Racially Polarized Voting and Black Electoral Success in Jacksonville, Florida

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Executive Summary

In this report, I examine past election data from the City of Jacksonville and Duval County in Florida to evaluate whether voting is racially polarized – that is, whether Black voters prefer one candidate and white voters, generally speaking, vote as a group against the Black-preferred candidate. To determine whether patterns of racially polarized voting exist, I evaluate 14 citywide elections between 2014 and 2020. Using this past election data, I further perform analysis to estimate the proportion of the electorate that would need to be Black in order for the Black-preferred candidate to achieve electoral success. I conclude the following:

- Patterns of racially polarized voting are present in Jacksonville. In every single election under study, the majority of Black voters support one candidate, and the majority of white voters support the opposing candidate.

- I evaluate the data both by examining simple scatterplots with fitted lines displaying the relationship between percent of each racial group in a given precinct and percent of votes cast for each candidate. I find that as the percent of voters who are Black in a precinct increases, so do votes cast for the Black-preferred candidate. I also evaluate the data using methods of iterative ecological inference. This allows me to derive an estimated proportion of each racial group who supported each candidate in a given election, with 95 percent confidence bands. Both methods reveal patterns of racially polarized voting.

- Candidates preferred by Black voters disproportionately do not achieve electoral success citywide. The majority of white voters in Jacksonville vote as a bloc against the Black-preferred candidate. This is true in 10 out of 14 elections (71 percent) under study.

- All elections were evaluated to estimate the proportion of the citizen voting age population (CVAP) that would need to be Black in order for the Black-preferred candidate to achieve electoral success. Across all elections, estimates ranged widely from 19 percent to 60 percent, with an average of 41 percent. Omitting elections where the Black candidate succeeded citywide, the average was 44 percent.

Background and Qualifications

I am an Assistant Professor of Government at the University of Texas, at Austin. I received my Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Washington in 2016. Previous appointments include as a post-doctoral fellow with the Prisons and Justice Initiative at Georgetown University

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(2016-2017), and as an Assistant Professor of Political Science and Criminal Justice at Rutgers University (2017-2020).

My area of expertise concerns institutional barriers to civic participation including voting, with an emphasis on barriers to participation faced by justice-involved people. I have 21 peer-reviewed articles published or forthcoming, including an award-winning book with Oxford University Press titled ``Mobilized by Injustice: Criminal Justice Contact, Political Participation and Race.'' My research has been published in the discipline's leading journals, including The Journal of Politics, Perspectives on Politics, Political Research Quarterly and Political Behavior. My research has been recognized for its excellence from my colleagues in Political Science, including multiple best paper awards and the best book in Racial and Ethnic Politics published in 2020 from the American Political Science Association. My research has likewise received recognition for its merit through the award of nearly half a million dollars in funding, cumulatively, from such organizations as the Russell Sage Foundation and the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab at MIT. My curriculum vitae is provided in the Appendix to this report.

This report provides analysis as to whether patterns of racially polarized voting are present in Jacksonville, Florida; and an estimated percentage of Black voting-eligible citizens that is likely to yield electoral success for Black-preferred candidates within the city. In order to formulate the opinions presented in this report, I evaluate 14 previous elections held between 2014 and 2020. I evaluate election data publicly available via the Duval County Supervisor of Elections website using methods of ecological inference in order to assess patterns of racially polarized voting. I further draw on estimates of voter registration and turnout in order to estimate the percent of citizen voting age residents who would need to be Black that is likely to lead to electoral success for the Black-preferred candidate.

Racially Polarized Voting

Racially polarized voting is understood to be present in a given electoral context when a plurality of a minority group votes for a given candidate (or initiative/ballot measure), and a plurality of the dominant racial group votes for the opposing candidate (or against the relevant initiative/ballot measure). In the case of Jacksonville, Florida, we are most interested in the voting patterns of the two largest racial groups in Duval County, white and Black residents.[1]

Experts evaluate multiple elections to assess whether a pattern of racially polarized voting occurs in a relevant geographic unit. In the case of Jacksonville, Florida, I evaluate voting patterns at the precinct level in the City of Jacksonville, which is coterminous with Duval County. If racially

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[1] According to the most recent estimates of citizen voting age population (CVAP) provided by the Census (2019), the Whites comprised 58.5 percent of the CVAP in Jacksonville, Black residents accounted for 29 percent, Latinos accounted for 7.3 percent, Asian Americans accounted for 4.1 percent and residents of some other race accounted for the remaining 1.1 percent. Estimates were retrieved from: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/voting-rights/cvap.html

polarized voting is present, in a two-candidate contest I would expect to see a majority of Black voters to support one candidate (referred to as the Black-preferred candidate), and a majority of white voters to support the other candidate (referred to as the white-preferred candidate). However, if a majority of both racial groups support the same candidate, then voting patterns in that particular election are not racially polarized.

The existence of racially polarized voting does not mean that voters intended to discriminate when choosing who to vote for. Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act does not require the presence of intentional race discrimination in voters' preferences for the law's mandates to apply. Instead, Section 2 prohibits the dilution of the voting power of minority groups. When patterns of racially polarized voting are present, depending on the configuration of political districts, dominant group voters may block minority voters from electing preferred candidates. The redistricting process offers the opportunity to create districts that allow minority voters to elect their preferred representatives, ensuring their voices are heard in the policy making process.

In this report, I evaluate whether patterns of racially polarized voting are present in Jacksonville, Florida. Details about the elections chosen for analysis are included below. I assess patterns of racially polarized voting at the precinct level. There are 199 precincts in Jacksonville. There are 14 City Council Districts. I elect to evaluate the data at the precinct level, rather than among the 14 districts, because patterns of the nature under study are easier to detect when one has more data points. Moreover, whether voting is racially polarized is a distinct question from one about the most equitable configuration of city council districts. I elaborate further on the empirical choices made for this report below.

Ecological Inference

To determine if patterns of racially polarized voting occur, analysts must infer individual-level voting behavior from aggregate data. They do this in the absence of individual level information about voters who are registered; voters who cast a ballot; and crucially, for whom they vote. Analysts use ecological inference to infer individual-level vote choice based on patterns observed in different precincts. They will estimate the racial composition of eligible voters in a given precinct using methods of spatial interpolation to convert voting-age population/citizen voting-age population estimates made available via the Census into estimates for the appropriate geographic unit. The Duval County Supervisor of Elections publicly provides a count of votes cast by racial group, and a count of eligible voters by race for each precinct. This allows for a more precise estimation of the candidate preference of a given racial group than might otherwise be possible were we to employ methods of spatial interpolation using only Census data.

Nevertheless, without data on individual-level voting decisions, I still do not know exactly how many ballots were cast by Black voters for a specific candidate. To estimate this, experts leverage various methods of ecological inference, including iterative ecological regression, homogenous precinct analysis and ecological inference. The R software package, eiCompare (Collingwood et al. 2020), builds upon packages eiPack (Lau, Moore, and Kellermann 2020) and ei (King and Roberts 2016) to streamline analysis of racially polarized voting, and includes several kinds of statistical methods. In this report, I first examine each election at the bivariate level, presenting simple scatterplots with fitted lines displaying the relationship between percent of the two racial groups analyzed in this report in a given precinct and the percent of votes cast

for each candidate. I then subject the observed relationships to more rigorous analysis, relying on iterative ecological inference as implemented via eiCompare. Finally, for each analysis I provide 95 percent confidence bands to demonstrate the range of statistical uncertainty contained in the estimates.

List of Elections Analyzed

Fourteen elections were selected for evaluation of racially polarized voting in Jacksonville, Florida. The Duval County Supervisor of Elections makes election results available to the public. Data suitable for analysis are easily accessible via this website from 2014 onward.[2] Elections which featured a Black candidate who received a substantial portion of the vote, and in which all 199 precincts participated were considered for analysis. My analysis includes general elections, municipal first elections featuring only two candidates, and nonpartisan judicial primaries featuring only two candidates—all of which are open to all voters in the City, regardless of party registration. Minor contests that are not obviously political, such as member of the soil and water conservation board, were also omitted for the sake of parsimony.

Table 1 lists the 14 contests between 2014 and 2020 that met the specifications I outlined above. Racially polarized voting is evident in every race evaluated for this report. In two races, the candidate preferred by Black voters is not themselves Black, but they face a Black opponent. In the 2019 general election for the at large city council seat for group 1, Lisa King, a white Democrat, is the Black-preferred candidate running against Terrance Freeman, a Black Republican. During the same election cycle the contest for at large city council seat for group 3, the Black-preferred candidate is white democrat Tommy Hazouri, running against Black Republican Greg Rachal. In 10 out 14 contests, the candidate preferred by Black voters was blocked from successful election; white voters voted as a bloc for the alternative candidate. Three contests are for statewide offices: the attorney general race during the 2018 general election, the gubernatorial race during the 2018 general election, and the commissioner of agriculture race during the 2014 general election.

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[2] Data for evaluation were retrieved from here: https://www.duvalelections.com/Election-Information/Past-Election-Results. Available data included counts of the number of votes cast and number of registered voters by race, at the precinct level. This information was used to calculate turnout by race, by precinct.

Table 1. Contests Analyzed in Jacksonville, Florida.

Race	Election	Black-preferred	White-Preferred	Type of Office	RPV	Black Pref'd Blocked
County judge group 1	primary 2020	Isaac D. East	Scott Mitchell	Judicial	Yes	Yes
County judge group 6	primary 2020	Rhonda Peoples Waters	Erin Perry	Judicial	Yes	No
city council at large group 1	general 2019	Lisa King	Terrance Freeman	City	Yes	Yes
city council at large group 3	general 2019	Tommy Hazouri	Greg Rachal	City	Yes	No
sheriff	primary 2019	Tony Cummings	Mike Williams	County	Yes	Yes
tax collector	general 2018	Mia L. Jones	Jim Overton	County	Yes	No
mayor	general 2015	Alvin Brown	Lenny Curry	City	Yes	Yes
sheriff	general 2015	Ken Jefferson	Mike Williams	County	Yes	Yes
city council at large group 1	general 2015	Kimberly Daniels	Anna Lopez Brosche	City	Yes	Yes
city council at large group 5	general 2015	Ju'Coby Pittman	Samuel C. Newby	City	Yes	Yes
supervisor of elections	primary 2015	Tracie Davis	Mike Hogan	County	Yes	Yes
attorney general	general 2018	Sean Shaw	Ashley Moody	State	Yes	No
governor	general 2018	Andrew Gillum	Ron DeSantis	State	Yes	Yes
commissioner of agriculture	general 2014	Thaddeus Thad Hamilton	Adam Putnam	State	Yes	Yes

Racially Polarized Voting Across Elections

For each election evaluated, I present scatterplots displaying the bivariate association between race and candidate choice. In order to more precisely estimate the degree to which white and Black voters support opposing candidates, I also present estimates derived using methods of ecological inference. Ecological inference is most appropriately applied when the units under evaluation (in this case, precincts) are characterized by a high degree of homogeneity. In the case of Jacksonville, of the 199 precincts included in the analysis, in 20 of them more than 90 percent of voters are white, and in 20 of them more than 90 percent of voters are Black.

County Judge, Group 1, August 2020 Primary: Isaac East (Black-Preferred) vs. Scott Mitchell (White-Preferred)

Figure 1 visually displays the bivariate association between race and candidate choice for the election of Duval County Judge (Group 1) in the 2020 Primary Election. The Black-preferred candidate is Isaac East. The correlation coefficient between percent of voters who are Black and percent vote for Isaac East is .83 (correlation coefficients range from -1 to 1, and 0.83 is thus very high and positive). The top two panels display support for the Black-preferred candidate, while the bottom two panels display support for the white-preferred candidate. The panels on the left side of the plot display support for each candidate as the percent of Black voters in a precinct increases; the panels on the right side of the plot display support for each candidate as the percent of white voters in a precinct increases. As the percent of Black voters declines in a given precinct, so too does support for Isaac East. The bivariate results provide clear evidence of racially polarized voting.
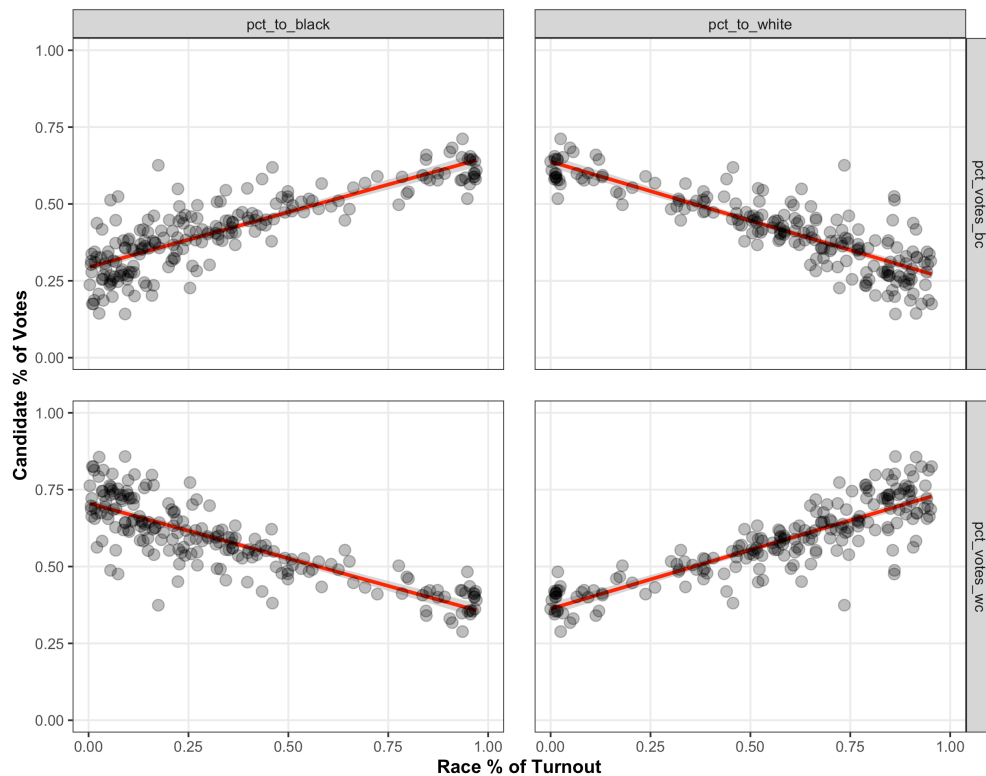
Figure 1. Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, county judge group 1, 2020 primary.

In order to more precisely estimate the degree of racially polarized voting in this election, I turn to methods of ecological inference. The results are displayed in Figure 2. The results reflect the bivariate plots above. Estimates indicate Black voters supported Isaac East at 64.93 percent, compared to only 25.93 percent of white voters. By contrast, white voters supported the opposing candidate, Scott Mitchell, at 74.08 percent, relative to only an estimated 35.03 percent of Black voters. Evaluating the data using ecological inference does not change the overall conclusion that racially polarized voting is present in this election.
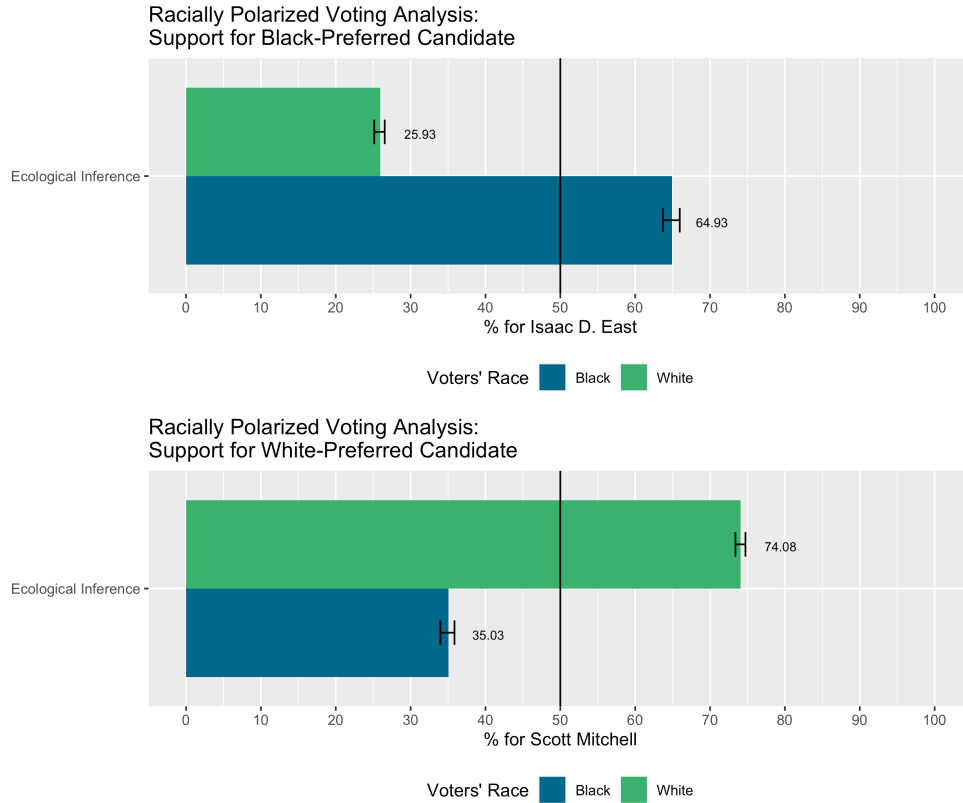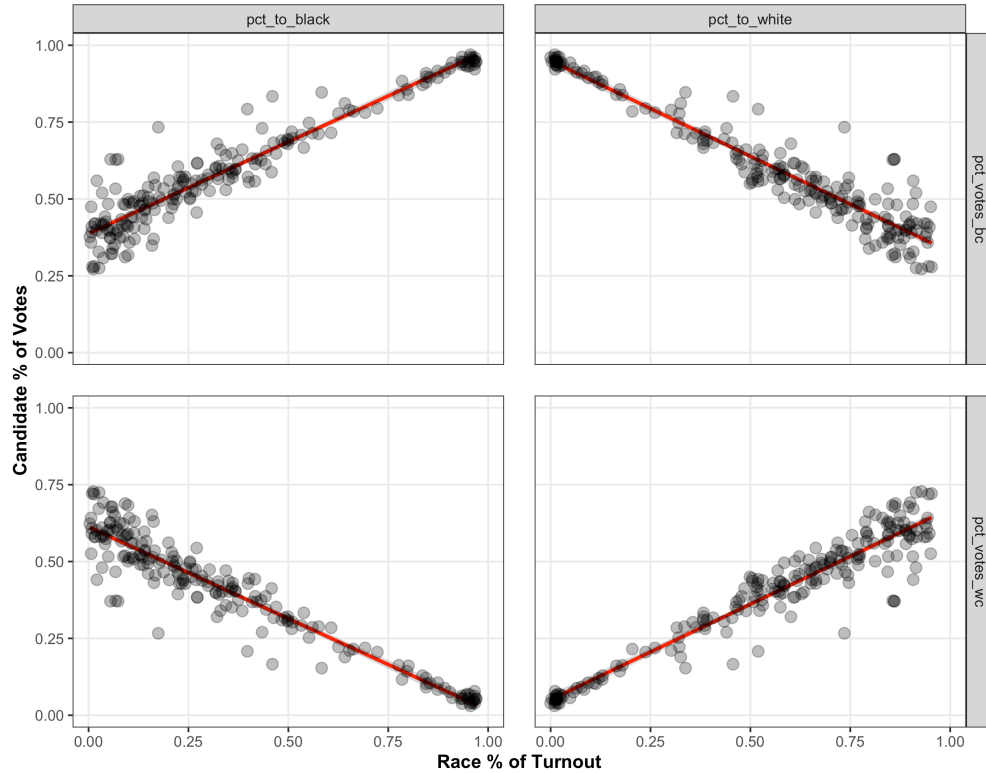
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

