



We trust in government, just not in yours: Race, partisanship, and political trust, 1958–2012



Rima Wilkes¹

Department of Sociology, University of British Columbia, 6303 NW Marine Drive, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1, Canada

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ABSTRACT

Although it is generally accepted that political trust is reflective of satisfaction with the performance of the incumbent administration, this is only considered true for White Americans. Because their trust reflects a larger discontent with the political system, Black Americans, it is held, do not respond in the same way in the short term. This argument has yet to be tested with over-time data. Time matters. Not only does the race gap in trust change over time but the impact of partisanship and political winning is, by definition, time-dependent. The results of an analysis of the 1958–2012 American National Election Studies data show that Black Americans and White Americans are equally likely to tie short-term performance to trust in government. However, the relationship between partisanship and political trust and, therefore, system discontent, clearly differs for the two groups. Aggregate models that do not take race-partisan sub-group differences into account will therefore be misleading.

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1. Introduction

It is widely held that democracies work better if citizens trust their government (Arneil, 2006; Dahl, 1956; Hetherington, 2005; Uslaner, 2002). Societies with greater political trust tend to have citizens who talk to each other, who work together, and who generally get along (Dahl, 1956; Mara, 2001; Newton, 2008; Putnam, 1995). As Hetherington (2005) so succinctly put it, trust matters.

Of key concern for scholars in the U.S. is the relationship between race and trust. Because there is nothing about skin color and physical appearance per se that should affect trust, the presence of such a relationship indicates that the political system is less responsive and less accessible to the members of particular groups, or at the very least, that particular groups perceive the political system as less responsive and accessible. For this reason, there has been a concerted effort to identify which causes of trust have race-varying effects in order to further understand the mechanisms through which this form of political inequality operates (Abramson, 1983; Avery, 2006; Citrin et al., 1975; Hetherington, 1998; Howell and Fagan, 1988; Mangum, 2011; Marshall and Shah, 2007; Miller, 1974; Putnam, 2001).

Among the correlates of trust identified as most important are assessments of political incumbents, of the electoral system, of public policy, and of the economy (Citrin and Luks, 2001; Hetherington, 2005; Keele, 2007). These, it is held, have differential effects on the trust of Black and White Americans because political trust reflects different considerations for each group. For Black Americans, trust is reflective of a deep malaise with the political system reflecting decades of political exclusion and violence (Abramson, 1983; Jung and Kwon, 2013; Nunnally, 2012). In contrast, for White Americans, trust represents short-term satisfaction with the current administration (Avery, 2006, 2007, 2008).

E-mail address: wilkesr@mail.ubc.ca

¹ The UBC is located on traditional Musqueam territory.

This research on whether there is racial variability in the causes and meaning of political trust has identified how the causes of trust matter within particular years, but it has yet to consider racial differences in political trust over time. There are reasons to suspect that conclusions concerning the impact of short-term satisfaction measures on trust may be time-dependent. Unlike the race gap in social trust (Wilkes, 2011; Smith, 2010), the race gap in political trust is extremely inconsistent. Not only is there a trust difference in some years and not in others, but the relative ranking of which group is more trusting shifts. As a result, inference as to the impact of short-term satisfaction or system discontent based on single-year samples may not be reflective of the general pattern.

Time matters because of partisanship. Not only do Black Americans have a high rate of affiliation with the Democratic Party, but partisans' trust rises sharply when their party is in office (Keele, 2005). The lower trust of Black Americans, if observed, could be a result of being sampled in a year in which there is a Republican President.² Single-year analysis cannot address this issue, even with controls for partisanship, because it stems from an exogenous variable that is constant for everyone within a given year. To consider a change in partisan control, and how this might be related to racial differences in trust, requires over-time data. The work presented in this paper is the first to fully address these issues related to time and trust via an analysis of 1958–2012 American National Election Studies.³

2. Race and political trust

The electoral experience of many Black Americans is characterized by multiple forms of discrimination including overt and covert disenfranchisement, contextual political irregularities, and political minority status (Omi and Winant, 1994; Walters, 2003; Wilson, 2012). Despite claims that with the election of Barack Obama, the U.S. is on its way to becoming a “post-racial” society, empirical evidence demonstrating an ongoing link between race and politics suggests otherwise (Bobo, 1997; Tesler, 2012). Race affects beliefs about out-group members. White Americans, for example, are more likely to believe that Black Americans are undeserving recipients of social assistance (Gilens, 1999; see also Gay (2006) on Black out-group attitudes). Race also correlates with policy preferences: Black Americans are more likely to favor redistributive welfare policies than White Americans (Hasenfeld and Rafferty, 1989; Hetherington and Globetti, 2002; King and Smith, 2011; Smith et al., 2011). Furthermore, race is connected to political participation, affecting voting, political campaign involvement, and protesting (Philpot, 2009; Verba et al., 1993).

Most fundamentally, race has been linked to general faith in the political system writ large as operationalized by trust in government (Bobo and Gilliam, 1990; Mangum, 2011; Nunnally, 2012). Briefly, generalized political trust represents an assessment individuals make as to the recent performance of government incumbents, typically the President and Congress (see e.g. Citrin, 1974; Hetherington and Husser, 2011). Individuals who rate these representatives more favorably are thus more likely to trust the government. Other factors linked to political trust in the research literature include policy preferences (Miller, 1974; Hibbing and Smith, 2004), economic assessments (Citrin and Green, 1986); issue salience (Hetherington, 1998; Hetherington and Husser, 2011) and social capital (Keele, 2007). These studies have, however, been conducted for the population as a whole. When race is considered, it is typically as a demographic control variable.

Studies of political trust that do have a specific focus on race consider trust among Black Americans or compare Black with White Americans. Using the 1992 National Election Studies Survey, Hetherington and Globetti (2002) demonstrate that feelings about the President have a strong effect on trust for White Americans but have no effect for Black Americans. Analysis of the 1984 and 1996 National Black Election Study show little effect of evaluations of the President, of Congress, or of defense policy on the trust of Black Americans (Avery, 2006). In a related study, the effect of Presidential evaluations not only differed between Black and White Americans, but Black Americans of all political persuasions were likely to feel dissatisfied after the Bush vs. Gore Supreme Court decision (Avery, 2007). Ultimately, many of the factors that affect White Americans' political trust have little or at least a much weaker effect on Black Americans' level of trust. Results such as these have led scholars to conclude that political trust represents short-term assessments of current government performance for White Americans, but for Black Americans, it represents a larger and more long-term political discontent.

The problem is that the evidence upon which this and other work has been based is largely derived from cross-sectional analysis of race and trust within a single or at most two years.⁴ In this paper I build on this work by using over-time data to assess the short-term vs. system discontent argument. There are two important reasons for doing so.

First, the race difference in political trust is not constant over time.⁵ Miller (1974) first pointed this out in his bivariate analysis of race and trust from 1964 to 1970. Whereas Black Americans were more trusting than White Americans in 1964

² An alternative is that time could matter because, in addition to representing parties, Presidents also represent race. According to the descriptive representation theory, minority groups who fail to see themselves reflected in their political leaders become politically alienated (Abney and Hutcheson, 1981; Howell and Fagan, 1988; Nordin, 2012; Pantoja and Segura, 2003). While the data used in this paper provide much-needed new evidence about trust under the first Black President, because there is only one year with a Black President and 23 years with White Presidents, the data do not allow for a formal test of the descriptive representation argument.

