Research Index
Politician Appeal to Minority Voters:

1. McIlwain, C., & Caliendo, S. (2011). Barack Obama, Race-Based Appeals, and the 2008 Presidential Election. In *Race Appeal: How Candidates Invoke Race in U.S. Political Campaigns* (pp. 184-216). Temple University Press. Retrieved June 1, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt14bt9zh.11
   a. Valentino, Hutchings, and White (2002), argue that the mere presence of Black individuals in ads "is not sufficient to launch effective racial cues."[1] Rather, the "pairing of racial images with particular racial narratives" is most effective in priming **negative** racial reactions (ex. The undeserving poor) (13).
   b. Defines **racial** versus **racist appeal** (all racist appeal is racial, but not all racial appeal is racist); racial appeal isn't necessary anti-minority. **Racial cues**, on the other hand, signals how to evaluate policy (16).
   c. Racist appeal: analyzed political ads to see whether racial stereotypes (and which stereotypes) were communicated to voters by white politicians in White vs. minority competitions (21).
   d. Racial appeal: how often do minority candidates appear in opponent's ads; presence of minority individuals alongside politician "represent the 'us', or those who the candidate portends to represent" (ex. only white individuals alongside white politician); message depends on presence/absence of other content (22-23).
   e. Racial appeals by candidates of color usually **focus on the candidate themselves rather than the opponent**, and a **majority of ads with racial appeal feature the candidate's image rather than policy** (35).
   f. Minority candidates with predominantly white constituencies may use **counter-sterotype references** (ex. work hard, play by the rules, etc.) (36). They claim to be "beyond the stereotype" but also cannot "distance themselves from members of their racial group" (38).
   g. Minority candidates, especially when engaging in a contest with one another, may seek to **prove their authenticity** to their respective racial or ethnic community (40).
   h. These candidates may also bring up their race to **defend themselves against racist appeals launched by opponents** (41).

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[1] Valentino, N., Hutchings, V., & White, I. (2002). Cues That Matter: How Political Ads Prime Racial Attitudes during Campaigns. *The American Political Science Review, 96*(1), 75-90. Retrieved June 5, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/3117811

        i.   Why is this an issue? Shifts towards racial equality do not mean politicians don't have an interest in appealing to predispositions White voters have against minority candidates (*The Race Card*, Mendelberg).[2]

2. Arora, M. (2019). *Which race card? understanding racial appeals in U.S. politics* (Order No. 13901988). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (2302017929). Retrieved from https://search.proquest.com/docview/2302017929?accountid=15172

    a.   Perceptions of Black individuals, immigrants, and Muslims have grown increasingly dissimilar among Democrats and Republicans since the 2016 election. Specifically, 69 percent of Democrats identified racial equality as a "very important" issue, while only 24 percent of Republicans made this same designation (78).[3]

    b.   As political division increases, it is likely that **perceptions of acceptable behavior and attitudes toward minority groups is determined by party association** (78).

    c.   Mendelberg argued that, during the 19th century, the norm of white superiority extended across parties; Arora suggests that the contemporary situation is different: the **Republican Party appeals to the norm of inequality of Muslims and Latino individuals, while Democrats appeal to equality**. Thus, Democratic politicians are incentivized to "**signal their support for these groups**" (79).

    d.   In a series of fictional primaries, **Democratic support for candidates who made explicit pro-Black, pro-Latino, and pro-Muslim appeals was substantially greater than for those who did not** (88-89).

    e.   However, when presented with a fictional moderate candidate who displayed (1) anti-Muslim, (2) anti-Immigrant, and (3) anti-Black appeal, support among Democrats sunk below 50% only when presented with the anti-Black message.

3. Mendelberg, T. (2001). *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*. PRINCETON; OXFORD: Princeton University Press. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1trkhws

    a.   Implicit racial appeals allow politicians to "prime racial stereotypes, fears, and resentments while appearing not to do so"; explicit appeals to racial predispositions violate norms of racial equality and are denounced, consequently losing their effectiveness to prime white voters (4). Example of implicit racial appeals: criticizing opponent for not being "hard on crime" (4-6)

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[2] Mendelberg, T. (2001). *The race card: Campaign strategy, implicit messages, and the norm of equality.* Princeton University Press.