25.93
64.93
% for Isaac D. East
Ecological Inference
Voters' Race   Black   White

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

74.08
35.03
% for Scott Mitchell
Ecological Inference
Voters' Race   Black   White

Figure 2. *Racially polarized voting assessment, county judge group 1, 2020 primary*

County Judge, Group 6, August 2020 Primary: Rhonda Peoples Waters (Black-Preferred) vs. Erin Perry (White-Preferred)

During the same election (August 2020), there was a second County Judge contest, in Group 6. This contest features an even stronger association between race and candidate choice. The correlation coefficient between percent of voters who are Black and support for the Black candidate of choice, Rhonda Peoples Waters, is a striking .95. Figure 3 suggests that as the percent of Black voters in a precinct increases, so too does support for Peoples Waters. In contrast, as the percent of white voters increases, support for Peoples Waters declines and support for the white candidate, Erin Perry increases.

Figure 3. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, county judge group 6, 2020 primary.*

Figure 4 offers further evidence of racially polarized voting. An estimated 97.77 percent of Black voters cast a ballot for Peoples Waters. While a not insignificant proportion of white voters also backed Peoples Waters (an estimated 31.72 percent), the majority are estimated to have voted for Perry (68.28 percent)
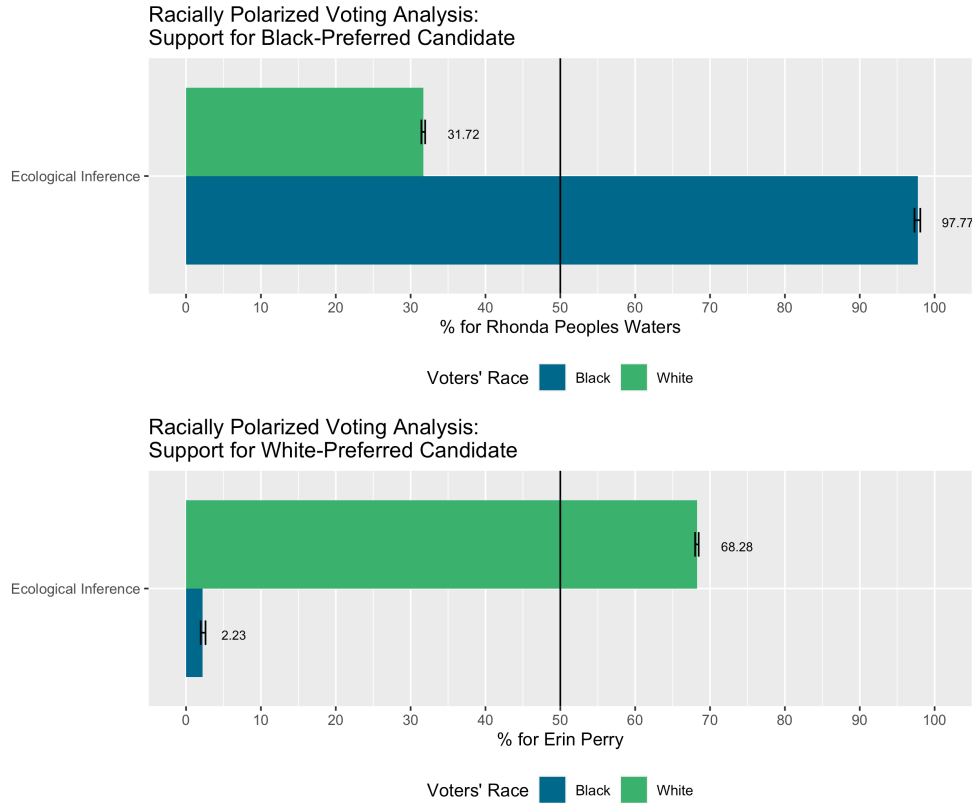
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

Figure 4. Racially polarized voting assessment, county judge group 6, 2020 primary

City Council At-Large, May 2019 General: Lisa King (Black-Preferred) vs. Terrance Freeman (White-Preferred)

The election for an at large, Group 1 representative on the Jacksonville City Council featured a white Democrat, Lisa King, running against a Black Republican, Terrance Freeman. In this instance, as displayed in Figure 5, the Black-preferred candidate is Lisa King. The correlation coefficient between percent Black voters and percent support for Lisa King is .87. Overall, although the Black-preferred candidate is herself white, there is evidence of racially polarized voting at the bivariate level.
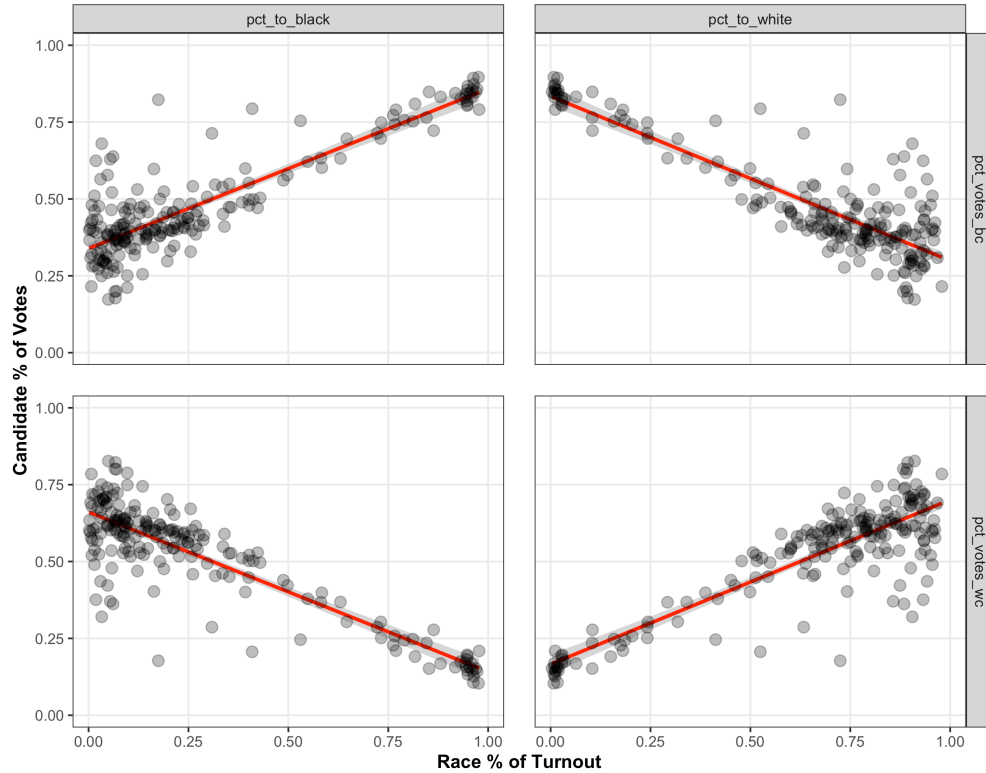
Figure 5. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, city council at large group 1, 2019 general.*

The relationship holds when subjected to more precise analysis, using methods of ecological inference. King is estimated to have received 86.43 percent of the Black vote, relative to 30.21 percent of the white vote. By contrast, Freeman received only 13.44 percent of the Black vote and 69.76 percent of the white vote.
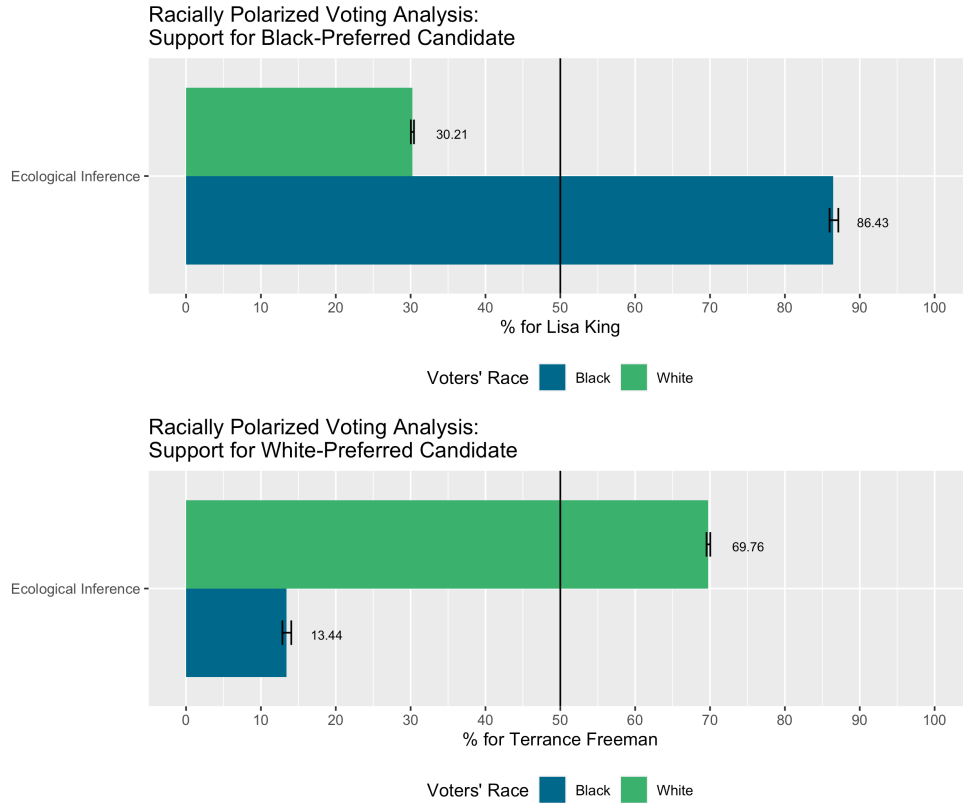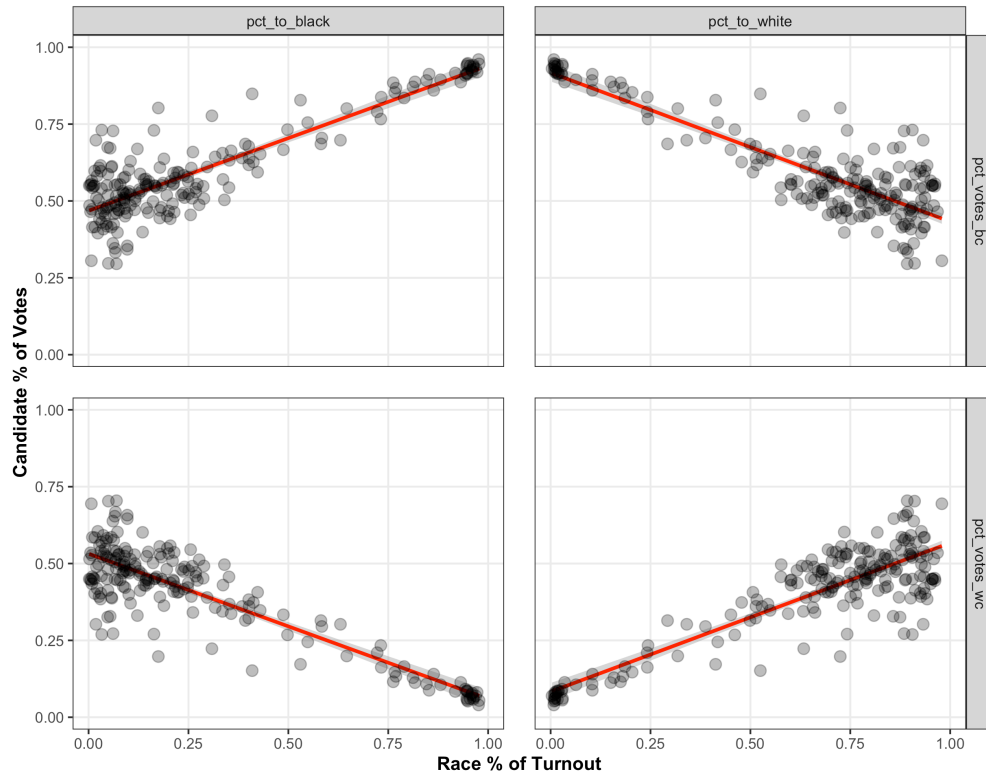
Figure 6. *Racially polarized voting assessment, city council at large group 1, 2019 general*

Group 3 City Council At Large, Fall 2019 General Election: Tommy Hazouri (Black-preferred) vs. Greg Rachal (White Preferred)

The contest between Tommy Hazouri, a white Democrat, and Greg Rachal, a Black Republican, displays similar patterns to those seen in the elections analyzed so far. The bivariate relationships, displayed in Figure 6, indicate that voting is racially polarized and that Hazouri is the Black-preferred candidate. The correlation coefficient between support for Hazouri and percent Black voters is .87.

Figure 7. Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, city council at large group 3, 2019 general.

Estimates derived from methods of ecological inference suggest that Hazouri garnered nearly 95 percent of the Black vote. He also garnered 43.54 percent of the white vote, but a majority of whites are predicted to have supported Rachal (56.54 percent).
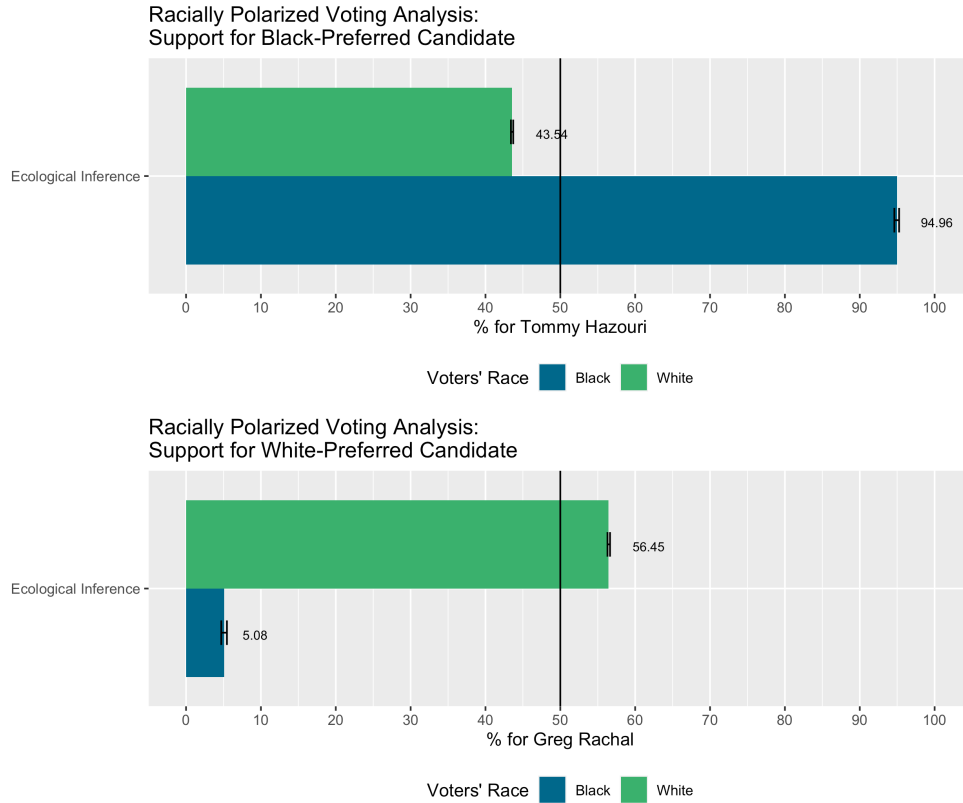
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

43.54

94.96

% for Tommy Hazouri

Voters' Race ■ Black ■ White

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

56.45

5.08

% for Greg Rachal

Voters' Race ■ Black ■ White

Figure 8. Racially polarized voting assessment, city council at large group 3, 2019 general.