³ Throughout this paper, race refers to identification as Black or White only and the theoretical focus is limited to these two groups. Although the ANES does contain some measures of an ‘Other’ racial group, the sample sizes in the first few decades of data collection are too small to produce results about this group that can be interpreted with any confidence.

⁴ Avery (2007) uses the 2000 Social Capital Benchmark survey and a sample collected in 2007 that contains data on 497 students, 51 of whom are Black. Nunnally (2012) also uses the former dataset and Mangum (2011) also uses the 1996 NBES.

⁵ In comparison, the racial gap in social trust is far more constant over time (Wilkes, 2011).

and 1966, they were less trusting in 1970. The inconsistency in the race gap is also evident in later multivariate studies of trust that include controls for race (Perrin and Smolek, 2009). During the 1980s, there is a race gap in trust in 1980 but not for other years during that decade (Miller and Borrelli, 1991). Hetherington (1998) also finds that being Black had no effect in 1988, but was associated with lower trust in 1996. More recently Nunnally (2012) shows higher trust for Black Americans than for White Americans in 2000,⁶ Cook and Gronke (2005) show no race difference in trust in government for 2002, and Abrajano and Alvarez (2010) show that White Americans had higher levels of political trust than Black Americans in 2004.

Furthermore, because these studies estimate models of trust in which race is included as a dummy variable, they do not represent a direct test of the short-term satisfaction vs. system discontent argument (except Nunnally, 2012). A test of this argument requires models that either test interactions between race and short-term assessments or models that are estimated separately by race. Of the few studies that do take one of these approaches, only Avery (2007) uses data for two time points and this is during 2000, a potentially anomalous year due to the Bush vs. Gore electoral outcome. Thus, not only are there a very limited number of studies that do assess the short-term vs. system discontent argument, but those that do are based on a very limited number of years.

Thus, the first reason for an over-time analysis is that there is little empirical evidence as to whether findings on racial differences in the effect of short-term considerations are more generalizable. What then can be expected in terms of these relationships? If race doesn't matter, then it can be hypothesized that *H1a: when averaged over time, short term political assessments will have the same effect on Black as on White political trust*. However, as stated earlier, the general argument advanced by scholars of race and trust is that political trust is more reflective of system discontent among Black Americans. Therefore, if this argument holds in light of the fact that the gap in political trust is variable, then it should be observed that *H1b: when averaged over time, short-term political assessments will have a greater effect on White than on Black political trust*.⁷

A second reason for an over-time analysis is that race is deeply intertwined with partisanship. Although Black Americans had historically supported the Republicans who abolished slavery under Lincoln, this affiliation changed with the introduction of Roosevelt's New Deal programs (Black, 2004).⁸ As a result of this legacy and because the contemporary Republican party is not seen as a viable alternative, Black Americans overwhelmingly identify with the Democratic Party (McDaniel and Ellison, 2008; Nunnally, 2012; Piliawsky, 1995). There are two different ways in which this partisanship affiliation could be associated with racial differences in trust, one of which requires over-time data.

In the first instance, which does not require over time data, partisanship is associated with individual-level trust. As Keele (2005:875) notes, "governance is really party governance" and trust in government requires faith in the party who is in charge of this governance. By identifying as partisan, individuals are expressing faith that the particular party they identify with will do an effective job and will be more effective than the alternative party. Partisans should therefore be more trusting than political independents, who, in contrast, do not share this belief.⁹ The latter group, who do not select any one party over the other, should not see this gain in efficacy with a change in Administration. The empirical data bears this out. Partisans, be they Democrat or Republican, are more trusting of the government than Independents by about 5 points on a 100 point scale (Keele, 2005; see also Birch, 2008; Gershtenson et al., 2006; Miller and Listhaug, 1990). A number of studies have considered whether for Black Americans, partisanship matters. Mangum's (2011) analysis of the 1996 NBES data, for example, shows no effect, but Avery's (2007) analysis shows that Black Democrats have lower trust.

Can partisanship at the individual level be used to disentangle whether trust represents short-term vs. system discontent? Reflecting the findings from previous work on partisanship for the population as a whole, I expect to find that White partisans are more trusting than White Independents.¹⁰ There are however, three possible outcomes with regards to the relationship for partisanship and trust for Black-Americans. First, as with White Americans, Black American partisans could be more trusting than political independents. In this event, trust would also reflect short-term considerations for Black Americans (at least the partisans). This outcome can be tested with the hypothesis that *H2a: the effect of partisanship for Black Americans will be the same as it is for White Americans*. Second, for Black Americans there could be little difference in trust between partisans and independents. This is a case that existing work used as evidence of system discontent (Avery, 2007). In this case then *H2b: the effect of partisanship for Black Americans will be different (and weaker) than it is for White Americans*. A third possibility is that, because the meaning of partisanship is different for Black Americans than it is for White Americans, partisans and Democrats in particular will be less trusting than political Independents. In that case, it can be expected that *H2c: the effect of partisanship for Black Americans will be different (and stronger) than it is for White Americans*. As with the previous hypothesis, such an outcome would indicate system discontent for Black Americans.

⁶ Nunnally's work generally shows lower trust but her indicator of trust in the federal government shows higher trust among Black Americans than White Americans.

⁷ This hypothesis tests the slope effect of these variables within a multi-year context. While the analyses presented in this paper control for compositional differences over time the approach is nevertheless distinct from an approach that would decompose each annual race gap into its constituent "effect" and "compositional" components.

⁸ During the antebellum period the Democratic Party found much of its support in the South among disenchanted Whites and as a consequence, was termed the "party of white supremacy" (Black, 2004: 1002).

⁹ Alford (2001:39) offers a contrasting argument which is that as a result of New Deal ideology which increased the federal governments' role in the economy Democrats should be the most trusting followed by Independents, and then Republicans.

¹⁰ Aggregate-level analyses by definition reflect the pattern for the majority group – in this case White Americans.

These hypotheses do not, however, consider the importance of political context and the fact that in some years the President is Democrat and in other years the President is Republican (Walton, 1997).¹¹ For partisans, political winning and losing could have an impact on trust. To ascertain whether this is the case, over-time data must be used. Thus, using the 1958–2000 ANES data, Keele (2005) shows that when partisans gain control of the Presidency, their trust increases by 6 points. Democrats are more trusting of government when a Democratic President is in office and Republicans trust government more when a Republican President is in office. Political Independents do not show these ebbs and flows. These patterns however, reflect the impact of short-term considerations for White Americans who form the majority group.

How then can winning and losing be expected to play out for Black Americans? If there is no effect of race, then *H3a: the effect of winning and losing will be the same for Black as for White Americans during different Presidential Administrations*. In contrast, in his analysis of political trust before and after the 2000 Bush vs. Gore decision, Avery (2007) shows that political winning and losing had little effect for Black Americans.¹² Both Black and White Democrats became less trusting after the decision. However, whereas White Republicans and White Independents became more trusting, this effect did not occur for either Black Republicans or Black Independents. In light of this evidence, Avery concludes that the lack of effect of partisanship illustrates that political trust is more reflective of system discontent for Black Americans. If this hypothesis holds beyond this particular context, then it can be expected that *H3b: in comparison to White Americans the effect of partisanship for Black Americans will show few or weak effects across different Presidential Administrations*. As with individual-level partisanship, it could also be the case that due to the high affiliation with the Democratic Party, Black Americans are more sensitive to winning and losing than White Americans. If this hypothesis holds, then it can be expected that *H3c: the effect of partisanship will be greater for Black than for White Americans during different Presidential Administrations*.