[3] Griffin, Robert. 2019. "Two Years In: How Americans' Views Have — and Have Not — Changed During Trump's Presidency." Voter Study Group, May 9, 2019. https://www.voterstudygroup.org/publication/two-years-in.

      i.   This creates a contradiction for politicians that must be upheld: (1) they must adhere to the norm of racial equality while simultaneously (2) mobilizing voter resentment towards minority groups (7).

      ii.   Because finding words by which to appeal implicitly to voters can be difficult, "Visual images are a more effective way to communicate implicitly" (9).

      iii.   The threat to an implicit racial appeal is to make it explicit by explaining it in terms of racial vocabulary. Doing so makes the racial message clear and reminds white voters of the necessity to uphold the norm of racial equality (10).

b. **Some issues have historically been associated with racial appeals, yet are not exclusively about race**: states' rights, criminal justice, welfare dependency. **What makes a message related to these issues racial in nature?**

      i.   Intention (not always clear)

      ii.   Racial references (ex. images of Black welfare recipients)

c. "The Democratic party thus must walk a fine line between alienating Blacks, its most loyal constituency, and losing further support from racially conservative whites" (15).

      i.   Predicts that the Democratic electoral strategy would (1) remain silent on race and (2) point out racial appeals by Republicans (17).

      ii.   **Is this still true?** Arora suggests that Democrats appeal to the norm of racial *equality* rather than inequality (they are not incentivized to appeal to racial inequality). Why did this change occur? Political polarization.

d. Republicans engage in implicit, as opposed to explicit, appeals so to appease their base of "racially resentful whites" while also upholding the norm of racial equality. Explicit racial appeals mean violating the norm and risk losing supporters (17).

e. Defines a **norm** as "standard of social behavior accepted by most members of the culture and that guides and constraints behavior." Norms carry with them an "obligatory character" so that individuals must conform to them or face societal backlash (17).

      i.   Norms arise from social movements and must be actively communicated with the support of influential leaders. Cooperation among individuals is necessary to establish a norm, particularly if it is in conflict with an existing one. Actions such as passing legislation, judicial rulings etc. establish a norm, as can discrediting the previous competing norm. Once established, norms can be "communicated more passively" (17-18).

      ii.   Norms do not necessary resolve institutional problems (ex. systemic racism, racial inequality, etc.) (19).

4. Haider-Markel, D., & Meier, K. (1996). The Politics of Gay and Lesbian Rights: Expanding the Scope of the Conflict. *The Journal of Politics, 58*(2), 332-349. Retrieved June 2, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/2960229
    a. While most advocacy organizations portray the advancement of gay and lesbian equality as a civil rights issue, opponents typically instead treat these issues as moral issues, similar to abortion, drugs & alcohol, etc. (333).
    b. How are gay and lesbian politics described in the U.S.?
        i. Measures by states and localities to **prohibit discrimination against gays and lesbians were dependent on the resources of interest groups**, support of the elite (politicians), and past policies (346).
        ii. On the other hand, **opposition to gay rights places issues on the ballot that were larger in scope, appealing to a moral argument**. Important factors include "religion, party competition, party competition, partisanship, and education" (340-346).
5. Matthew Tokeshi & Tali Mendelberg (2015) Countering Implicit Appeals: Which Strategies Work?, Political Communication, 32:4, 648-672, DOI: 10.1080/10584609.2014.969463
    a. Mendelberg, 2001 claims that the most effective way by which to counter negative implicit racial appeals is by bringing their racial implications to light
        i. Tokeshi and Mendelberg expose a caveat in this conclusion: white candidates benefit from calling out racial appeals, while Black candidates do not (measured by net change in feeling thermometer rating)
        ii. They claim this is why many Black politicians, such as Barack Obama and Cory Booker, have deracialized their campaigns; calling out racist appeals by opponents does not yield an advantage
6. Lazarsfeld, P. F., Berelson, B., & Gaudet, H. (1968). Chapter 1. *The people's choice: how the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign.* 3d ed. New York: Columbia University Press.
    a. '**Opinion leaders**' are individuals who engage in political discourse much more than the general public; a majority of the influence on their political thoughts is sourced from the media (14)
    b. Lazarsfeld et al. suggests a **two-step flow of communication** from the media to opinion leaders to less informed sectors of the American public (14)
    c. How does person-to-person communication reinforce political homogeneity, and why is it perhaps even more effective than media-to-person contact?
        i. The media is self-selecting: those with strong political opinions are drawn to the media to "test and strengthen" predispositions (14); person-to-person communication, on the other hand, can engage the political indifferent through unexpected or casual conversation (15)

ii.   Person-to-person communication, when met with resistance, can be adaptable and flexible to get one's point across; this is not the case with the media, which aims for the "whole target instead of just the center (the individual)" (15)

iii.   The threat of voting compliance from a party or the media is much less immediate than the threat from another individual; the reward for compliance is avoiding discomfort (assuming individuals who enjoy non-conformism is much smaller than those who do not, of course) (16)

iv.   Individuals may doubt the intentions or values of the media source from which they receive information, but find comfort in listening to other individuals with whom they share the same "status and interests"; prestige of the individual also plays a role in influencing one's political opinions (consequences seem more plausible) (16-17)

v.   Opinion leaders may be able to leverage personal connections to attract friends, coworkers, or other individuals to the polls without discussion of political issues, candidate personalities, etc. ; this mobilization is nearly impossible through the media (17)