Jacksonville Sheriff, March 2019 First Election: Tony Cummings (Black-Preferred) vs. Mike Williams (White-Preferred)

The 2019 First Election included a race for Jacksonville Sheriff. Tony Cummings (Black-preferred) ran against Mike Williams (white-preferred). The correlation coefficient between percent Black voters and support for Cummings is, again, very high, at .94. Figure 9 displays the bivariate relationship, with clear evidence that the more heavily white a precinct, the lesser support received by Cummings (and greater support for Williams).

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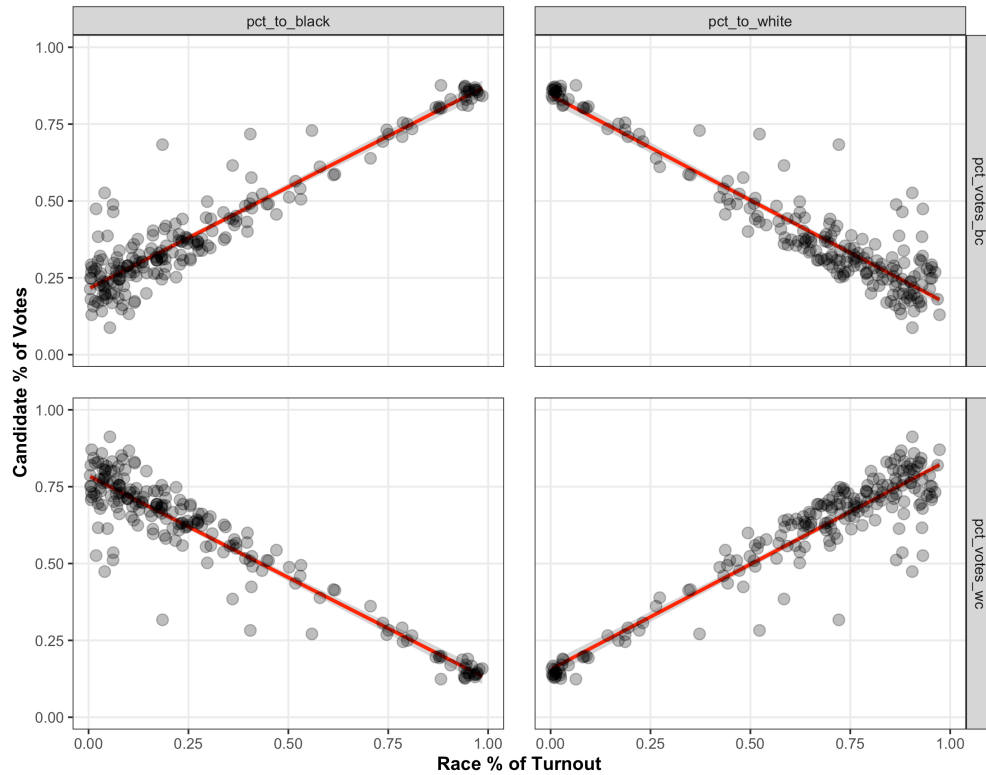
Figure 9. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, Sheriff, 2019 First Election*

Ecological inference analysis estimates that 87.99 percent of Black voters supported Cummings, while an estimated 84.74 percent of the white vote went to Williams. Cummings lost to Williams.
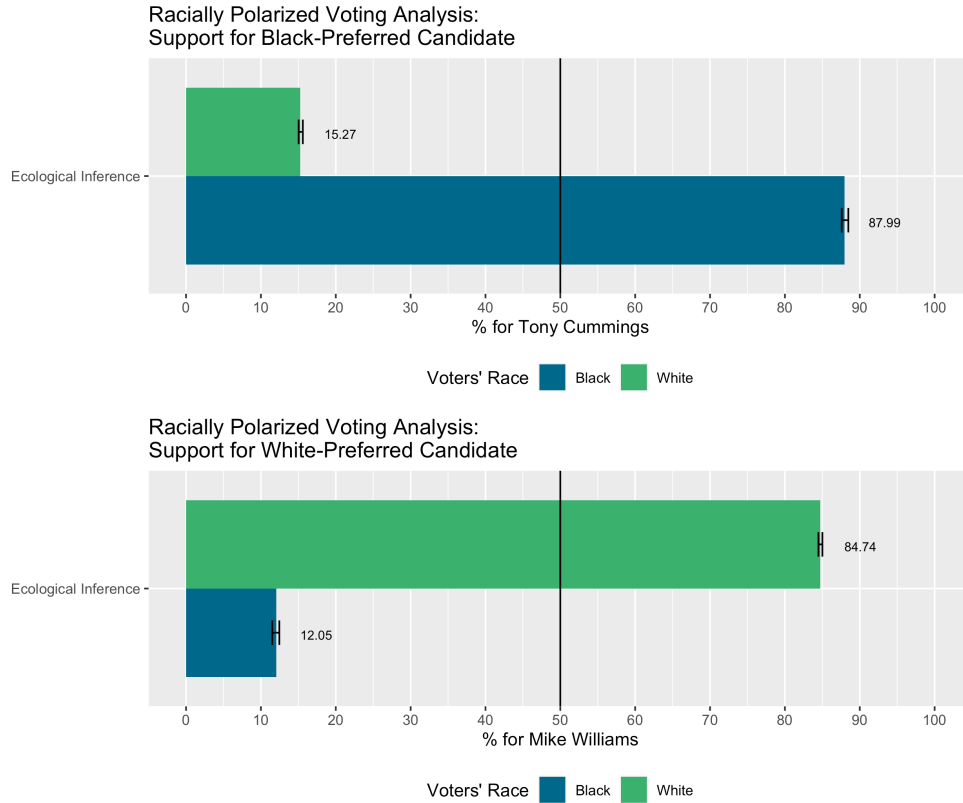
Figure 10. *Racially polarized voting assessment, sheriff, 2019 First Election*

Florida Governor (subset to Duval County), Fall 2018 General Election: Andrew Gillum (Black-Preferred) vs. Ron DeSantis (White-Preferred)

The 2018 general election featured the gubernatorial contest between Ron DeSantis (a white Republican) and Andrew Gillum (a Black Democrat). Again, this particular election provides evidence of racially polarized voting (Figure 11). The correlation coefficient between support for Gillum and percent Black voters is .93. As the percent of voters who are white increases, so does support for Ron DeSantis.
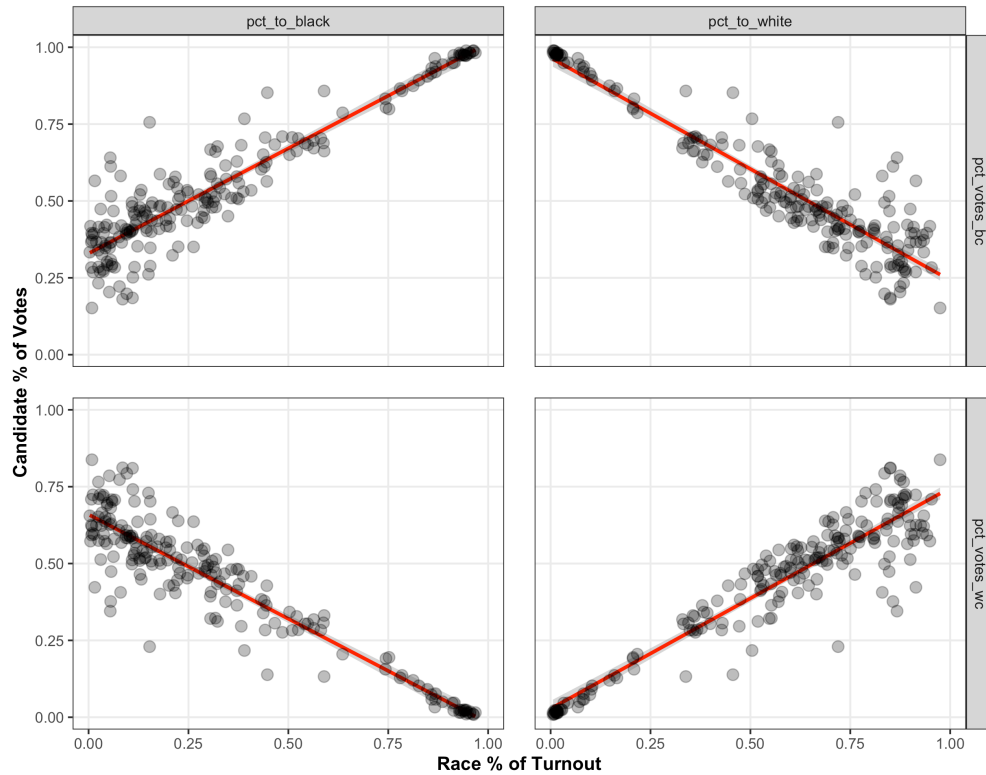
Figure 11. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, Florida Governor, 2018 general.*

Ecological inference analysis estimates that over 99 percent of Black voters supported Gillum (displayed in Figure 12). 75.72 percent of white voters are estimated to have supported DeSantis. It is not always the case that the Black-preferred candidate is blocked from successful election. In this instance, Gillum won in Duval County, even as he lost the race state-wide.
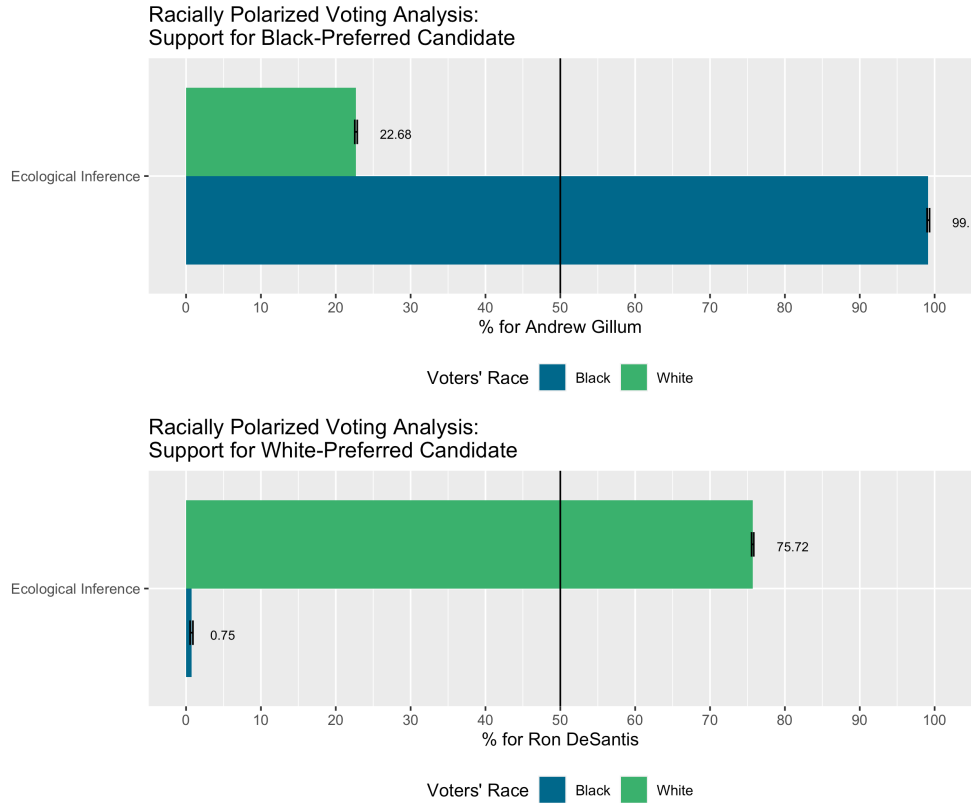
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

% for Andrew Gillum

Voters' Race: Black | White

22.68

99.

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

% for Ron DeSantis

Voters' Race: Black | White

75.72

0.75

Figure 12. *Racially polarized voting assessment, Florida Governor, 2018 general.*

Florida Attorney General (subset to Duval County), Fall 2018 General Election: Sean Shaw (Black-preferred) vs. Ashley Moody (White-Preferred)

The results for the state-wide Attorney General race are similarly polarized. The correlation between percent Black voters and percent support for the Black-preferred candidate, Sean Shaw, is .94. Figure 13 displays that as precincts become more heavily Black, support for Ashley Moody steadily declines, and support for Shaw increases.
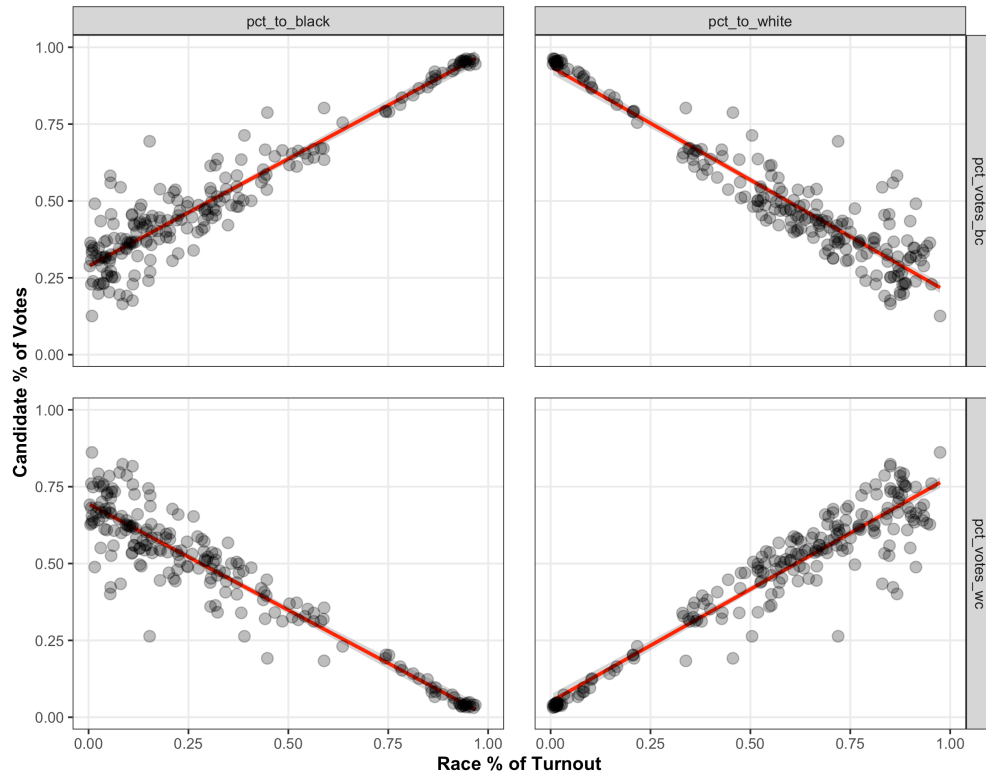
Figure 13. Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, Florida Attorney General, 2018 general.

Figure 14 displays estimates from the method of ecological inference. Shaw received an estimated 98.8 percent of the Black vote and only 18.34 percent of the white vote. Moody received an estimated 79.75 percent of the white vote and only 1.2 percent of the Black vote.
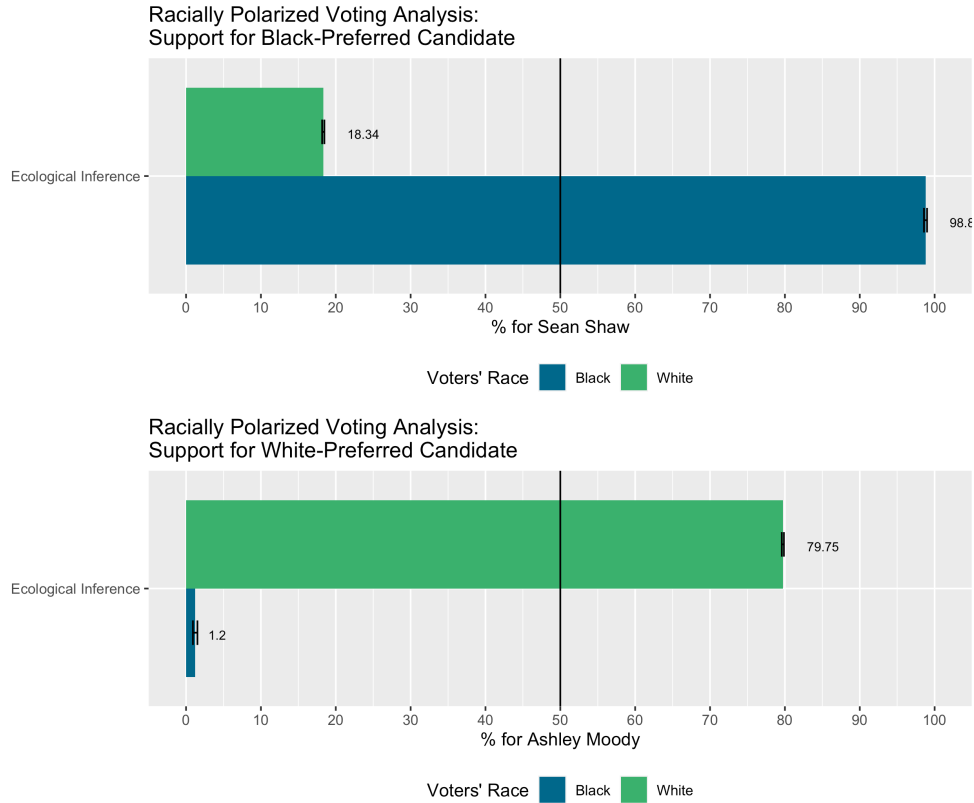
Figure 14. *Racially polarized voting assessment, Florida Attorney General, 2018 general.*

Duval County Tax Collector, Fall 2018 General Election: Mia Jones (Black-Preferred) vs. Jim Overton (White-Preferred)