3. Data and measures

To test these expectations I use ANES (American National Election Studies) data from 1958 to 2012. I constructed this dataset by merging the 1958–2008 cumulative data with the 2012 time series data.¹³ This comprises 24 separate years of data collected between 1958 and 2012. The cumulative data file variables begin with VCF and the 2012 variables are named.

3.1. Political trust

The dependent variable is the ANES's trust in government index (VCF0656) compiled by the ANES for 1958–2008 (see also Hetherington, 1998; Keele, 2005; Poznyak et al., 2013). I constructed this index for 2012 in consultation with ANES. This index, ranging from 0 to 100, represents the scaled responses to four variables indicating: “trust in the federal government to do what is right” (VCF0604/trustgov_trustgrev or trustgov_trustgstd); whether “the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people” (VCF0605/trustgov_bigintrst); whether “people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes” (VCF0606/trustgov_waste); and whether “quite a few of the people running the government are crooked” (VCF0608/trustgov_corrpt). Separate factor analyses were also conducted in order to ensure that the patterns shown in the aggregate index were not being driven by any single item in the index.¹⁴

3.2. Performance

Three groups of variables are used to indicate performance: attitudes towards incumbent authorities, economic evaluations, and policy satisfaction. All have been included in previous studies of partisanship and trust (e.g. see Citrin and Green, 1986; Keele, 2005, 2007) and race and trust (e.g. see Avery, 2006, 2007; Miller, 1974).

Attitudes towards incumbent political authorities are indicated by feelings about the President (VCF0428/ftpo_pres) and Congressional approval (VCF0992/congapp_job). The former variable asked respondents how they feel about the President on a scale where answers range from 0, indicating “feeling cold”, and 100, indicating “feeling warm”. The congressional approval measure asks respondents whether they “approve”, “disapprove” or are “somewhere in the middle” in terms of

¹¹ Walton does not consider political trust but does show how context strongly shapes presidential approval for Black and White Americans (see e.g. Fig. 8.2 in Walton, 1997: 142).

¹² Gay's (2002) research on attitudes towards Congressional Representatives shows that partisanship has a much larger effect on the interactions between Whites and their Congressional Representatives than it does on the interactions between Blacks and their Congressional Representatives.

¹³ Please contact the author for further details and/or for the SAS code.

¹⁴ This was estimated across groups and then by race and showed that all items loaded well on a single factor in each year. The cronbach's alpha for the items is .67 overall, .65 for Black respondents and .67 for White respondents. Plotting of the trends for each of the four index items across all groups and then separately for each group showed stability in the item trends within and across all years except in 1966 where some of the items showed sharp peaks whereas others did not change, particularly for Black Americans. I ran all analyses with and without this particular year. The general direction and significance of the effects does not change. However, the effect of winning (discussed in multivariate analysis), though in the same direction, was much larger in the models for Black Americans when this year is included. Therefore, in order not to over-estimate the magnitude of the effect, I take the more conservative approach and provide the results of multivariate models without this particular year.

“the way the U.S. Congress has been handling its job”. Economic assessments are measured by prospective personal (VCF0881/finance_finnext) and national (VCF0872/econ_ecnext) economic evaluations. These are both coded on a 3-point scale with one indicating that the respondent expects their own/ the national economic situation to worsen, 2 indicating that it will stay the same, and 3 indicating that it will improve.

Policy satisfaction is indicated by three variables indicating placement in terms of defense spending (VCF0843/def-sprr_self – 7 point scale, 0 indicates that “we should be spending less on defense” and 6 indicates that “defense spending should be greatly increased”), jobs (VCF0809/guarpr_self – 7 point scale 0 indicates that “the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living” and 6 indicates that “the government should just let each person get ahead on his/their own” and aid to minorities (VCF0830/aidblack_self – 7 point scale, 0 indicates that “government should help minority groups” and 6 indicates that “minority groups should help themselves”). Each of these was re-coded for the multivariate analysis into a categorical measure in order to compare those who are “satisfied” with those who wanted a change in either direction (see [Avery, 2006](#)).

Finally, I include controls for three demographic variables indicating education, age, and Southern residence.

3.3. Race and partisanship

Race is coded as a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent identified as Black or White (VCF0106/dem_raceet). At the individual-level, party identification is coded from (VCF0301/pid_self) as Democrat, Republican, and Independent.¹⁵ The party affiliation of the President is indicated by a dummy variable indicating whether the President in a given year was Democrat or not. Ten years had Democratic Presidents: Johnson (1964, 1966 and 1968), Carter (1978, 1980), Clinton (1994, 1996, 1998, and 2000) and Obama (2012). Fourteen years had Republican Presidents: Eisenhower (1958), Nixon (1970, 1972), Ford (1974, 1976), Reagan (1982, 1984, 1986 and 1988), George Bush (1990, 1992), and George W. Bush (2002, 2004, 2008).

[Table 1](#) shows the distribution of trust, the political evaluations, partisanship and the demographic characteristics. The first three columns in the table show the means on each variable averaged across all years, and then for years in which the President is Democratic and Republican respectively. The next three columns show the same for Black and then for White respondents. The scores on the trust index show that at the aggregate level, there is little difference in trust overall between years when there is a Democratic (35.29) compared to when there is a Republican President (34.83). This changes dramatically when race is considered. Whereas Black Americans are about 8 points more trusting during Democratic presidencies, the differences for White Americans are negligible. Interestingly, the presidential thermometer also shows little difference between presidencies when calculated for the aggregate population. However, there are again dramatic differences when this variable is considered by race for different administrations. For Black respondents, the mean presidential thermometer score is much higher (78) during Democratic than Republican (43) presidencies. In contrast, for White respondents the reverse is true; it is higher (though not to the same extent) during Republican (61) than Democratic (55) presidencies. Several of the remaining measures show race-based differences, but these do not appear to vary across administrations.

[Figs. 1–4](#) show the over-time distributions of the focal variables used in this analysis. That trust is so variable by race and administration is clearly not an artifact of a single year. As illustrated in [Fig. 1](#) which shows the trust trends for both Black and White Americans, the relative trust changes depending on the partisanship of the President. The trust levels of Black Americans are higher under Democratic Presidents and lower under Republican Presidents. Worth noting in this and all subsequent figures is the blue bar on the far right of the figure denoting the Obama Presidency. Here the trust levels of Black Americans are higher than Whites but the gap is not dramatically different than in other years.¹⁶

[Figs. 2 and 3](#) show the respective party identification of White and Black Americans. [Fig. 2](#) shows that the number of White Democrats has been in a slow decline over more than 50 years and that there has been a further decline under Obama. The number of White Republicans has increased slightly. [Fig. 3](#) shows the trends in party identification for Black Americans. The black line at the top of the figure illustrates the extremely high levels of affiliation with the Democratic Party as well as the relative stability of this identification over time. There has been a slight increase in the number of Black Democrats under Obama but this change is not especially dramatic.

