings Senator _____

My name is Precious Hall and I am a doctoral candidate in Political Science at Georgia State University. I am currently working on my dissertation and my focus is on African American politicians. As part of my dissertation, I would like to sit down with you to ask a few questions about your experiences. These interviews will take no more than one hour of your time. Having the experiences of actual successful African American politicians will strengthen the overall findings of my dissertation. If you would be so kind as to agree to sit down to an interview at a time that works best for you at your office in the state capital or another agreed upon public location, that would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Precious Hall

Student Researcher

Georgia State University