The Fall 2018 general election included a special election for a county-wide race as well for the position of Tax Collector. Mia Jones, both herself Black and the Black-preferred candidate, ran against Jim Overton. The correlation coefficient between percent Black voters in a precinct and support for Jones is .95, and bivariate relationship displayed in Figure 15 again indicate patterns of racially polarized voting.
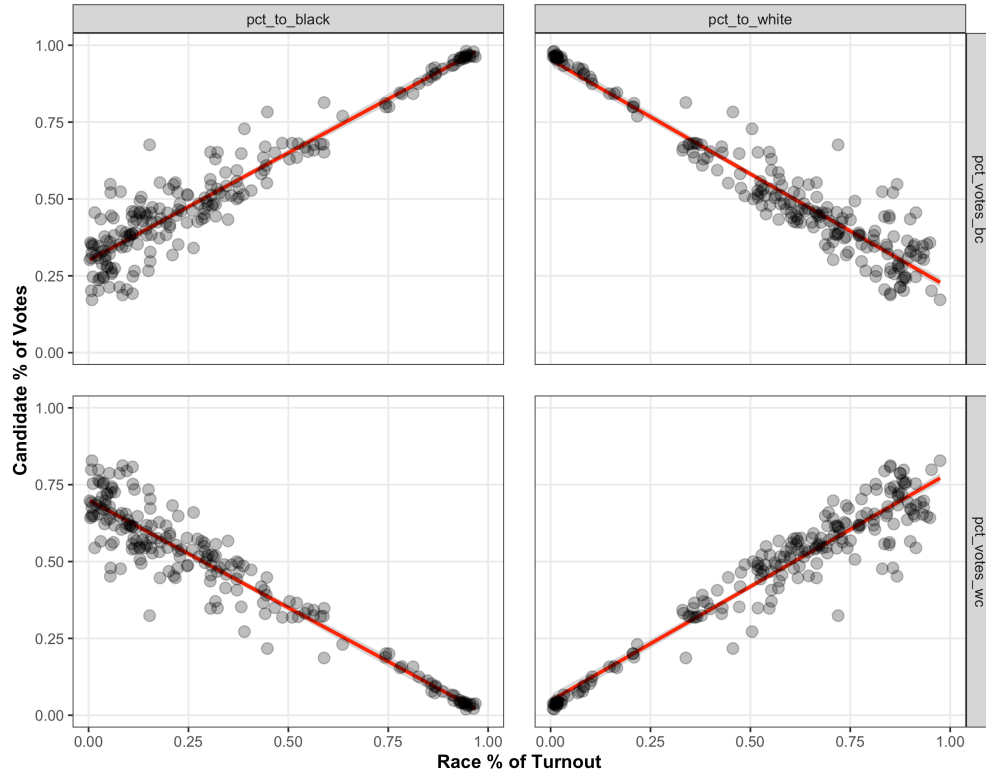
Figure 15. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, Tax Collector, 2018 general*

Estimates derived from ecological inference support this overall pattern (Figure 16). Only 19.5 percent of white voters are estimated to have voted for Jones, relative to 99 percent of Black voters. Overton won the election, with 80.48 percent of white voters supporting his candidacy, and only one percent of the Black vote.
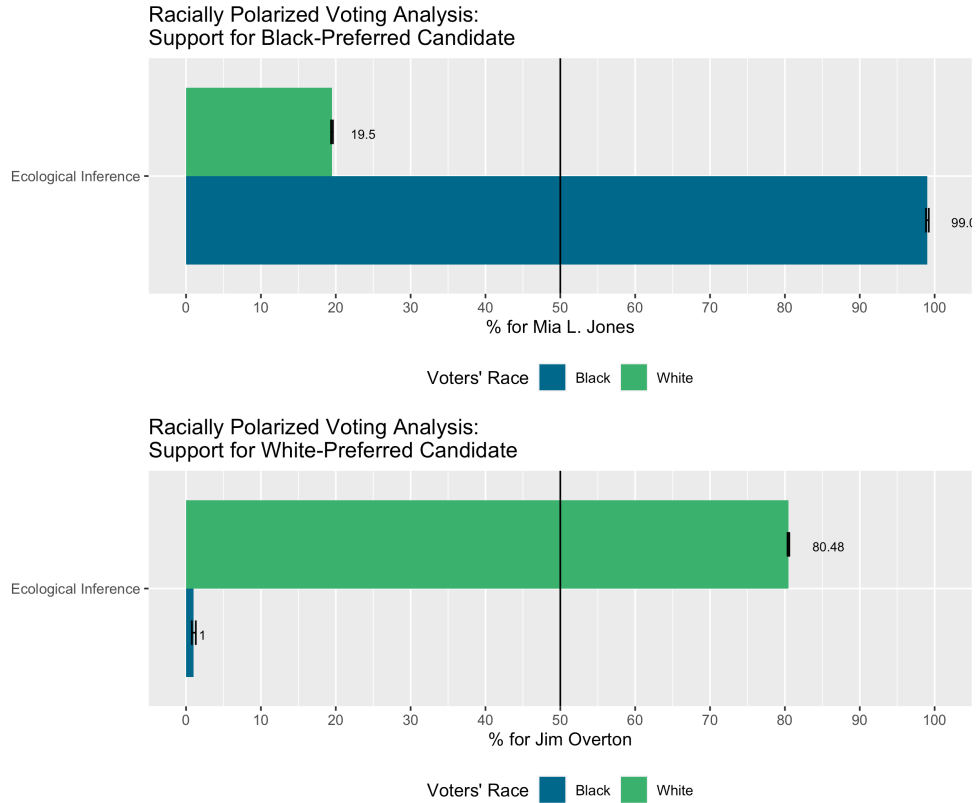
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

% for Mia L. Jones

Voters' Race ■ Black ■ White

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

% for Jim Overton

Voters' Race ■ Black ■ White

Figure 16. *Racially polarized voting assessment, Tax Collector, 2018 general*

Jacksonville Mayor, May 2015 General: Alvin Brown (Black-Preferred) vs. Lenny Curry (White-Preferred)

In the 2015 general election, residents of Jacksonville voted on a mayor. Incumbent Alvin Brown (a Black Democrat) faced off against Lenny Curry (a white Republican). Figure 17 displays the bivariate relationship between turnout by race, and support for each of the candidates. Black voters overwhelmingly supported Brown (correlation coefficient is .97), and white voters overwhelmingly supported Curry (correlation coefficient is .96).
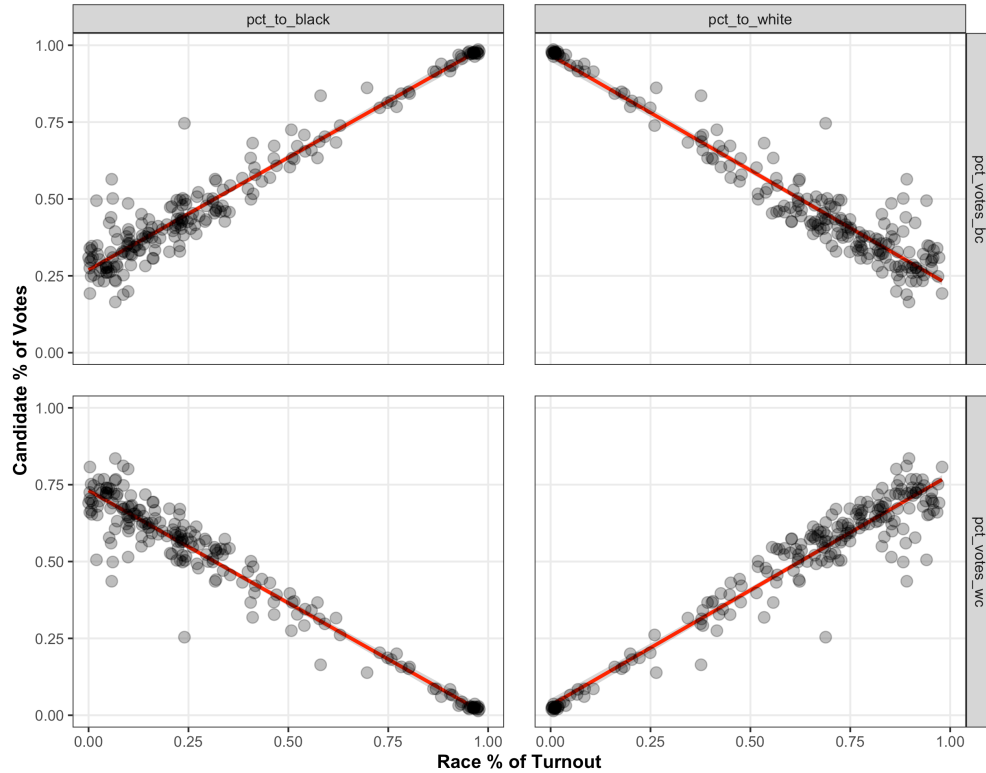
Figure 17. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, Jacksonville Mayor, 2015 general*

Ecological inference analysis further confirms patterns of racially polarized voting (Figure 18). Brown is estimated to have received 98.8 percent of the Black vote. He only garnered 20.69 percent of the white vote. Curry won the election with 79.31 percent of the white vote and 1.04 percent of the Black vote.
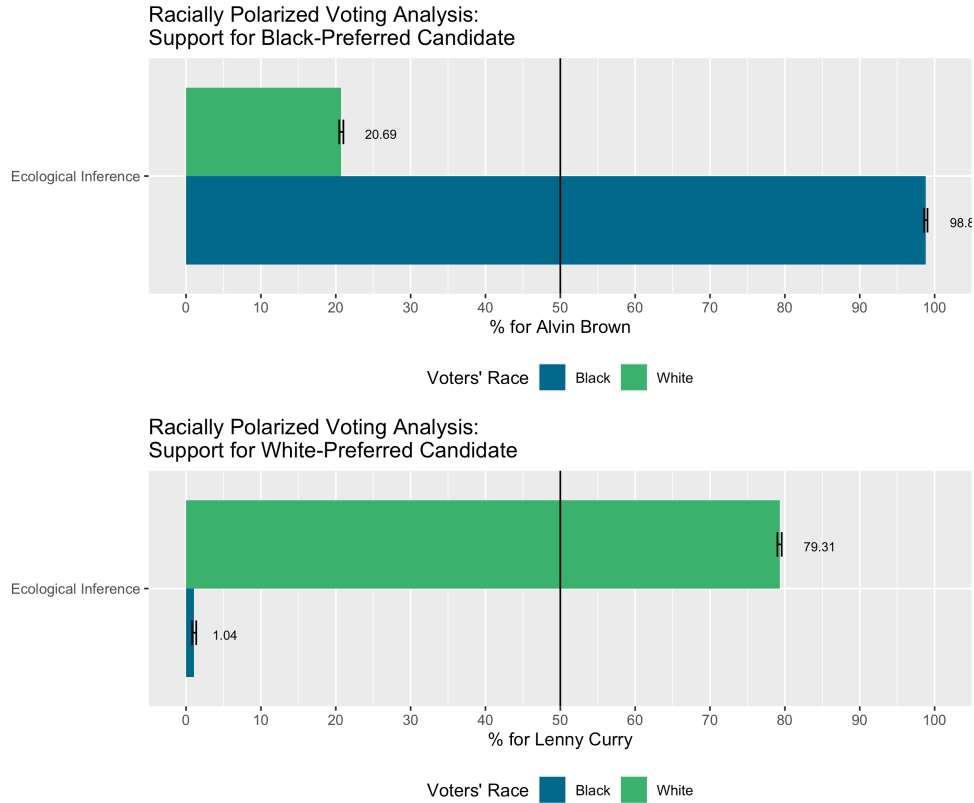
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis: Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

Ecological Inference

20.69

98.8

% for Alvin Brown

Voters' Race — Black — White

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis: Support for White-Preferred Candidate

Ecological Inference

79.31

1.04

% for Lenny Curry

Voters' Race — Black — White

Figure 18. *Racially polarized voting assessment, Jacksonville Mayor, 2015 general*

Jacksonville Sheriff, May 2015 General: Ken Jefferson (Black-Preferred) vs. Mike Williams (White-Preferred)

Figure 18 displays the bivariate relationship between race and candidate choice in the 2015 general race for Jacksonsville Sheriff. Mike Williams was again the white-preferred candidate, and was challenged by Ken Jefferson, the Black-preferred candidate. The correlation coefficient between percent Black voters and support for Jefferson is .98. The correlation coefficient between percent white voters and support for Williams is .97.
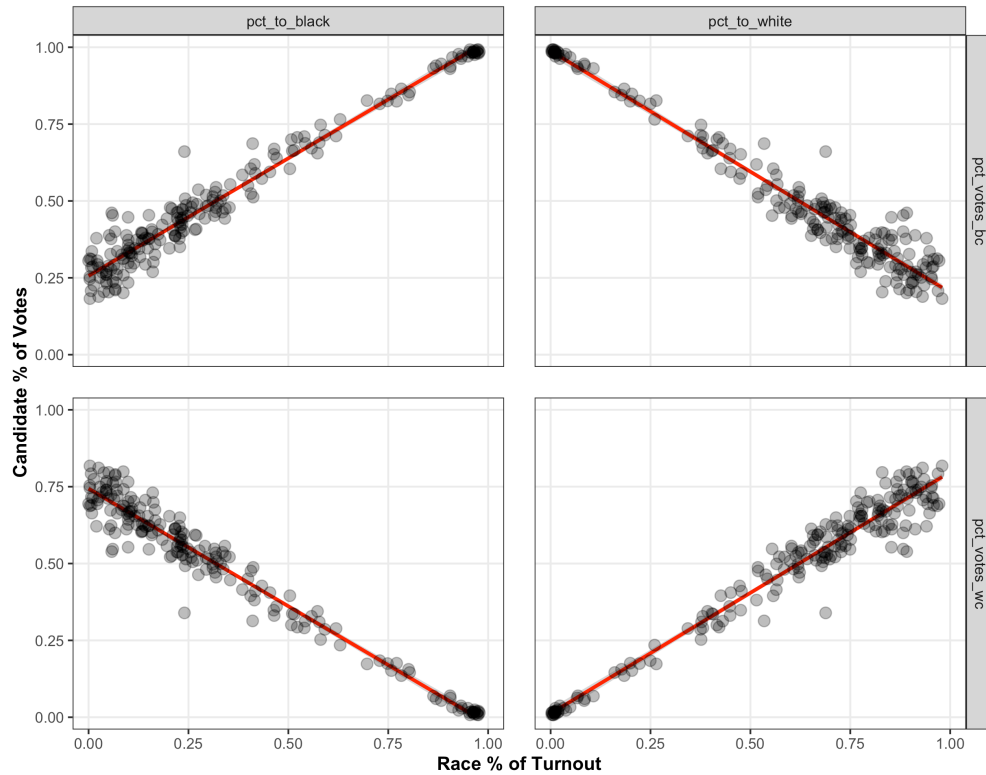
Figure 19. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, Sheriff, 2015 general*

The pattern of racially polarized voting is confirmed when subjected to ecological inference (Figure 20). Williams is estimated to have received less than one percent of the Black vote (.85), and 80.04 percent of the white vote. Even as about 20 percent of white voters joined the over 99 percent of Black voters estimated to have voted for Jefferson, Williams nevertheless won the election.
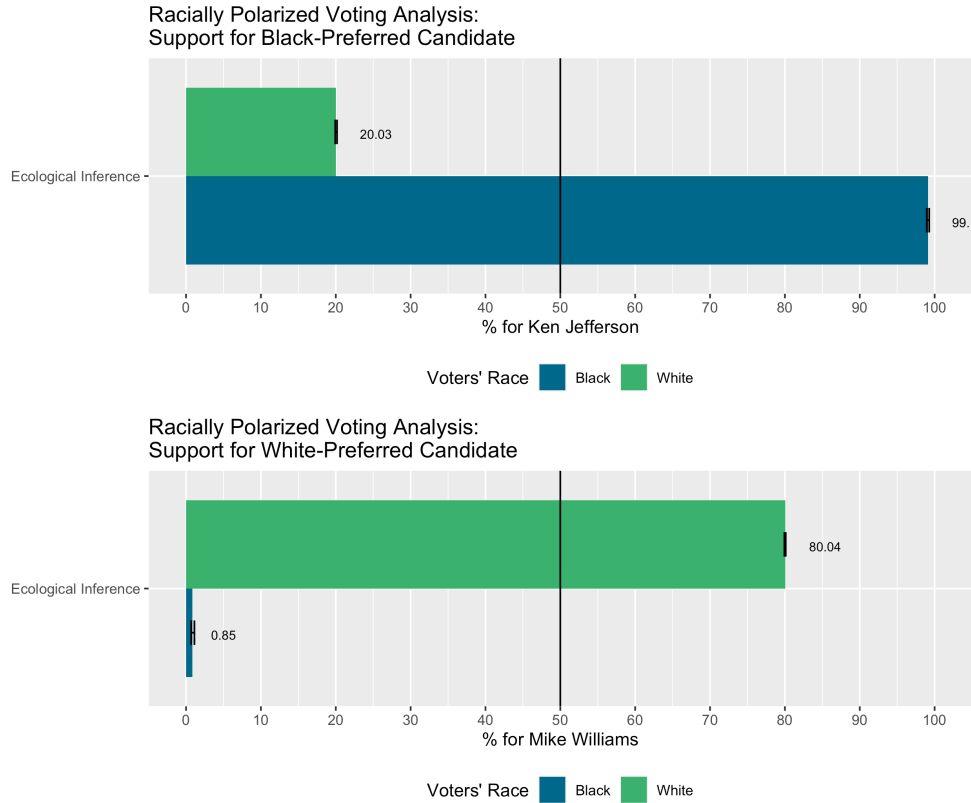
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

% for Ken Jefferson

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

% for Mike Williams

Figure 20. *Racially polarized voting assessment, Sheriff, 2015 general*

City Council At Large, Group 1, May 2015 General: Kimberly Daniels (Black-Preferred) vs. Anna Lopez Brosche (White-Preferred)