¹⁵ This represents 7-point continuum in the ANES (ranging from Strong Democrat to Strong Republican). I coded all respondents who selected Strong Democrat, Weak Democrat and Independent Leaning Democrat as Democrat, all respondents who selected Strong Republican, Weak Republican and Independent Leaning Republican as Republican and all respondents who selected Independent as Independent. [Petrocik \(2009\)](#) has shown that it is more accurate to treat leaners as affiliated with political parties than as Independents. There were some anomalies in 2004 with this variable, and partisanship was thus coded from VCF0303 for this particular year (see also ANES documentation).

¹⁶ [Appendix A](#) provides several graphs each of which plots the gap in trust and the gap in the Presidential thermometer scores between Blacks and Whites ([Figs. 5 and 8](#)), between Black Democrats and White Democrats ([Figs. 6 and 9](#)), and between White Democrats and White Republicans ([Figs. 7 and 10](#)). The graphs show a race difference in trust of about 1.5 points for Blacks under Obama (2012 vs. other years) compared to other Democratic Presidents. There may have been a greater effect in other years. The gap in the Presidential thermometer score has increased under Obama though this is part of an ongoing trend. It is not only that Black Democrats like Obama more than White Democrats ([Fig. 9](#)) but also that Obama is especially disliked by White Republicans (see also [Brooks and Manza, 2013](#)). The graphs also show that Black Democrats liked Clinton more than any other President at that point ([Fig. 9](#)), though this did not translate to increased political trust ([Fig. 6](#)).

Table 1

Means on trust in government, performance assessments, and partisanship, 1958–2012.

	All			Black			White		
	All years	Democrat years	Republican years	All years	Democrat years	Republican years	All years	Democrat years	Republican years
Trust index (0–100)	35.02	35.29	34.83	35.28	39.92	31.97	34.98	34.61	35.25
<i>Performance</i>									
<i>Incumbents</i>									
Presidential thermometer (0–100)	58.20	57.45	58.72	57.55	77.88	43.04	58.29	54.44	61.00
Congressional approval (1–3)	2.09	2.16	2.05	2.05	2.04	2.05	2.10	2.18	2.05
<i>Economic</i>									
Personal economic expectations (1–3)	1.81	1.79	1.83	1.70	1.61	1.77	1.83	1.81	1.84
National economic expectations (1–3)	1.95	1.90	1.99	1.87	1.70	1.98	1.97	1.93	1.99
<i>Policy satisfaction</i>									
Government let everyone get ahead on their own (0–6)	3.30	3.32	3.28	2.16	2.33	2.04	3.46	3.47	3.46
Defense spending should be increased (0–6)	3.05	3.15	2.97	2.86	3.03	2.74	3.08	3.17	3.01
Minorities should help themselves (0–6)	3.49	3.60	3.41	2.27	2.51	2.10	3.67	3.76	3.60
<i>Partisanship</i>									
Democrat (0–1)	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.82	0.83	0.80	0.46	0.46	0.46
Republican (0–1)	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.41	0.41	0.41
Independent (0–1)	0.13	0.12	0.13	0.10	0.09	0.11	0.13	0.13	0.13
<i>Demographics</i>									
Education (0–6)	2.75	2.84	2.69	2.25	2.33	2.19	2.83	2.92	2.76
Age	45.87	46.24	45.62	43.24	43.28	43.21	46.26	46.67	45.97
Southern residence (0–1)	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.31	0.32	0.31

N = 42,987 (6148 Black respondents and 36,839 White respondents).

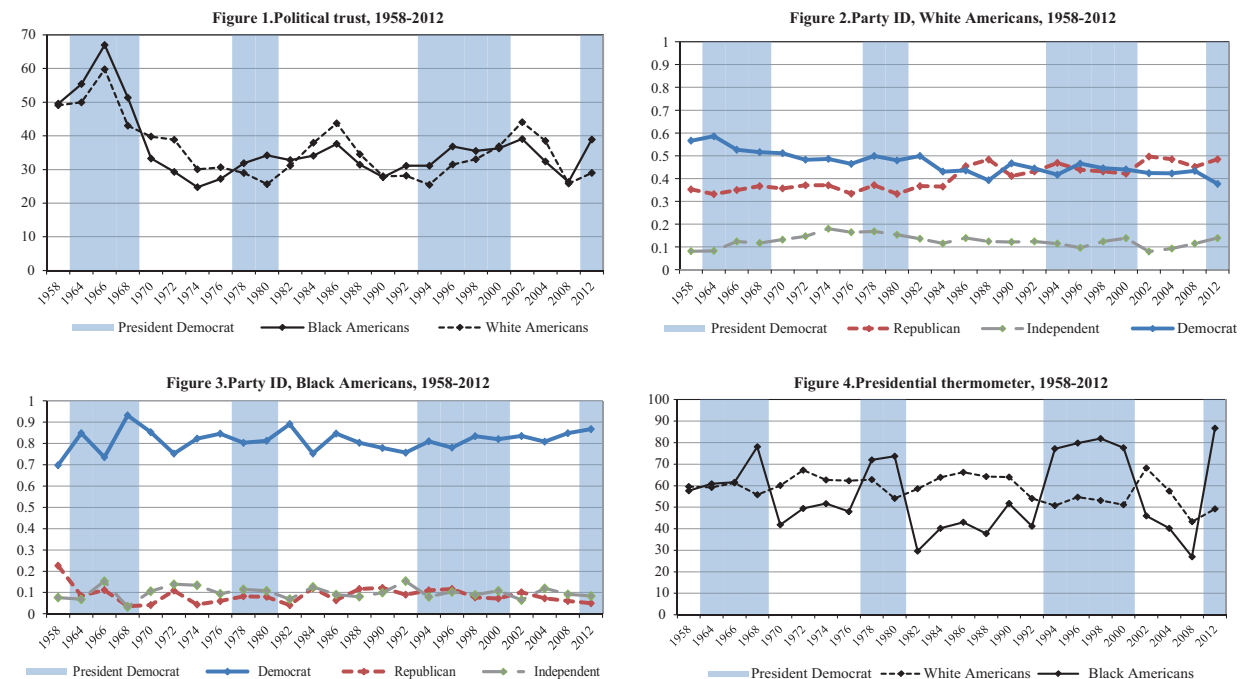
**Figs. 1–4.** Trends in trust, partisanship, and Presidential thermometer by race. Blue bars denote President is Democrat, White denotes Republican. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

Fig. 4 shows the race based trends in Presidential thermometer over time. The pattern in this figure is extremely striking. The thermometer peaks dramatically for Black Americans when the President is Democrat. In contrast, the line for White Americans is much smoother. The reason for this difference can be found in Appendix B which provides a further breakdown of the political trust and presidential thermometer scores by race-partisan combinations. Fig. 16 in this appendix shows that

White Democrats and Republicans have polarized views which, when combined, create an even line. Also worth noting is Fig. 18 which shows that when the President is Democrat, Black Democrats are much warmer towards him than White Democrats.

4. Methods

The ANES data are repeated cross-sectional. I use a linear mixed approach in which individuals are treated as level one, and year is treated as level two (see also Wilkes, 2014).¹⁷ This approach allows the differences across individuals and across the trends in trust to be modeled. The level one effect represents the effect of a given variable on individual-level trust. The level two variables represent the effect on the trend in trust. The variance components σ^2 , τ_{00} indicate the variance in trust at the individual and year levels.¹⁸ Thus, τ_{00} provides an indication of the variability in trust over time, that is, the trend. I can therefore consider the change in this variance across models to ascertain the extent to which the inclusion of macro-level variables ‘explains’ the trend.

First, I specify a random intercepts model with no covariates (2.1). Next, model 2.2 adds the measures of race and partisanship and model 2.3 adds the performance, policy, and demographic variables.¹⁹ Model 2.4 treats race and partisanship in combination and includes a dummy variable indicating years when the President was Democrat. Models 2.5 and 2.6 do not include the presidential thermometer variable in order to consider potential confounding effects between this measure and the party of the President.²⁰ Finally, model 2.6 and 2.7 add the cross-level interaction between the respondent’s partisanship and the party affiliation of the President. There are six possible combinations: Democrat in Democrat year, Republican in Democrat year and Independent in Democrat year, Democrat in Republican year, Republican in Republican year and Independent in Republican year.²¹ To ensure the generalizability of the results, all analyses were weighted using the general weight variable (VCF0009/weight_full) which corrects for any unevenness in sample selection and sample response rates (DeBell, 2010).

5. Findings

Table 2 provides the results from the analysis of the effects of partisanship and short term political assessments on trust for the aggregated population. The first model in this table is an intercept-only model that apportions the variability in trust into its individual and trend components. The intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC) indicates that about 9 percent of the variability in trust is at the year level, and the remainder represents within year differences across individuals. The second model adds dummy variables for race and partisanship. The results in this model show a small global trust difference by race (higher for Black Americans) and a small effect of partisanship on trust. Compared to Democrats, Republicans have slightly higher trust levels whereas Independents have lower trust by about 2 points.

Model 2.3 adds the performance evaluations and demographic controls. Race and Republican identification both become non-significant in this model. Importantly, this model also shows that those who make positive assessments of political incumbents, of the electoral system, of their own economic prospects as well as that of the national economy, have greater trust in government. These short-term assessments also explain a large proportion of both the individual and trend variability. The trend variance decreases from 51 to 41 and the individual variance decreases from 513 to 457. The decline in the BIC also shows that this is a much better fitting model. There is a positive effect of education and no effect of age and Southern residence. Although the inclusion of these latter measures explains little of the variance (results not shown) I nevertheless retain them in order to purge their correlation with the performance evaluation measures.

Model 2.4 tests the role of race in combination with partisanship as well as a dummy variable indicating the Partisan identification of the President. The coefficients show that Black Republicans, White Democrats and White Republicans all have significantly higher levels of trust than Black Democrats, controlling for other factors. Most notable is that Black Republicans have the highest trust levels of any group, a finding I address in the discussion. There is no effect of the Partisanship of the President. Model 2.5 re-tests the effect of race and partisanship, excluding the Presidential thermometer variable. The principle difference with prior models (though they are not nested) is that the effect of individual Republican identification is again significant and positive.

¹⁷ Because there is missing data in the ANES I used multiple imputation. The imputations were created using Honaker and King’s 2010 Amelia II program and the combined datasets were analyzed with the SAS Mianalyze procedure.

¹⁸ Non-mixed approaches used with repeated cross-sectional data include regression with time dummy variables and regression with linear and quadratic indicators of time (see e.g. Thomas and Hughes, 1986). The disadvantage of such approaches is that, unlike the mixed approach where the variance at level two provides an opportunity to assess how well the model fits the trend, there is no R2 type of measure for the trend in standard regression approaches. Furthermore, mixed approaches offer an improvement over these other approaches in that clustered error within years is taken care of via the use of random intercepts, and clustered error across years are addressed by specifying the error structures across the random portion of the model (see e.g. Boehle and Wolf, 2012; DiPrete and Grusky, 1990; Fairbrother and Martin, 2012; Semyonov et al., 2006; Wilkes et al., 2007; Wilkes and Corrigan-Brown, 2011; Yang and Land, 2006).

¹⁹ The effect of Presidential feeling thermometer is treated as random across years.

²⁰ As shown in Appendix A, Black and White Democrats and White Republicans all clearly adjust their Presidential thermometer scores in tandem with the partisanship of the President. The two measures are therefore confounded.

²¹ I use the model specifications for interactions with dummy variables suggested by Yip and Tsang (2007).

Table 2

Mixed models showing political trust, all groups 1958–2012.

	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7
Intercept	34.96***	34.69***	25.81***	25.32***	24.23***	25.64***	25.45***
<i>Individual-level</i>							
Black		0.98*	−0.03		−0.24	−0.29	−0.03#
Partisanship							
Democrat		−	−		−	−	−
Republican		1.17***	0.42		1.32***	−	−
Independents		−2.28***	−1.78***		−1.50***	−	−
Race by Partisanship							
Black Democrat				−			
Black Republican				7.28***			
Black Independent				−0.43			
White Democrat				0.89*			
White Republican				0.89*			
White Independent				−1.16*			
<i>Performance evaluations</i>							
Incumbents							
Presidential thermometer			0.17***	0.17***	−	−	0.17***
Congress “poor job”			−	−	−	−	−
Congress “fair job”			5.00***	4.99***	5.30***	5.33***	4.99***
Congress “good job”			8.97***	8.95***	9.68***	9.69***	8.97***
<i>Policy satisfaction</i>							
Jobs and income							
Satisfied			−	−	−	−	−
Gvt. should do more to help			0.22	0.22	−0.13	−0.05	0.22
Individuals on their own			−0.27	−0.25	−0.49	−0.35	−0.27
Defense spending							
Satisfied			−	−	−	−	−
Increase spending			−0.85	−0.87#	−1.34*	−1.27*	−0.85#
Decrease spending			0.56	0.55	0.57#	0.63#	0.56
Aid to minorities/Blacks							
Satisfied			−	−	−	−	−
Gvt. should help			1.19*	1.20*	0.78	0.85#	1.19*
Minorities help themselves			−2.04***	−2.04***	−2.53***	−2.39***	−2.04***
<i>Economic assessments</i>							
National economy “worse”			−	−	−	−	−
National economy “same”			2.59***	2.59***	3.31***	3.19***	2.59***
National economy “better”			3.91***	3.90***	5.78***	5.24***	3.90***
Personal economy “worse”			−	−	−	−	−
Personal economy “same”			3.51***	3.51***	4.33***	4.22***	3.51***
Personal economy “better”			3.69***	3.71***	4.88***	4.62***	3.69***
<i>Demographics</i>							
Education			0.54***	0.56***	0.47***	0.48***	0.54***
Age			−0.02**	−0.02**	−0.01	−0.01	−0.02***
Southern residence			−0.59*	−0.63**	−0.41	−0.29	−0.60*
<i>Democratic President</i>				−0.71	−1.05		
<i>Winning and losing (cross-level)</i>							
Democrat and Democrat President						−	−
Democrat and Republican President						−2.80	0.60
Republican and Republican President						1.99	1.01
Independent and Republican President						−2.40	−0.82
Republican and Democrat President						−4.07***	0.43
Independent and Democrat President						−4.61***	−2.34***
<i>Variance Components</i>							
τ_{00}	51.00***	50.73***	40.60**	38.29**	44.01	43.45	42.41**
σ^2	513.05***	511.86***	457.94***	452.39***	479.19	475.04	457.94***
% level 2	9.04	9.02	8.14	7.80	8.41	8.38	8.48
BIC	380,143	380,035	375,439	375,386	377,287	376,922	375,435

Note. Standard errors and year random intercepts not shown to save space.