Figure 21 displays voting patterns in the contest an at large seat on the City Council in Group 1, during the 2015 general election. The correlation coefficient between percent Black voters and support for Kimberly Daniels, the Black-preferred candidate, is .991. The correlation coefficient between percent white voters and support for Anna Lopez Brosche, the white-preferred candidate is .988. The bivariate plots very clearly suggest patterns of racially polarized voting.
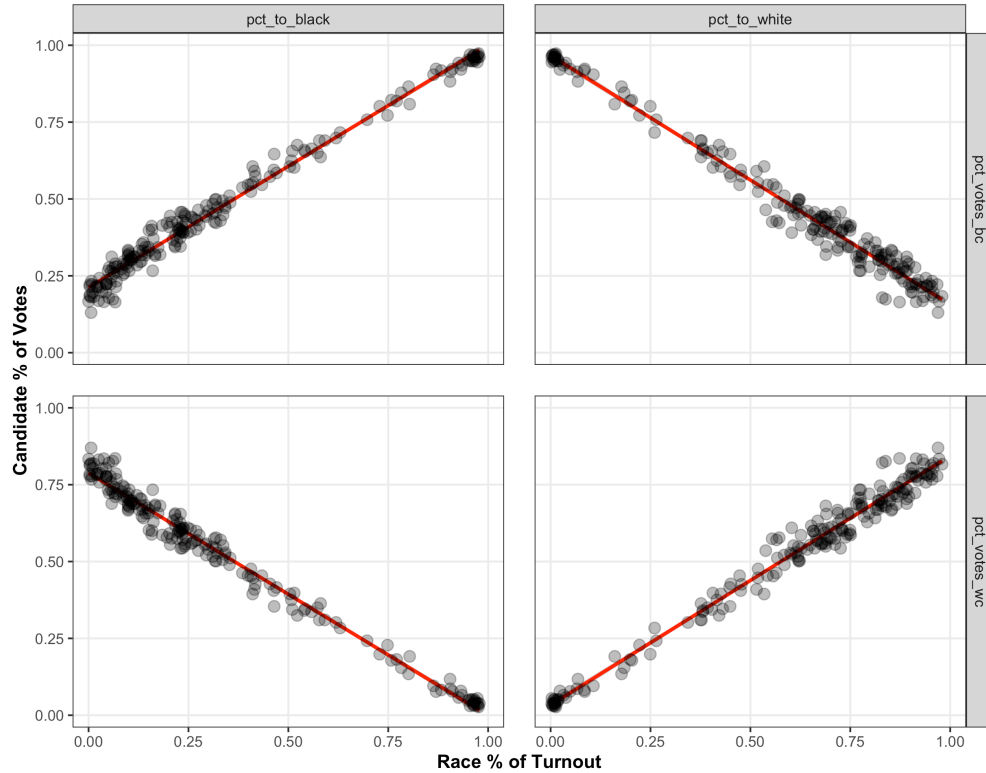
Figure 21. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, city council at large group 1, 2015 general*

Estimates derived from the ecological inference analysis further suggest racially polarized voting. 98.3 percent of Black voters are estimated to support Daniels, compared to only 15.36 percent of white voters. Likewise, only 1.47 percent of Black voters are estimated to have supported Brosche, who garnered 85.64 percent of white votes and ultimately won the contest.
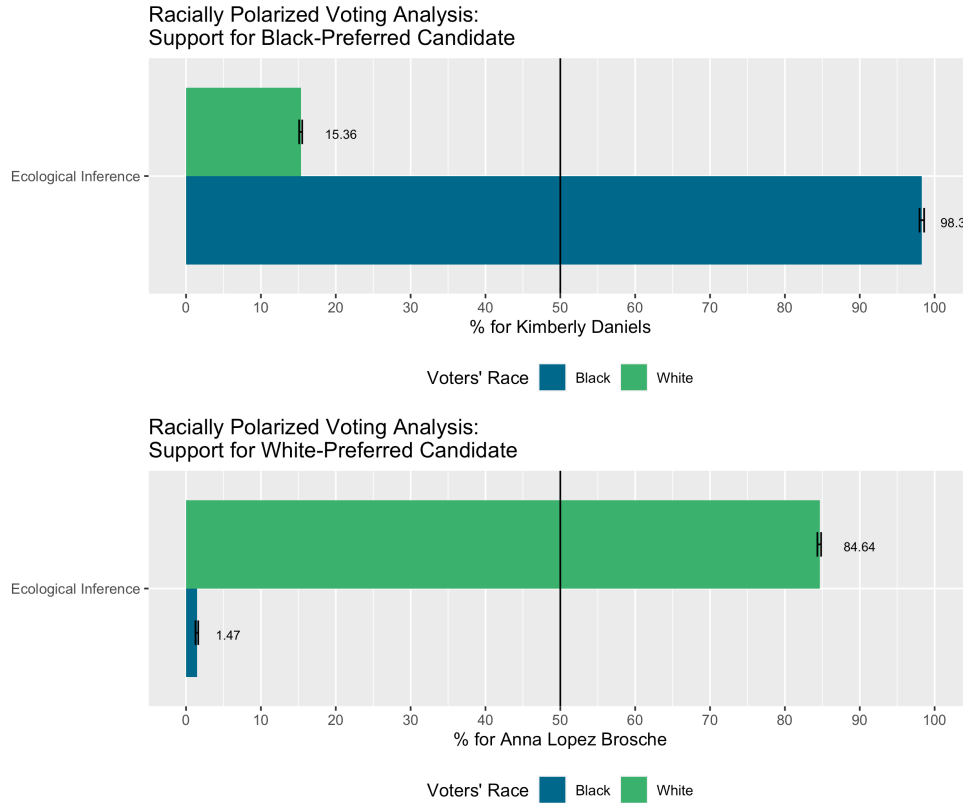
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

15.36

98.3

% for Kimberly Daniels

Voters' Race — Black — White

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

84.64

1.47

% for Anna Lopez Brosche

Voters' Race — Black — White

Figure 22. Racially polarized voting assessment, city council at large group 1, 2015 general

City Council At Large, Group 5, May 2015 General: Ju'Coby Pittman (Black-Preferred) vs. Samuel Newby (White-Preferred)

The same election cycle also featured a contest for the at large city council seat in Group 5. In this instance, both candidates were Black. Ju'Coby Pittman, a Black Democrat, was the Black-preferred candidate. The correlation coefficient between percent Black voters and support for Pittman is .96. Samuel Newby, a Black Republican, was the white-preferred candidate, with a correlation coefficient of .95. The bivariate relationship, displayed in Figure 23, again suggests racially polarized voting in Jacksonville.
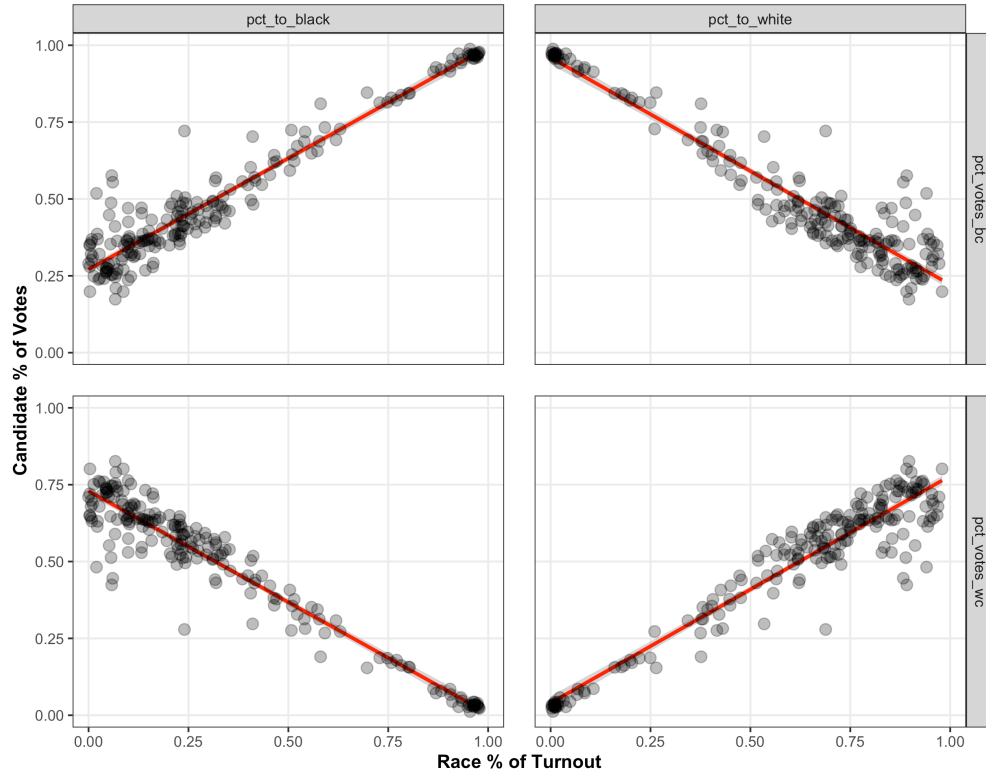
Figure 23. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, city council at large group 5, 2015 general*

Figure 24 displays estimates derived from ecological inference methods. As is the case with several elections, the Black-preferred candidate (Pittman) is estimated to have received nearly 100 percent of the black vote (99 percent). Nevertheless, her candidacy was blocked by Newby, with 78.99 percent of the white vote (and one percent of the Black vote).
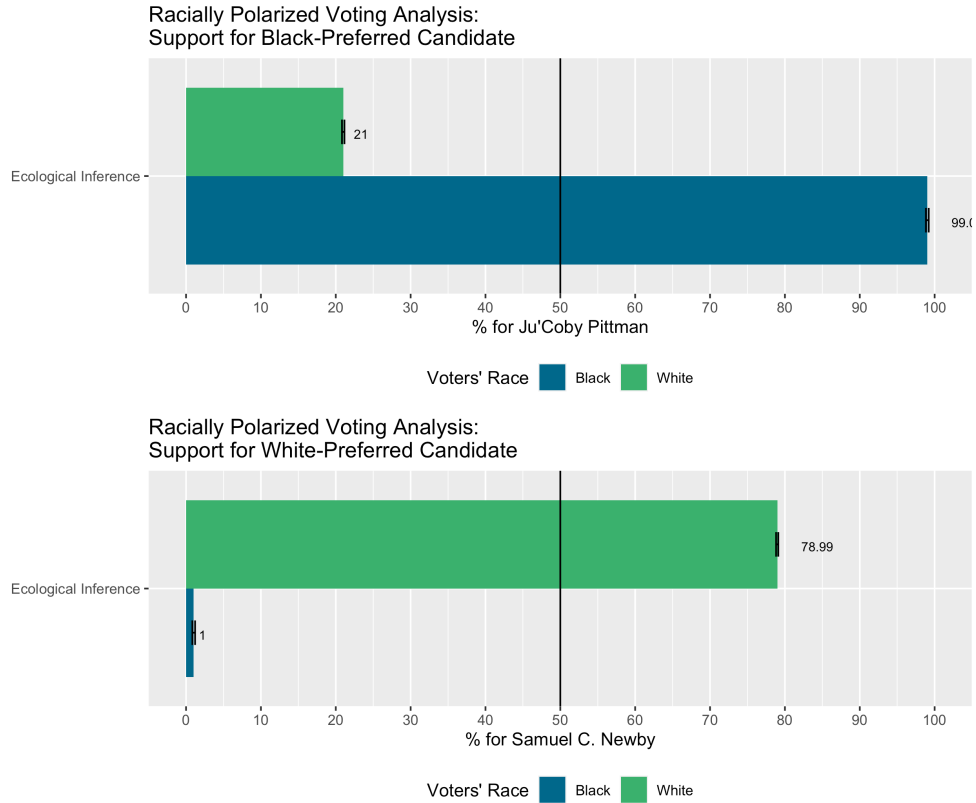
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

Figure 24. *Racially polarized voting assessment, city council at large group 5, 2015 general*

Supervisor of Elections, Spring 2015 First: Tracie Davis (Black-preferred) vs. Mike Hogan (White-Preferred)

The 2015 Spring First election included a contest for supervisor of elections in Duval County. Tracie Davis (a Black Democrat) ran against Mike Hogan (a white Republican). Davis is clearly the Black-preferred candidate, with a correlation coefficient between percent Black voters and support for her candidacy of .96. Figure 25 again suggests that racially polarized voting occurs in Jacksonville.
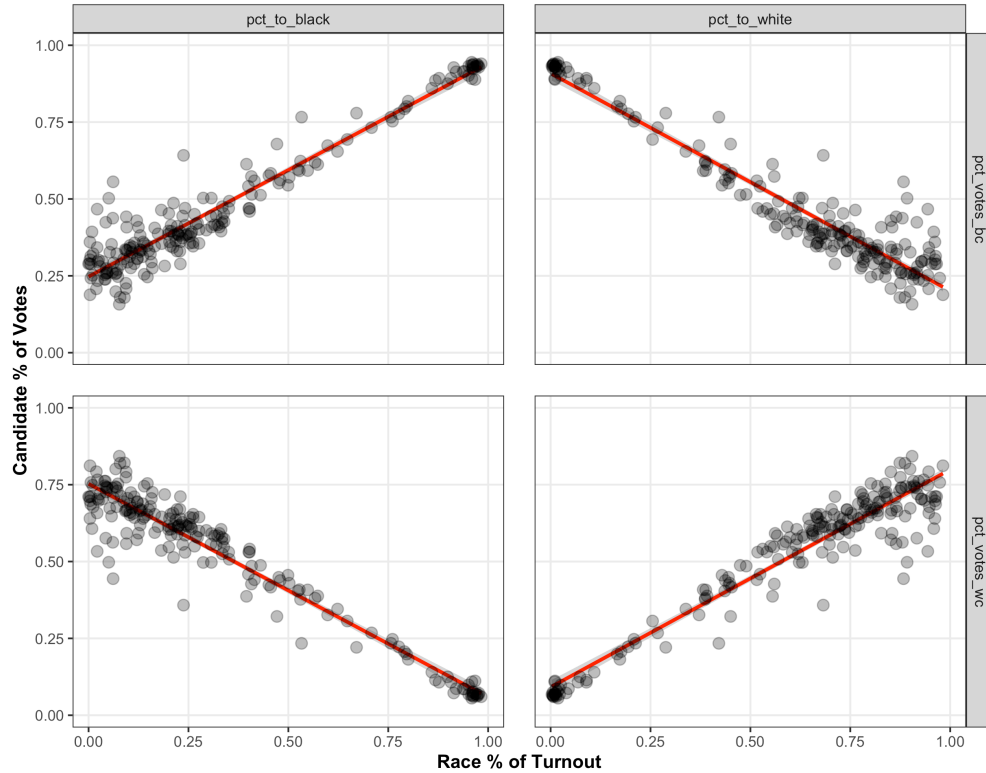
Figure 25. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, supervisor of elections, 2015 first*

Figure 26 displays the vote estimates for each candidate by race of voter derived from ecological inference analysis. Davis received an estimated 95.32 percent of the Black vote and 18.43 percent of the white vote. Even with some support from white voters, Davis lost to Hogan, who received an estimated 81.56 percent of the support of white voters and 4.67 percent of the support of Black voters.
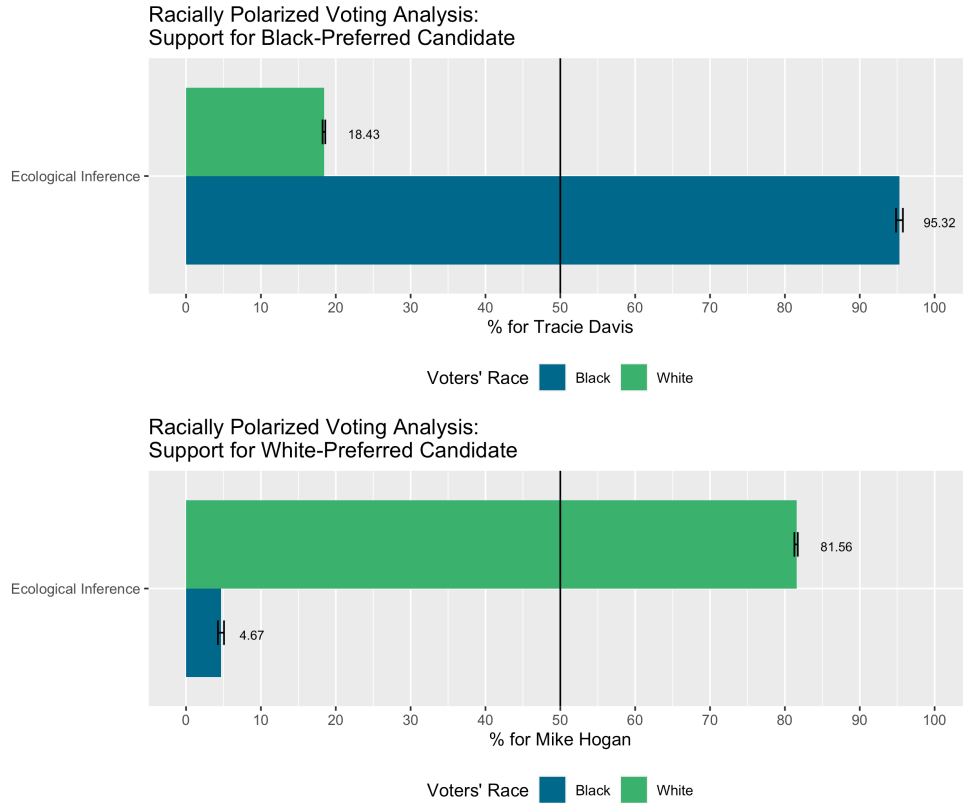
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

Ecological Inference

18.43

95.32

% for Tracie Davis

Voters' Race   ■ Black   ■ White

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis:
Support for White-Preferred Candidate

Ecological Inference

81.56

4.67

% for Mike Hogan

Voters' Race   ■ Black   ■ White

Figure 26. *Racially polarized voting assessment, supervisor of elections, 2015 first*

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture (subset to Duval County), Fall 2014 General: Thaddeus Hamilton (Black-Preferred) vs. Adam Putanm (White-Preferred)