Models 2.4 to 2.6 contain random slope for Presidential thermometer (not shown). 1966 omitted (see text).

Winning and losing denotes a cross-level interaction between individual-level partisanship and the party affiliation of the President.

$p < .10$.* $p < .05$.** $p < .01$.*** $p < .001$.

Table 3

Mixed model showing political trust by race, 1958–2012.

	Black Americans					White Americans				
	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.10
Intercept	34.40***	20.41***	25.03***	25.93***	24.99***	34.92***	24.84***	26.32***	25.32***	25.52***
<i>Individual-level</i>										
Partisanship										
Democrat	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Republican	9.17***	7.22***	6.25***	–	–	0.82**	0.97***	–0.06	–	–
Independents	–1.02	–0.52	–0.78	–	–	–2.46***	–1.68***	–2.04***	–	–
<i>Performance evaluations</i>										
Incumbents										
Presidential thermometer		–	0.16***	–	0.16***		–	0.17***	–	0.17***
Congress “poor job”										
Congress “fair job”		5.84***	5.29***	5.81***	5.30***		5.08***	4.85***	5.14***	4.84***
Congress “good job”		10.46***	9.49***	10.47***	9.50***		9.31***	8.74***	9.37***	8.73***
<i>Policy satisfaction</i>										
Jobs and income										
Satisfied		–	–	–	–		–	–	–	–
Gvt. should do more to help		–0.64	–0.50	–0.65	–0.51		0.02	0.31	0.06	0.31
Individuals on their own		–0.62	–0.63	–0.58	–0.63		–0.51	–0.28	–0.37	–0.29
Defense spending										
Satisfied		–	–	–	–		–	–	–	–
Increase spending		–1.98*	–1.57	–1.94*	–1.57		–1.29*	–0.80	–1.24*	–0.80
Decrease spending		0.91	0.68	0.89	0.67		0.49	0.47	0.55	0.47
Aid to minorities/Blacks										
Satisfied		–	–	–	–		–	–	–	–
Gvt. should help		0.47	0.81	0.49	0.81		1.14*	1.45**	1.17*	1.45**
Minorities help themselves		1.16	1.34	1.20	1.34		–2.69***	–2.26***	–2.59***	–2.27***
<i>Economic assessments</i>										
National economy “worse”		–	–	–	–		–	–	–	–
National economy “same”		2.96*	2.52*	2.92*	2.52*		3.32***	2.59***	3.21***	2.59***
National economy “better”		6.17***	5.14***	6.07***	5.14***		5.48***	3.66***	5.00***	3.66***
Personal economy “worse”		–	–	–	–		–	–	–	–
Personal economy “same”		3.91***	3.09**	3.92***	3.09**		4.34	3.58***	4.24	3.58***
Personal economy “better”		3.88***	3.01**	3.87***	3.01**		4.90	3.82***	4.68	3.82***
<i>Demographics</i>										
Education		–1.10***	–1.07***	–1.10***	–1.06***		0.71***	0.78***	0.72***	0.78***
Age		0.03	0.01	0.03	0.01		–0.02*	–0.03***	–0.02*	–0.03***
Southern residence		3.15***	2.51***	3.17***	2.52***		–1.08***	–1.21***	–0.96***	–1.22***
Democratic President		5.08*	–0.05	–	–		–1.97	–0.83	–	–
<i>Winning and losing (cross-level)</i>										
Democrat and Democrat President				–	–				–	–
Democrat and Republican President				–5.77*	0.01				–1.90	0.80
Republican and Republican President				3.55	6.61*				2.20	0.64
Independent and Republican President				–5.51*	–1.00				–1.78	–0.85
Republican and Democrat President				3.58*	5.63**				–3.93***	0.09

Independent and Democrat President				-1.84	-0.37				-4.65***	-2.63***
Variance Components										
	56.31**	41.07	44.40**	40.35	44.33**	54.26***	46.05	43.49	45.46	43.48**
	479.12***	439.46	425.63***	439.02	425.71***	512.32***	479.09	459.06	475.60	459.05***
% level 2	10.52	8.55	9.45	8.42	9.43	9.58	8.77	8.65	8.72	8.65
BIC	55,623	55,072	54,892	55,058	54,886	324,125	321,738	320,239	321,472	320,234

Note. Standard errors and year random intercepts not shown to save space.

1966 omitted. Presidential thermometer specified as random across years in model for White Americans.

$p < .10$.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

The final two models in the table contain the cross-level interactions between partisanship and the President's party without and with the Presidential thermometer variables. Model 2.6 shows that Republicans and Independents are less trusting under Democratic Presidents and Model 2.7 shows that this effect disappears for Republicans when the Presidential thermometer variable is included. These models provide a baseline, but as currently specified, do not provide a test of the hypotheses about racial differences in short-term vs. system discontent. Table 3, which provides the results of the same models estimated separately for each group, provides these additional tests.

The first set of models for each group (models 3.1 to 3.5 for Black respondents and models 3.6 to 3.10 for White respondents) test the hypotheses. Recall that, concerning the effect of partisanship at the individual level, it was hypothesized that if trust represents short term discontent, then the effect of partisanship should be equivalent across the two groups (H2a). In contrast, if trust represents system discontent, then the effect of partisanship should be either (H2b) different and weaker for Black compared to White Americans or (H2c) different and stronger for Black compared to White Americans. The results in the first three models for Black Americans (3.1–3.3) show that, in comparison with Black Democrats, Black Republicans have trust levels that are about 9 points higher— a difference of 6 points once the performance assessments are included. In contrast, the difference between White Democrats and White Republicans is less than 1 point.²² Thus, that this evidence demonstrates that, in this regard, trust represents system discontent for Black Americans.²³

These models also provide a test of Hypotheses 1a and 1b. Hypothesis 1b was that if trust represents system discontent for Black Americans, then performance evaluations should have much weaker effects than they do for White Americans. There is no evidence in any of the models presented in this table that this is the case. The effects of assessments of political incumbents and of economic evaluations are not only significant for both groups but the magnitude of the effect is almost identical. Thus, the effect of feelings about the President is .16 for Black Americans and .17 for White Americans. There is a 9 point difference for both groups in trust between those who think Congress is doing a good job compared to those who think Congress is doing a poor job. The economic assessments also show a similar and very close pattern for the two groups. Policy satisfaction has little effect on trust for either group with one exception.²⁴ The only policy measure to show a significant divergence across the two groups is in the effect of the “government should aid minorities” policy measure. White Americans who think the government should do more to help are more trusting and White Americans who think that minorities should help themselves are less trusting (see also Hetherington and Globetti, 2002 on the latter measure). This policy measure has no effect for Black Americans. Thus, in this regard, political trust is reflective of short-term discontent for Black Americans.²⁵

The final set of hypotheses centered on the effects of the party affiliation of the President. Three hypotheses were proposed. Hypothesis 3a was that the effect of political winning and losing would be the same by race indicating that trust reflects short-term discontent/satisfaction. Hypotheses 3b and 3c were that, if trust represents system discontent, then there will either be a much weaker or a much greater effect of political winning and losing for Black Americans. I test these hypotheses with sets of models. The first set includes a dummy variable for Presidential administration and the second set includes the cross-level interactions between individual partisanship and Presidential administration. The results clearly show that winning and losing has a greater effect for Black Americans (at least for most) than it does for White Americans. While for Black Americans the coefficient for Democratic Party (model 3.2) is positive and significant (a 5 point trust increase), this same coefficient is not significant for White Americans (model 3.7). Similarly, model 3.4 shows that while Black Democrats are far less trusting when the President is Republican this effect is not significant for White Democrats (model 3.9).²⁶

²² Analysis of the general demographic variables (not shown) indicate that, although in comparison to Black Democrats, Black Republicans and Independents are somewhat younger and have less education, there is little difference in income or class identification among the three groups. When the trends for each of these demographic measures are mapped over time, as would be expected given their relatively smaller samples sizes, there is more volatility in the trends for Black Republicans and Black Independents. This volatility is around a relatively constant mean, and there is no indication of any kind of shift in the general pattern over time. While the education level of Black Republicans, for example, like all other groups, has increased over time, in most years Black Republicans have less education than Black Democrats. The average Black Republican in the sample is therefore different from prominently featured leaders such as Condelezza Rice (Gates, 2011).

²³ Black Republicans and Black Independents are a relatively small proportion of the total Black American population. To date, the largest sample of Black Americans used in any study of race and generalized political trust is 1739 (Avery, 2007). That the multivariate analyses in this paper (without 1966) use a sample of 6148 Black Americans and hence 460 Black Republicans and 570 Black Independents probably accounts for why the effects of partisanship are more evident.

²⁴ Those who want to increase defense spending are less trusting, an effect that is the same for Black and for White respondents.

²⁵ It could also be argued that this evidence also reflects the system discontent of White Independents, though this was not hypothesized a priori.

²⁶ The change in the effect of the coefficients for partisanship when presidential thermometer is included in the models indicates the extent to which that particular group is tying its assessments of the President to whether it is their President. I also conducted separate analyses (not shown) that tested for differences in the effects of years coded as White Republican President, White Democrat President, and Black Democrat President. The full model showed that while trust overall was lower under Obama by about 2 points this was not statistically significant. The model for Black Americans only showed a 1 point (non-significant) difference between Black and White Democratic Presidents (in favor of the former). There was a 5 point (significant) difference between White Democrat and Republican Presidents (in favor of the former). The Model for White Americans showed 1 point difference between White Democrat and Republican (in favor of the latter) and a 3 point difference between White Democrat and Black Democrat (in favor of the former). Thus, the results of the analysis of this data show no significant effect of race of the President. Still, it is worth noting that the general pattern suggests that the race of the President may matter more for Whites. Rather than Black Americans feeling that they are gaining under Obama it may be the case that White Americans feel that they are losing (Tompson and Benz, 2013).

Table 4

Summary of hypotheses and empirical findings in models of trust in government.

	Short-term discontent	H supported?	System discontent	H supported?
Correlate of Trust				
Performance assessments	H1a: Effect for Black = Effect for White	Yes	H1b: Effect for Black < Effect for White	No
Individual partisanship	H2a: Effect for Black = Effect for White	No	H2b: Effect for Black ne/ < Effect for White H2c: Effect for Black ne/ > Effect for White	No Yes
Winning and Losing	H3a: Effect for Black = Effect for White	Yes	H3b: Effect for Black < Effect for White H3c: Effect for Black > Effect for White	No Yes

Table 4 provides a summary of the evidence testing the hypotheses. In terms of performance assessments, the results clearly show that they reflect short-term discontent for both Black and White Americans. That is, the effects of multiple indicators of performance on political trust were almost identical across the two groups. On the other hand, the effects that partisanship and winning and losing have on political trust clearly indicate a pattern of system discontent for Black Americans. First, at the individual level, the effect of partisanship on political trust is both different and larger for Black than it is for White Americans. Black Democrats and Republicans are far more polarized, controlling for all other factors, than White Democrats and Republicans. Second, Black Americans (at least the majority who are Democrats) are also more sensitive to winning and losing than Whites, including White Democrats. Thus, in contrast, to White Americans whose discontent is manifest through partisan withdrawal, Black Americans' system discontent occurs via partisan concentration.²⁷

6. Conclusion

Because it is such a fundamental source of inequality in contemporary U.S. society, much attention has been given to race as a marker of other political outcomes. This has been especially true in terms of the level of interest in the relationship between race and trust in government (Abramson, 1983; Citrin et al., 1975; Hetherington, 1998; Howell and Fagan, 1988; Miller, 1974; Putnam, 2000). The generally accepted view is that, whereas for White Americans levels of trust in government reflect short-term satisfaction with political incumbents and their performance, for Black Americans trust represents a more profound discontent with the political system (Avery, 2007, 2008; Nunnally, 2012; Walton, 1985). The principal aim of this paper was to examine whether trust represents short-term performance or system discontent for Black and White Americans with over time data.

When race and trust are considered over time, it becomes clear that the standard measure of political trust indicates short-term performance evaluations for both Black and White Americans. The multivariate analyses clearly show that performance assessments have the same effect on the trust of Black respondents as they do on the trust of White respondents. Both groups are equally likely to tie how they feel about the President, about Congress, about the economy and about policy to their trust in government. In both cases, when these assessments are more positive, trust in government goes up. The exception to this pattern is in the effect of racial policy assessments which matter for White but not for Black respondents (see also Citrin et al., 1990; Hetherington and Globetti, 2002).

This does not therefore mean that most Black Americans are content with the political system as a whole (Bobo and Gilliam, 1990; Mangum, 2011; Walton, 1997) but instead that political system discontent is manifest through partisanship rather than through the direct effect of other kinds of performance evaluations on trust. There are differential race-based distributions across the political spectrum resulting in the extremely high levels of identification of Black Americans with the Democratic Party. It is also clear that the magnitude of the effects of partisanship on trust also vary by race. Black Democrats are less trusting than White Democrats, even after controlling for performance assessments. Furthermore, the difference in trust between Black Republicans and Black Democrats is far greater than the difference between White Republicans and White Democrats. Indeed, albeit a very small group, Black Republicans are the most trusting of any group. It is likely that in order to identify as Black Republican probably requires an unusual confidence in the political system and its fairness irrespective of who is in charge. This may also be why the trust of Black Republicans is actually higher during years in which the President is Democrat.

The magnitude of the coefficients tying Presidential context to political trust is also much larger for Black than for White Americans. The results clearly show that political winning and losing has a differential effect on Black Americans' trust than it does on White Americans' trust. Black Democrats' profound distrust under Republican Presidents, and the large increase in trust that occurs when the President is Democrat, exists above and beyond that attributable to differences in the effects of performance assessments. In contrast, changes in the party of the President have a more muted

²⁷ I do not assess the racial group consciousness argument (e.g. see Avery, 2006; Nunnally, 2012) in this paper. Although this may have a further effect on trust, it would be unlikely that any measure of racial group consciousness would wipe out the large effects of either performance or partisanship.

effect on the trust levels of Whites though here too there is evidence of increasing polarization (see also [Brooks and Manza, 2013](#)). These results provide much-needed evidence as to the degree to which the political fortunes of Black Americans are tied to the Democratic Party. Most important is that these findings explain why previous work has shown such differential and inconsistent race effects on trust. Single-year analysis cannot address the very large effect of different Presidents on trust.