The final election evaluated for this report is the contest for Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, held during the 2014 general election. Thaddeus Hamilton, a Black Democrat, ran against Adam Putnam, a white Republican. Figure 27 presents the bivariate relationship between race and candidate preference. Hamilton is clearly the Black-preferred candidate, and the correlation coefficient between percent Black voters and support for Hamilton is .97.
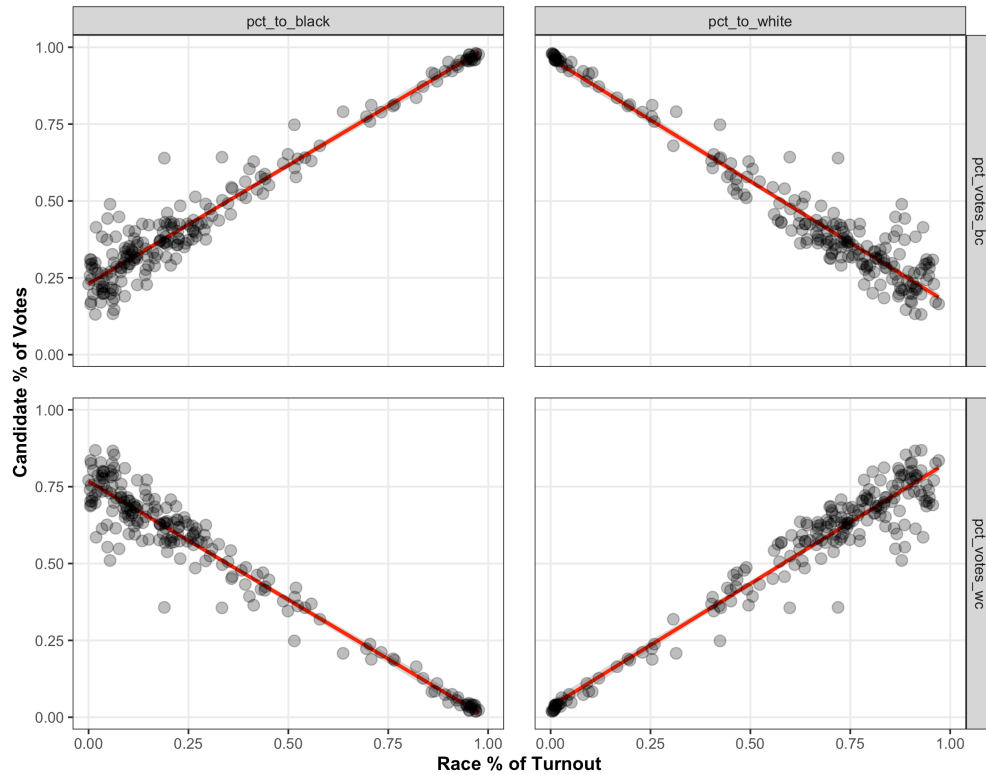
Figure 27. *Bivariate association between candidate support and precinct racial demographics, Florida commissioner of agriculture, 2014 general*

Figure 28 presents estimates of candidate support by race derived from methods of ecological inference. 98.6 percent of Black voters are estimated to have supported Hamilton, relative to 15.5 percent of white voters. 84.34 percent of white voters are estimated to have supported Putnam, relative to 1.12 percent of Black voters. This final election, once again, provides evidence that racially polarized voting occurs in Jacksonville, Florida.
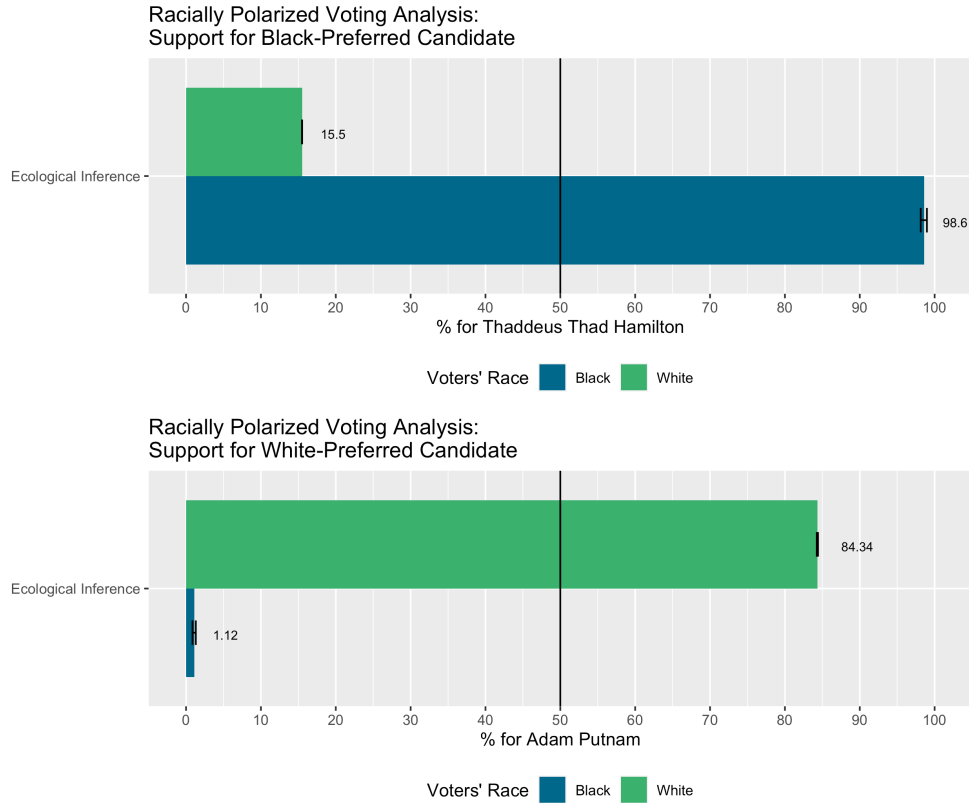
Racially Polarized Voting Analysis: Support for Black-Preferred Candidate

(Chart: % for Thaddeus Thad Hamilton)
- Ecological Inference — White: 15.5; Black: 98.6
- Voters' Race: Black, White

Racially Polarized Voting Analysis: Support for White-Preferred Candidate

(Chart: % for Adam Putnam)
- Ecological Inference — White: 84.34; Black: 1.12
- Voters' Race: Black, White

Figure 28. *Racially polarized voting assessment, Florida commissioner of agriculture, 2014 general*

Estimated Threshold Proportion of Black Voters to Perform

Analysis of 14 elections in Jacksonville, Florida between 2014 and 2020 reveals a consistent pattern of racially polarized voting. It is also the case that in 10 out of 14 elections (71 percent) evaluated, the Black-preferred candidate was blocked from electoral success. In this section, I offer an estimate of the proportion of the citizen voting age population that is Black (Black CVAP) required in (a city council district in) Jacksonville for a Black-preferred candidate to achieve electoral success.

To develop this estimate, I calculate turnout among both Black and white voters, respectively (using estimates of registered voters by election, made publicly available by the Duval County Supervisor of Elections). I also calculate the share of eligible voters overall who are Black (measured using citizen voting age population (CVAP) estimates by race, available via the census). I then estimate the share of overall votes the Black-preferred candidate would have received using estimated Black and white support derived from methods of ecological inference, displayed above. I do this over a possible range of percent of CVAP that is Black. This allows me to determine the proportion of the Black CVAP at which the Black-preferred candidate would have achieved at least 51 percent of the vote, given known turnout in each election.

This approach uses known Black turnout and Black and white support for the Black-preferred candidate to develop such an estimate. Across the elections under study, the proportion of the CVAP that is Black is between 30-33 percent. By varying Black CVAP, and using actual Black voter turnout and estimates of support for the Black-preferred candidate, we can begin to answer the question: how would the Black-preferred candidate have fared if the Black CVAP were 40 or 50 percent of the electorate, and at what proportion does the Black-preferred candidate achieve success, given estimated support from white voters?

The variables used to develop these estimates include Black and white turnout, white support for the Black-preferred candidate, and Black support for the Black-preferred candidate. Each of these factors vary by election contest. I therefore evaluate all 14 elections used in the analysis above, in order to ascertain a range of percent Black CVAP that is likely to yield success for the Black-preferred candidate. I calculate the mean and median percent Black CVAP among 14 elections. There are four races where the Black-preferred candidate was successful. These elections tended to feature higher than average support from white voters. I therefore also calculate the mean and the median percent Black CVAP that would lead to success for the Black-preferred candidate among only those candidates that did not achieve electoral success. I do this to provide a conservative estimate of percent Black CVAP likely to yield success for the Black-preferred candidate.

All 14 races, the level of estimated support received from Black and white voters, and percent Black CVAP required to obtain success for the Black-preferred candidate are listed below in Table 2. Below, the estimated thresholds are displayed graphically. The measures of central tendency used to derive percent Black CVAP needed for the Black candidate range between 41 percent and 44 percent.

Table 2. Estimated percent of Black registered voters needed for the Black-preferred candidate to succeed among select races.

Race	Election	Est. % Black vote	Est. % white vote	% Black CVAP needed
County judge group 1	primary 2020	64.88	25.89	60.00
County judge group 6	primary 2020	97.76	31.71	26.00
city council at large group 1	general 2019	86.44	30.24	46.00
city council at large group 3	general 2019	94.91	43.53	19.00
sheriff	first 2019	87.97	15.25	55.00
attorney general	general 2018	98.83	18.32	42.00
governor	general 2018	99.12	22.70	39.00
tax collector	general 2018	99.05	19.50	41.00
mayor	general 2015	98.81	20.69	38.00
sheriff	general 2015	99.13	20.05	38.00
city council at large group 1	general 2015	98.33	15.35	42.00

city council at large group 5	general 2015	99.04	21.01	37.00
supervisor of elections	first 2015	95.34	18.41	42.00
commissioner of agriculture	general 2014	98.64	15.50	47.00
All races	Mean	94.16	22.73	40.86
All races	Median	98.48	20.37	41.50
Black candidate blocked	Mean	92.77	20.51	44.40
Black candidate blocked	Median	98.48	20.37	42.00

Figure 29 displays the range of possible outcomes for the Black-preferred candidate in the group 1 contest for county judge in 2020. In this race, the preferred candidate received higher than average support from white voters, and the lower support from Black voters than in any other contest under evaluation (65 percent). Under these conditions, the Black-preferred candidate is likely to achieve electoral success when Black CVAP is 60 percent.
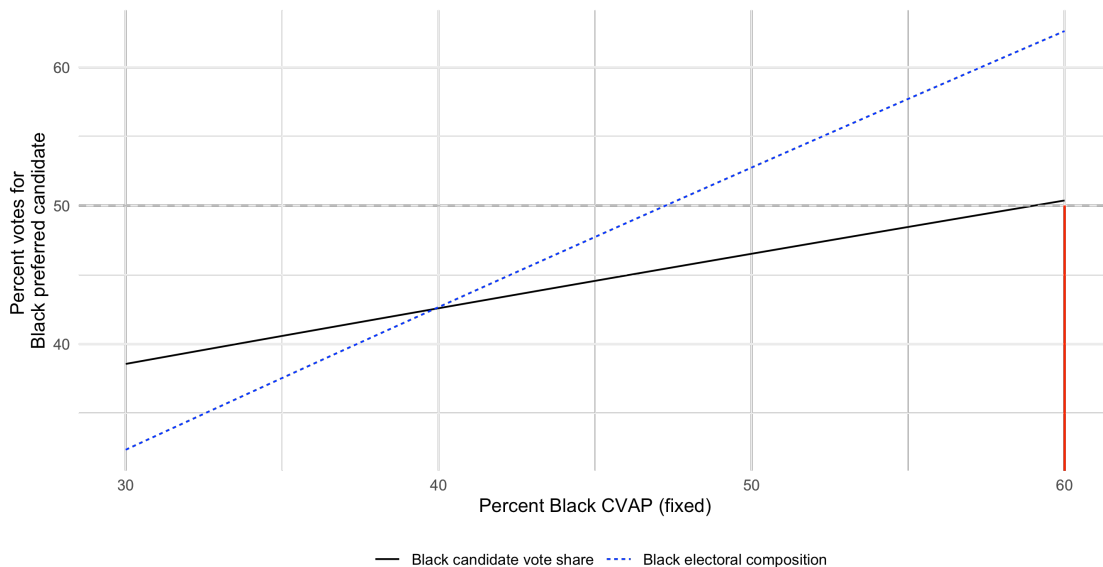
Figure 29. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, county court judge group 1, 2020 primary*

Figure 30 displays the same information, but for the group 6 contest for county judge in 2020. In this race, the Black-preferred candidate did succeed, receiving higher than average support from both white and Black voters (31 percent and 98 percent respectively). Thus, the percent Black CVAP required for the Black-preferred candidate to succeed is 26 percent, the second lowest estimate across elections under evaluation.
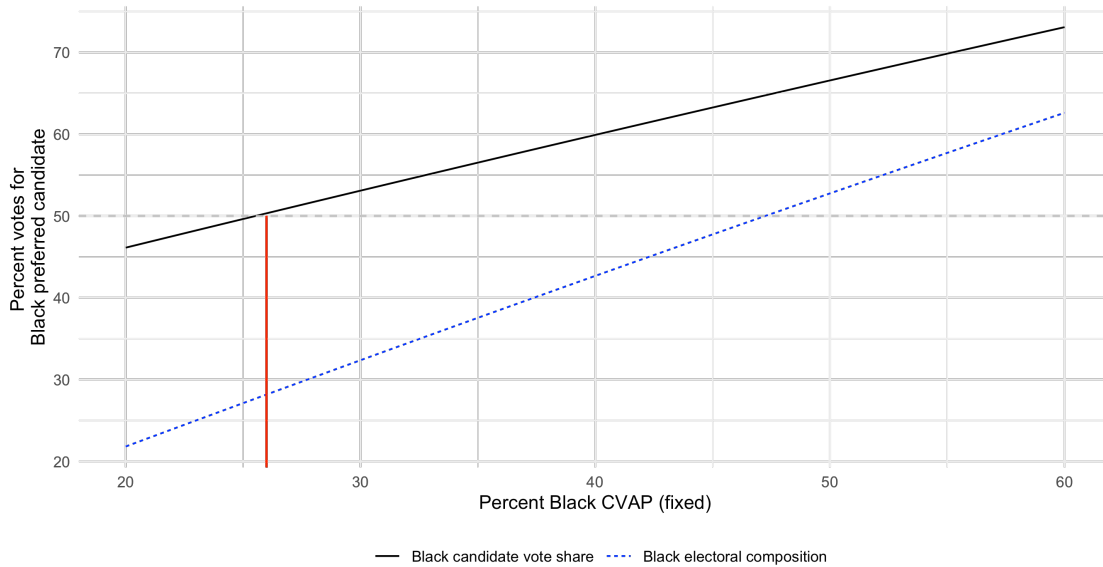
Figure 30. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, county court judge group 6, 2020 primary*

Figure 31 displays the range of possible outcomes for the Black-preferred candidate in the group 1 contest for an at large city council seat in 2019. In this race, again, the preferred candidate received higher than average support from white voters (30 percent), and lower than average support from Black voters (86 percent). It is perhaps worth noting that in this election, the Black-preferred candidate is a white Democrat. Under these conditions, an estimated 45 percent of the CVAP should be Black before the Black-preferred candidate is successful.
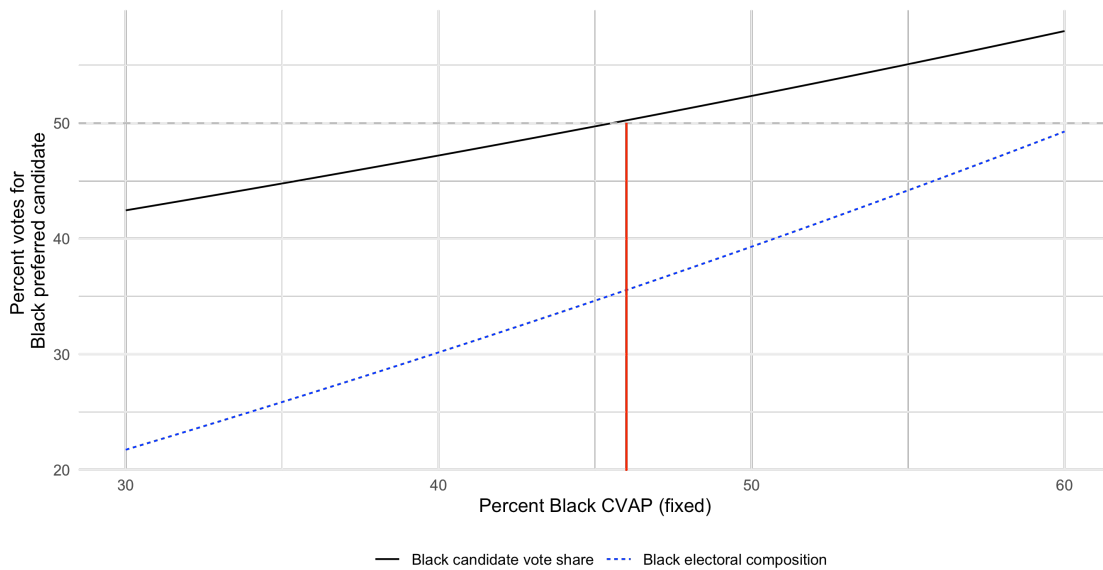
Figure 31. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, city council at large group 1, 2019 general*