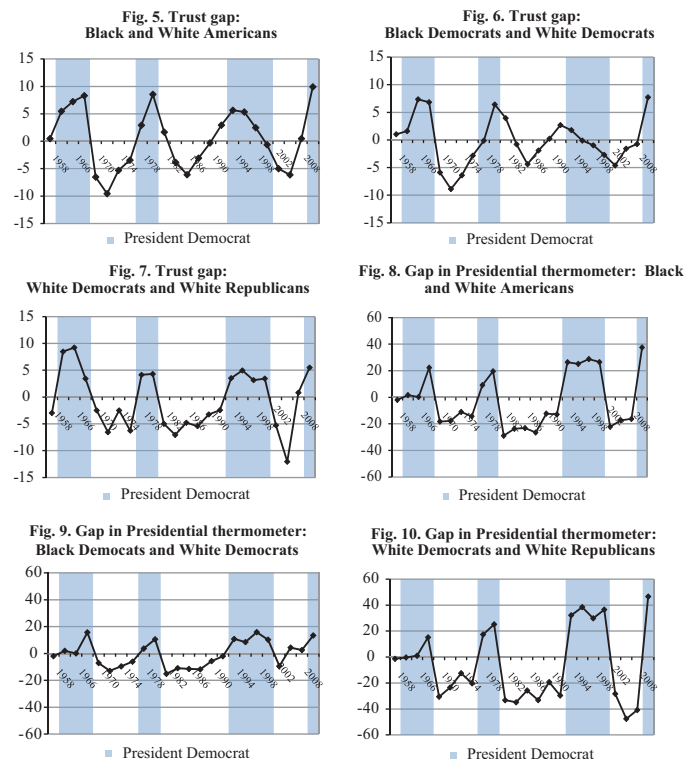
Finally, the present study provides important new evidence about race, partisanship, and trust under the Obama administration. Levels of political trust for Black Americans under Obama were higher than those of White Americans including White Democrats. However, levels of political trust for Black Americans in 2012 were still lower than they were during the Johnson era of the 1960s and thus, if there is a Presidential race effect on trust it is relatively minor. Where there is a difference is in terms of likeability and partisan identification. White Republicans are cooler towards Obama than they have been towards any other President. On the other hand, Democrats, both Black and White, like Obama more than they have liked any other President over the past half century. Yet most tellingly is that it does not appear that White Democrats have, at least in 2012, translated this likability into support. They continue to leave the Democratic Party in droves.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix A

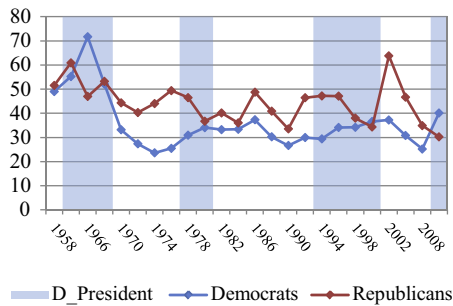
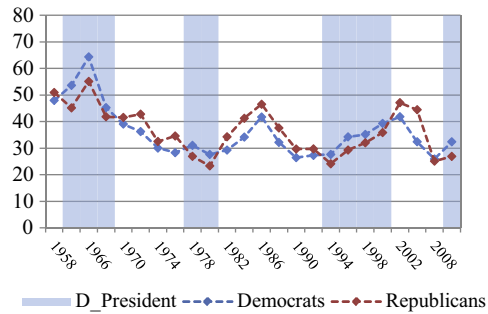
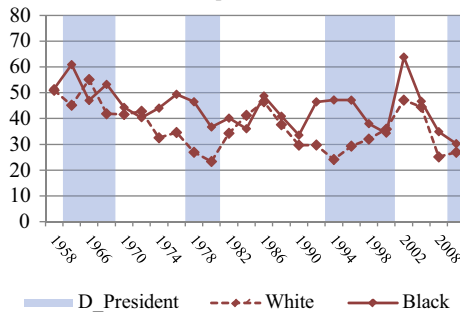
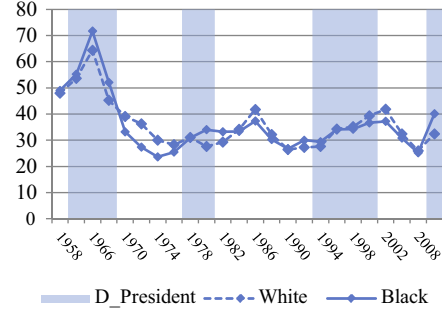
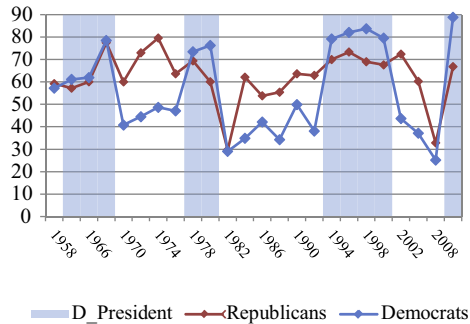
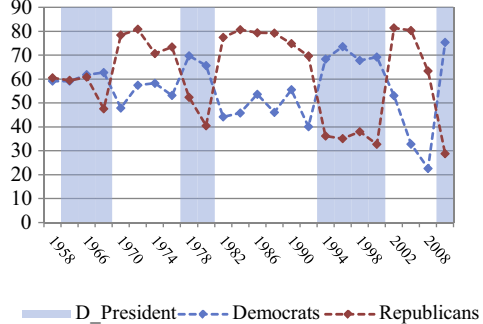
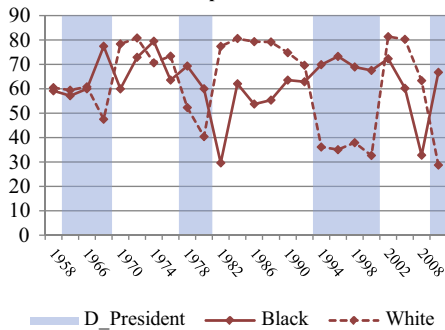
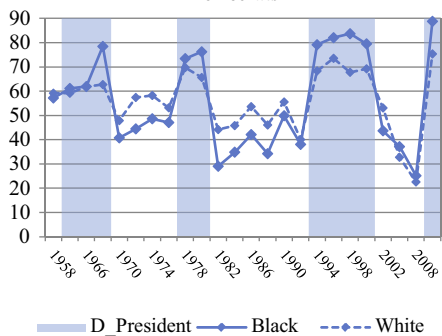
See [Figs. 5–10](#).



Figs. 5–10. Gap in political trust by race and by partisanship, 1958–2012. Years with blue background denote Democratic Presidents, years with white background denote Republican Presidents. Positive values indicate first group more trusting, negative indicate first group less trusting. Eisenhower = 1958; Johnson = 1964–1968; Nixon = 1970–1974; Ford = 1976; Carter = 1978–1980; Reagan = 1982–1988; Bush = 1990–1992; Clinton = 1994–2000; Bush = 2002–2008; Obama = 2012. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

Appendix B

See Figs. 11–18.

**Fig. 11. Political trust:
Black Americans****Fig. 12. Political trust:
White Americans****Fig. 13. Political trust:
Republicans****Fig. 14. Political trust:
Democrats****Fig. 15. Presidential thermometer:
Black Americans****Fig. 16. Presidential thermometer:
White Americans****Fig. 17. Presidential thermometer:
Republicans****Fig. 18. Presidential thermometer:
Democrats****Figs. 11–18.** Race-partisan combinations for political trust and presidential thermometer, 1958–2012.

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