The same information for the group 3 at large contest for a seat on the city council in 2019 is displayed in Figure 32. Here, again, the Black-preferred candidate received an unusually high degree of support from white voters (44 percent). He received 95 percent support from Black voters. In this case, the Black-preferred candidate did obtain success. The estimated percent Black CVAP required for success is 19 percent, the lowest estimate across all elections under study.
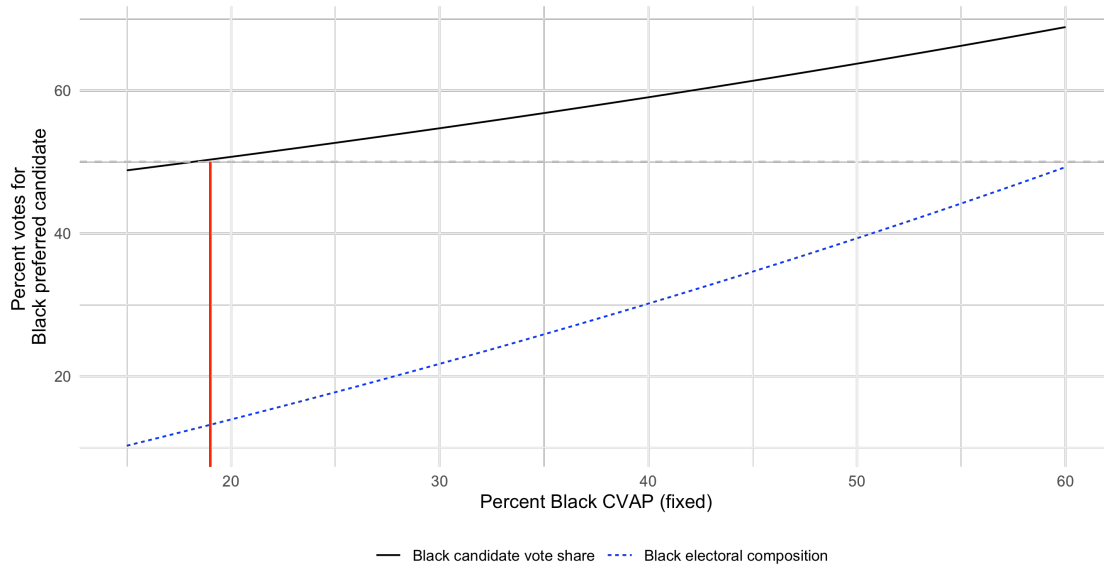

Figure 32. Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, city council at large group 3, 2019 general

Figure 33 displays the 2019 contest for Jacksonville Sheriff. This race featured below average support from both white and Black voters. Under these conditions, the proportion of the electorate that is Black is 54 percent when the Black-preferred candidate obtains at least 50 percent of votes overall.
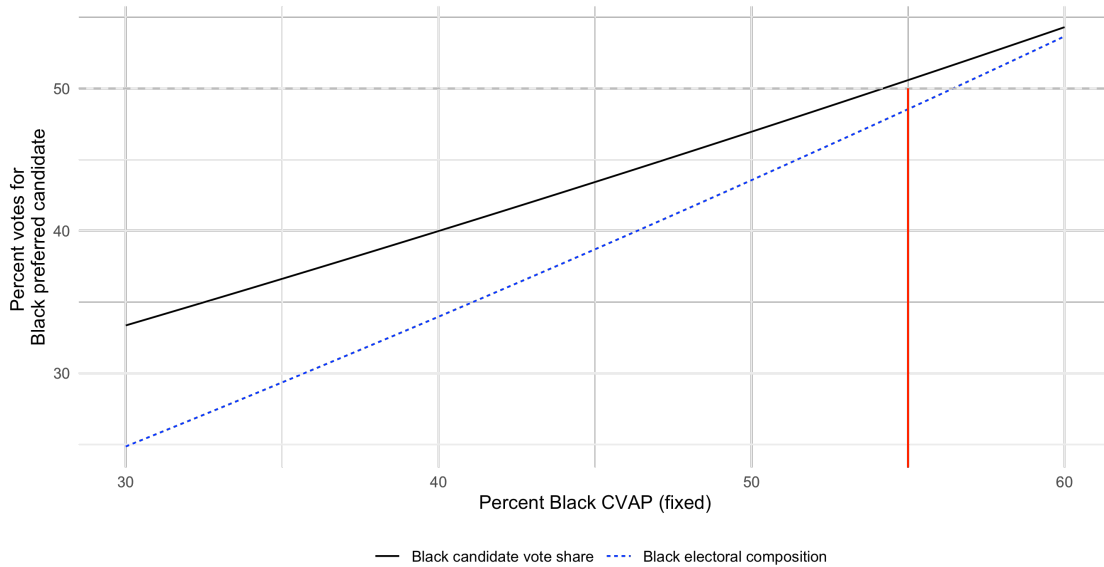
Figure 33. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, sheriff, primary 2019*

The statewide race for attorney general in 2018 (subset to Jacksonville) is displayed in Figure 34. The Black-preferred candidate received 99 percent of Black support and 18 percent of white support. The estimated threshold at which the Black-preferred candidate would succeed is closer to the overall average, at 42 percent.
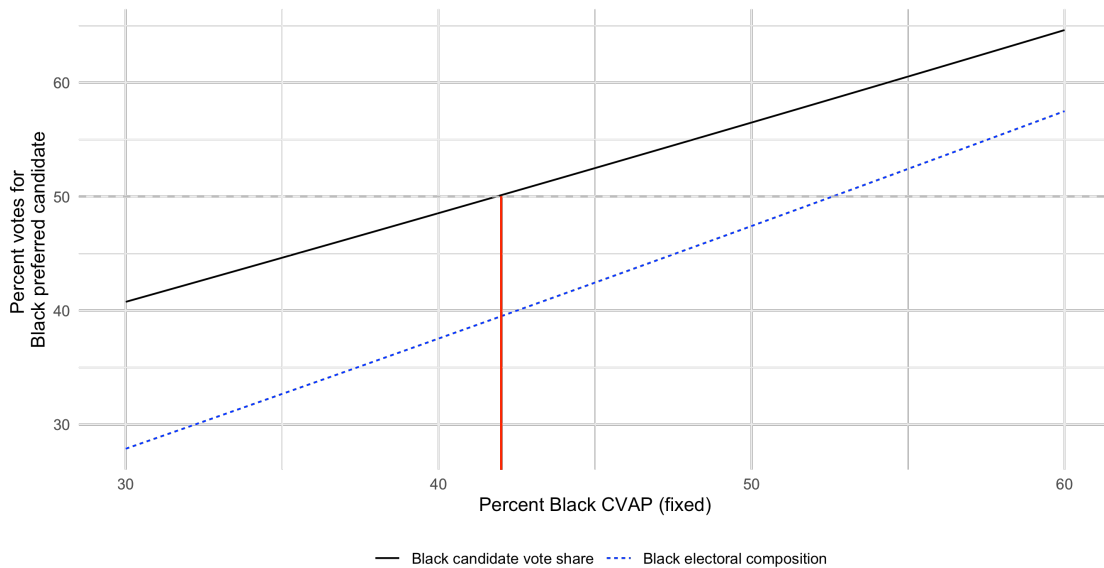

Figure 34. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, attorney general, general 2018*

The 2018 gubernatorial race is displayed in Figure 35. The Black-preferred candidate received an estimated 99 percent of the Black vote, and 23 percent of the white vote. The threshold at which the Black-preferred candidate would achieve success is when Black people comprise 39 percent of the citizen voting age population.
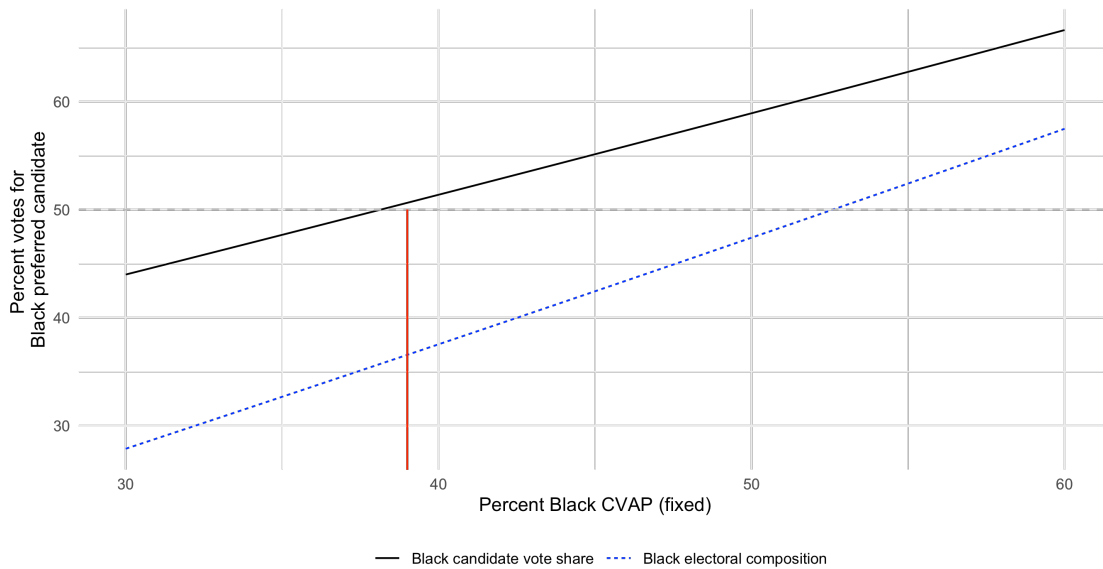

Figure 35. Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, governor, 2018 general

Figure 36 displays the share of votes the Black-preferred candidate would have received given a range of proportion of the electorate that is Black in the 2018 race for Duval County tax collector. The Black-preferred candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote when Black CVAP is 41 percent.
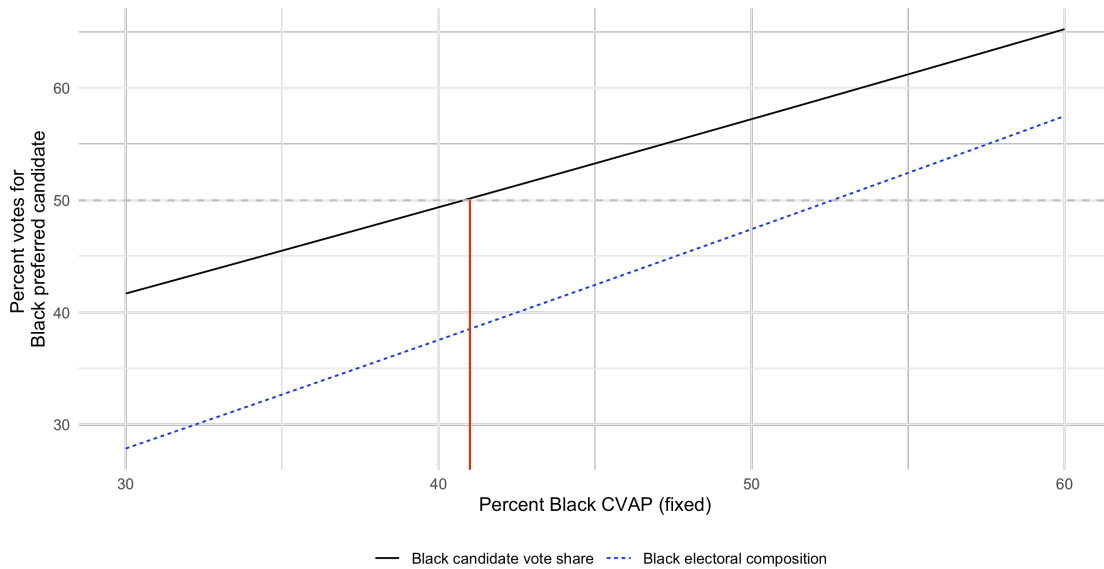
Figure 36. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, tax collector, 2018 general*

Figure 37 displays the share of votes the Black-preferred candidate would have received given a range of proportion of the electorate that is Black in the 2015 mayoral election. In this election, the Black-preferred candidate is estimated to have received more than 50 percent of the vote had Black registered voters comprised 37 percent of the electorate.
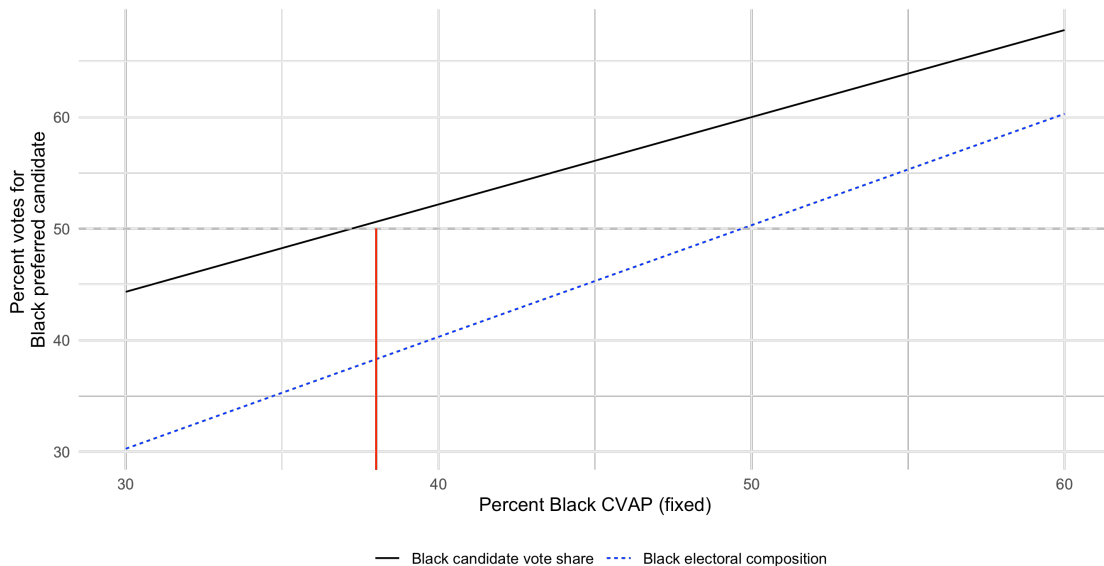

Figure 37. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, mayor, 2015 general*

In the 2015 contest for Jacksonville sheriff, the Black-preferred candidate received an estimated 99 percent of the Black vote, and 20 percent of the white vote. The estimated threshold at which the Black-preferred candidate would have received over 50 percent of the vote is 38 percent Black CVAP.
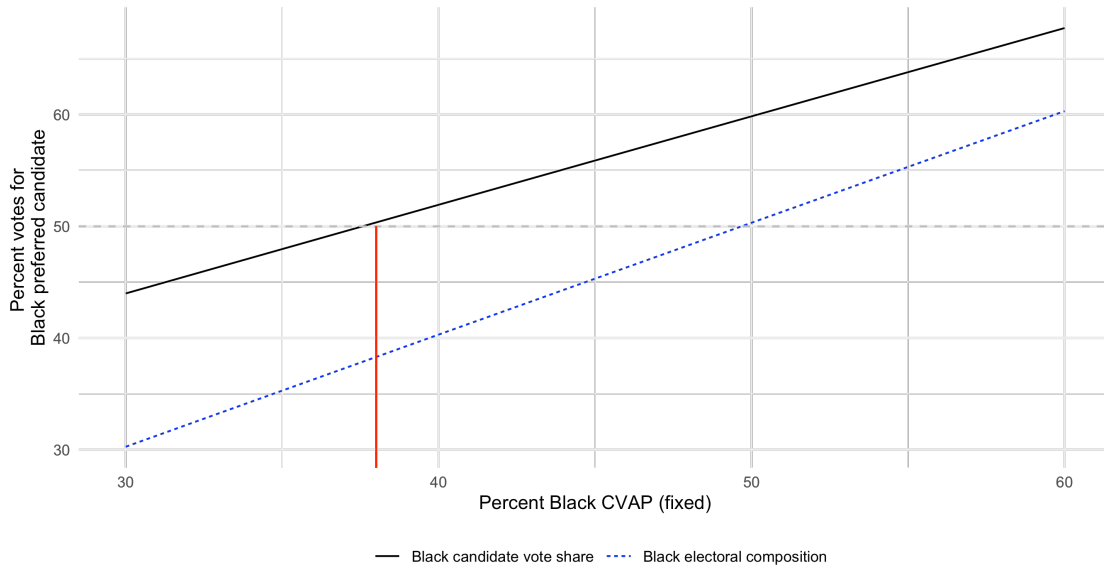

Figure 38. Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, sheriff, 2015 general

In the 2015 group 1 at large contest for city council, the Black-preferred candidate is estimated to achieve electoral success when Black CVAP reaches 42 percent. This estimate is displayed in Figure 39.
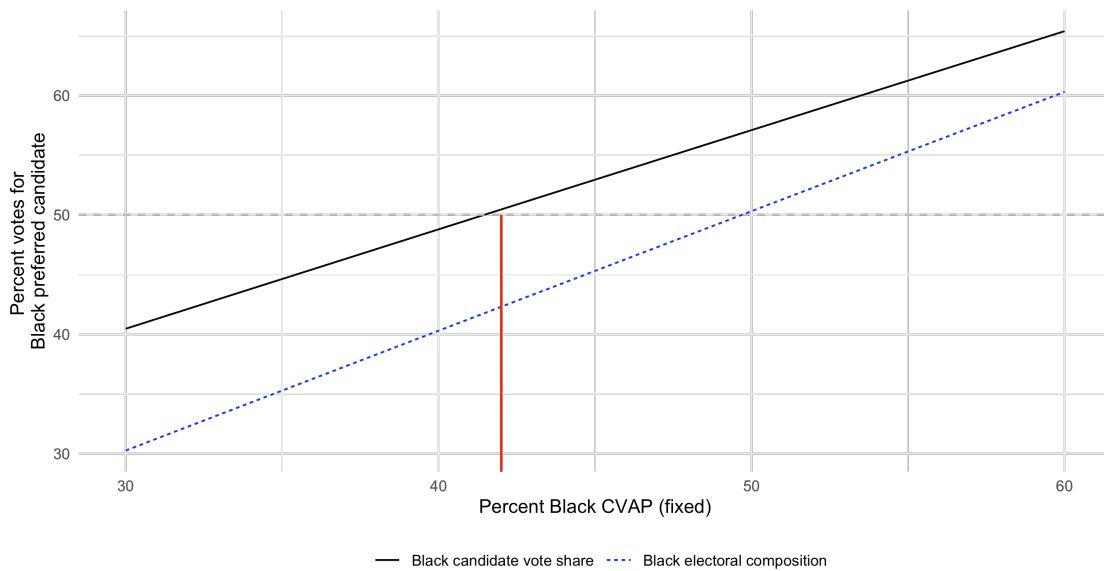
Figure 39. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, city council at large group 1, 2015 general*

Figure 40 displays the threshold at which the Black-preferred candidate would have achieved electoral success in the 2015 group 5 at large contest for city council. 99 percent of Black voters are estimated to have supported their candidate, compared to 21 percent of white voters. The Black-preferred candidate is estimated to receive more than 50 percent of the vote when Black CVAP reaches 37 percent.
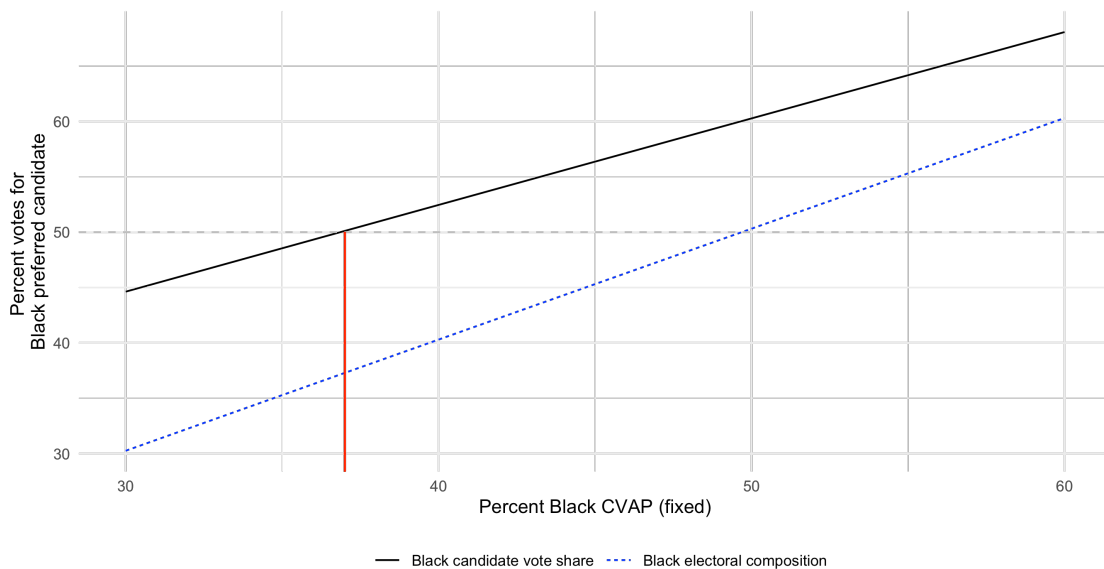

Figure 40. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, city council at large group 5, 2015 general*

Figure 41 displays range of possible outcomes for the Black-preferred candidate, given the proportion of the electorate that is Black, in the 2015 race for the supervisor of elections. The Black-preferred candidate is estimated to receive more than 50 percent of the vote when the Black CVAP is 41 percent.
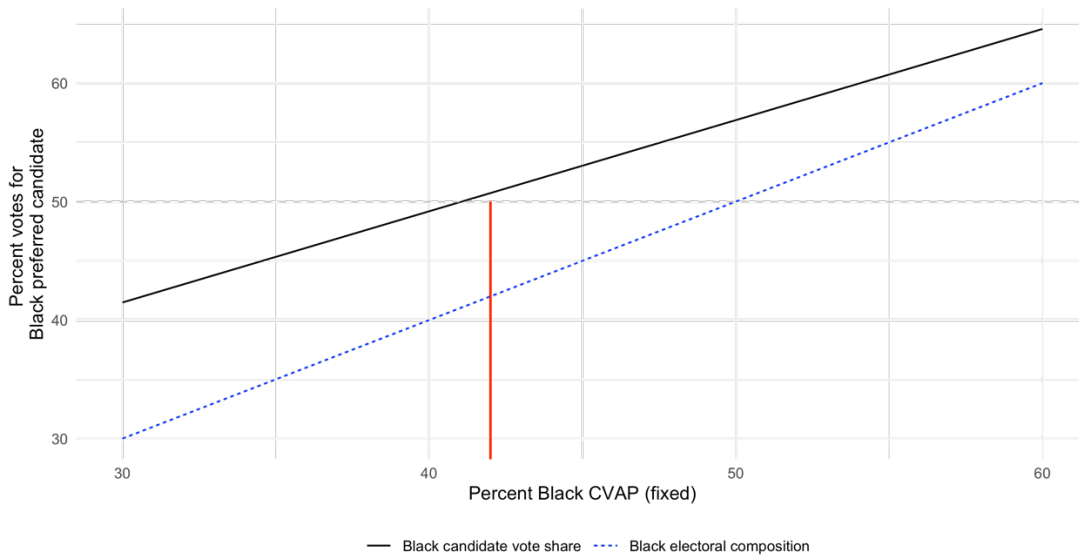

Figure 41. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, supervisor of elections, 2015 first*

The final election under study is the contest for the commissioner of agriculture for the state of Florida in 2014. Here, the Black-preferred candidate is likely to achieve electoral success when Black people account for 47 percent of the overall CVAP.
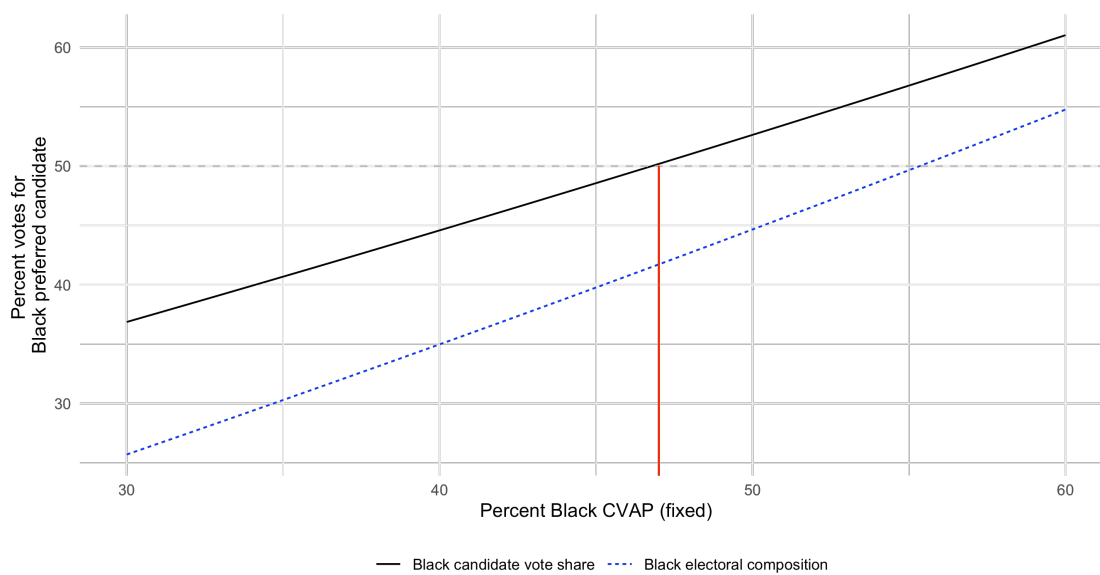
Figure 42. *Percent of Black registered voters needed to elect Black-preferred candidate, commissioner of agriculture, 2014 general*

Accounting for all races, the mean threshold at which the Black-preferred candidate is likely to achieve success is when they comprise 41 percent of the citizen voting age population. The median is slightly higher at 42 percent, reflecting that a few races featured higher than average white support, leading the success of the Black-preferred candidate overall (the Black-preferred candidate succeed in four out of fourteen races). Omitting contests where the Black-preferred candidate achieved success, the mean threshold at which the Black-preferred candidates would have achieved success is 44 percent.

Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to evaluate whether patterns of racially polarized voting are present in Jacksonville, Florida; and to develop an estimated threshold of percent Black CVAP at which the Black-preferred candidate is usually likely to succeed. I evaluated 14 elections that occurred between 2014 and 2020.

I evaluate the data first by examining simple scatterplots with fitted lines displaying the relationship between the percent of each racial group in a given precinct and the percent of votes each candidate received. I also evaluate the data using methods of ecological inference, in order to develop estimates of the level of support each candidate received from each racial group, with 95 percent confidence bands. Across both methods, patterns of racially polarized voting were observed in every single election under study. Moreover, the Black-preferred candidate failed to obtain electoral success in 10 out of 14 contests (71 percent) because white voters voted as a bloc in favor of the opposing candidate.

In order to estimate a threshold of the proportion of CVAP that would need to be Black in order for the Black-preferred candidate to obtain more than 50 percent of the vote, I used known

turnout among Black and white voters together with estimates of support each candidate received in a given election. I then evaluate, over a range of possible proportions of Black people among the citizen voting age population, the percent at which the Black-preferred candidate is likely to achieve electoral success. I do this among all 14 elections, and among the subset of those contests where the Black-preferred candidate did not achieve electoral success. I calculate the mean and median across all elections.

The measures of central tendency suggest that Black CVAP should comprise between 41 - 44 percent of a given district for Black-preferred candidates to achieve electoral success. It is important to note that the threshold offered here is not a guarantee that the preferred Black candidate will succeed in a given election. Potential configurations of city council districts should be subjected to a reconstituted election analysis to assess whether they are likely to ensure the usual success of the Black-preferred candidate.

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Winner of the American Political Science Association Racial and Ethnic Politics Section best book award, 2020

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Lajevardi, Nazita, Oskooii, Kassra, and Walker, Hannah L. "Unmediated Digital News Consumption and Support for Anti-Muslim American Policy Proposals." Revise and resubmit.

Dias, Megan, Epp, Derek, Roman, Marcel and Walker, Hannah L. "The practical efficiency and normative efficacy of police discretion." Under review.

Lopez Bunyasi, Tehama, Watts Smith, Candis and Walker, Hannah L. "Are These My People? The Geography of Black Politics." Working paper.

Doleac, Jennifer, Eckhouse, Laurel, Harris, Allison, Walker, Hannah L. and White, Ariel. "Registering Returning Citizens to Vote: Field Experiments in North Carolina and Texas." Working paper.

Matos, Yalidy, McCabe, Katherine, Walker, Hannah L. and Greene, Stacey. "The Impact of Misperceiving Latino Neighborhood Density on Attitudes towards Immigration." Working paper.

Funding

Russell Sage Trustee Grant in Social, Political and Economic Inequality, "Registering Re-Entering Citizens to Vote," 2021-2023, $166,865.00 (with Jennifer Doleac, Laurel Eckhouse, Eric Foster-Moore, Allison Harris, and Ariel White).

J-PAL North America Pilot Grant, "Registering Re-entering Citizens to Vote," 2019-2022, $174,636 (with Jennifer Doleac, Laurel Eckhouse, Eric Foster-Moore, Allison Harris, and Ariel White).

Russell Sage Foundation Pipeline Grant, "Intersecting (In)Justice: The Causes and Consequences of the Criminalization of Immigration," 2020-2021, $26,428.00

J-PAL North America Pilot Grant, "Pilot: Registering Re-entering Citizens to Vote," 2019, $49,126.30 (with Jennifer Doleac, Laurel Eckhouse, Eric Foster-Moore, Allison Harris, and Ariel White).

Rutgers University Research Council Award, 2019-2020, $2,880.00

MIT Election Lab New Initiatives Grant, 2019-2020, $9,992.13 (with Laurel Eckhouse, Allison Harris and Ariel White)

Brian and Diane Jones Graduate Research Grant, University of Washington, Department of Political Science, 2015, $1,500.00

Center for Statistics and Social Science Graduate Student Research Presentation and Training Grant, Spring 2014, $1,000.00

WISER Survey Research Fellowship, Fall 2011-Fall 2014, $2,000.00

WISER Summer Research Fellowship, Summer 2012, $2,500.00

Christopherson Fellowship, 2011-2012 Academic Year

Bloustein Fellowship in Public Policy, 2009-2010 Academic Year.

Awards

Racial and Ethnic Politics Section Best Book Award, APSA, 2020, *Mobilized by Injustice: Criminal Justice Contact, Political Participation and Race.*

Latino Caucus Best Paper in Latino Politics, WPSA, 2019, "The Ripple Effect: The Political Consequences of Proximal Contact with Immigration Enforcement," (with Marcel Roman and Matt Barreto).

Racial and Ethnic Politics Section Best Conference Paper Award, APSA, 2019, "Acculturation and Perceived Discrimination among Muslim Americans," (with Nazita Lajevardi, Kassra Oskooii and Aubrey Westfall).

Best Graduate Paper in Political Science, 2014, "Executive Discretion: A Mixed-Method Study of the Pardon and Clemency Process in Washington State," (with Kassra Oskooii)

Western Political Science Association Paper Award 2012, Best Paper in Black Politics. "The Effects of Indirect Contact With the Criminal Justice System on Political Participation."

Public Writing

2018. What gets ex-prisoners politically and civically involved? *The Monkey Cage,* September 21. With Michael Leo Owens.

2018. How changes to how the Census counts people has implications for democracy and inequality. *LSE American Politics and Policy Blog,* February 15. with Rebecca U. Thorpe.

2018. Here's what the Democrats need to do to get the DREAM Act through Congress. *LSE American Politics and Policy Blog,* January 29. Also covered by *Newsweel* U.S. Ediction. with Kassra A.R. Oskooii and Sergio Garcia-Rios.

2017. Allies in name only? Latino-only leadership on DACA may trigger implicit racial biases among white liberals. *LSE American Politics and Policy Blog,* September 28. with Kassra A.R. Oskooii and Sergio Garcia-Rios.

2016. Voter Suppression in a post-Shelby world. *Huffington Post Latino Decisions Blog,* November 29.

Teaching

Introduction to American Politics

Immigration Enforcement

Race, Criminal Justice and Civil Rights

Crime and Public Policy

Law and society

Public Policy Formation

American Politics Pro Seminar (graduate)

Political Behavior (graduate)

Citizenship, Violence and Political Exclusion (graduate)

Research and Consulting Experience

Florida, 2020, expert witness, Jones v. Desantis

North Dakota, 2016, 2018, provided research support for expert report with Dr. Matt Barreto, Dr. Gabe Sanchez and Janelle Johnson submitted to federal court in the case Brakebill at al. v Jaeger

Texas, 2014, provided research support for expert report with Dr. Matt Barreto and Dr. Gabe Sanchez submitted to federal court in the case Veasey v. Perry

City of Seattle, Office for Civil Rights, Research and Evaluation Assistant, 2013 - 2014

Pennsylvania, 2012, provided research support for expert report with Dr. Matt Barreto and Dr. Gabe Sanchez submitted to federal court in the case Applewhite v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Milwaukee County, WI, 2012, provided research support for expert report Dr. Matt Barreto and Dr. Gabe Sanchez submitted to federal court the case Frank v. Walker

Washington Poll, University of Washington, 2012 - 2014.

Rutgers Eagleton Poll, Rutgers University, 2009 - 2010

The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, 2010

Invited Talks and Conference Presentations

SNF Paideia Program, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 2021

Citrin Center on Public Opinion, University of California, Berkeley, 2020

Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas, Austin, 2020

Race, Inequality and Policy Initiative, Wake Forest University, 2020

Facebook, Race and Social Justice Workshop, 2020

Department of Political Science Research in American Politics Workshop, University of California, Berkeley, 2019

Department of Political Science Race, Ethnicity and Politics Workshop, University of California, Los Angeles, 2019

University of Denver, 2019

Columbia University, 2018

Yale University, 2018

Seminar in Racial and Ethnic Politics, Pace University, 2017

Winant Symposium on Democratic Deficits and American Politics, Rothermere American Institute at the University of Oxford, 2016

Latino National Health and Immigration Survey Mini-Conference, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at the University of New Mexico, 2015

American Political Science Association Meeting, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

Western Political Science Association Meeting, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

The Midwestern Political Science Association Meeting, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

Politics of Race, Immigration and Ethnicity Consortium, 2013, 2019, 2021

Professional Service

Discipline

American Political Science Association, section on Race, Ethnicity and Politics best paper award committee, 2021

Journal of Racial and Ethnic Politics, special issue in criminal justice, 2020 (guest editor with Allison Harris and Laurel Eckhouse)

American Political Science Association, section on Race, Ethnicity and Politics program chair, 2020

Women in REP Writing Retreat, co-organizer, June 2019

American Political Science Association, section on Race, Ethnicity and Politics Newsletter editor, 2017 - 2019

American Political Science Association, mini-conference on "Justice and Injustice: Political Science Perspectives on Crime and Punishment" co-organizer, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

Manuscript reviewer for Journal of Politics, American Political Science Review, American Journal of Political Science, Political Behavior, Religion and Politics, Politics, Groups and Identities and the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Politics

University

Dissertation committee member:
Bailey Socha (Rutgers University)
Katie Krumholz (Rutgers University)
Megan Dias (UT Austin)
Ben White (UT Austin)
Klara Fredrikkson (UT Austin)

Criminal Legal System Research Interest Group (CLS RIG) advisory committee member, 2020 - present

Racial and Ethnic Politics Search Committee, 2021

Provost's Early Career Fellowship Program Search Committee, 2020

Diversity and Inclusion in Government Graduate Studies (DIGGS) recruitment participant, 2021, 2022

Admissions Committee, 2019

Advisory Committee, 2017 - 2018

Panelist, Mass Incarceration Round Table, Department of Journalism and Media Studies, January 2018