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RACE AND REDISTRICTING IN THE 1990S

Edited by
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film machines and pouring through *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* disabused of us that notion. There were two problems with the public record: first, minor candidates (those receiving less than 10% of the vote) often were mentioned only in passing, and second, the race of leading candidates was not noted in some cases. Next, we called party officials (starting with the state party headquarters in each relevant state), newspaper reporters, campaign workers, offices of incumbents who were still in office (this approach was especially useful for 1992), and the candidates themselves to fill in the substantial gaps. After 239 phone interviews, ranging in length from a minute or two ("Nope, don't know anything about that campaign. Try Mr. X. He would know"), to more than a half an hour, we were able to identify the race of all the candidates.

ESTIMATING THE IMPACT OF VOTING-RIGHTS-RELATED DISTRICTING ON DEMOCRATIC STRENGTH IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Bernard Grofman and Lisa Handley

WHILE THIS ASSERTION HAS BEEN DENIED BY CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS such as the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (NAACP LDF, 1994), there appears to be a widespread agreement across party and ideological lines that the creation of a large number of new majority black districts in the South (and, perhaps to a lesser extent, the creation of new majority black and majority Hispanic districts elsewhere in the country) contributed in no small part to the change in party control of the House that occurred between 1990 and 1994. For example, according to George Will (1995), "(r)acial gerrymandering is one reason that Newt Gingrich is speaker." More recently, the Voting Rights Act has been blamed for the continuing Republican control of the House in 1996 despite the reelection of a Democratic president. Thus, the argument is made that gains in descriptive minority representation have come only at the cost of probable defeat of minority-supported initiatives in the House.¹

In addition, the claim has been made (e.g., by Lublin, 1997) that there is, in general, a trade-off between descriptive representation of minorities and the ability of minorities to gain policy outcomes to their liking which holds even if Democrats were to have remained (or to become again) the majority party in the House (or in any given Southern state legislature).

Here we focus on African-American representation in the House in 1992 and

¹Lublin (1995b) observes that "the aggregate effect of racial redistricting has been to make the House less likely to adopt legislation favored by African Americans."

1994. By comparing the results of the congressional elections in 1992 and 1994 under the 1990s lines with earlier outcomes, we provide new empirical evidence on the extent to which 1990s redistricting leading to the creation of new black majority congressional seats (1) negatively impacted Democratic seat share, and/or (2) negatively impacted mean and median congressional liberalism. While our results suggest that the *direct* impact of racial redistricting on Democratic congressional losses in the South has been somewhat exaggerated, we offer a theory of what we call the "triple whammy" that leads us to an extremely negative view of the long run prospects for the Democratic party in the South. In our view of what has been happening in the South, race and realignment go hand in hand.

DATA ANALYSIS

Impact of Districting/Distribution of Black Population on Democratic Seat Share

We believe it important to distinguish between three easy-to-confuse questions. The first is "Did the Democrats suffer greater losses between 1990 and 1994 in the areas of the country where (new) black seats were drawn than elsewhere?" The second is "If the districting lines in 1990 had been used (in the South) in 1994, would Democrats have done better; and, the flip side, if the districting lines in 1994 had been used (in the South) in 1990, would the Democrats have done worse?" The third is "Would the optimal arrangement of black voting strength across congressional districts have permitted the Democrats (in the South) to hold on to some of the seats they lost?" The answers to these different questions need not point in the same direction vis-a-vis the partisan consequences of districting. Which question you answer largely determines whether you conclude that the Voting Rights Act proved very costly to House Democrats in the 1990s.

For the 1994 versus 1990 comparison, our answer to the first question is no;² our answer to the second question is yes, but not to any great extent; and our answer to the third question is yes for sure, but not nearly as many seats as you might think, although more than one would conclude in looking only at the answers to the previous two questions.

Let us look first at the question, "Did the Democrats suffer greater losses between 1990 and 1994 in the areas of the country where (new) black seats were drawn than elsewhere?" Taking this question as the relevant question to be answered, the civil rights attorney Laughlin McDonald (1995) asserts that the impact of the VRA on the Democratic party has been much exaggerated. He points out that in the nine states that drew new predominantly minority districts after the 1990 census, Democrats lost 19% of their 1992 seats in the 1994 election; in the 41 other states, they lost 21%.³ Moreover, even if the Democrats had

retained every one of their 1992 House seats in the nine states that drew new black majority seats—completely bucking the national trend—the Republicans would *still* have gained control of the House in 1994.

Of course, looking at only a single year can be misleading. In 1992 most of the limited number of Democratic losses did occur in the nine states with new majority minority seats; thus looking only at 1994 results understates the impact of 1990s districting on Republican gains. But even taking these Democratic 1992 losses into account does not change the basic result that Republican congressional gains between 1990 and 1994 occurred virtually everywhere. Between 1994 and 1996, however, the Republicans gained a handful of Southern seats in the House (some by virtue of incumbents changing their party affiliation) at the same time as they were losing seats elsewhere in the nation. But, on average, at least for elections to the House, Republicans also gained more votes compared with 1994 in the South than elsewhere.

The answer to the second question posed above, "If the districting lines in 1990 had been used in 1994 (and in 1992), would Democrats have done better; and, the flip side, if the districting lines in 1994 had been used in 1990, would the Democrats have done worse?" is a subject of some dispute in the literature. For example, Lublin (1995a, b), who looks at seats decided by relatively small margins which lost substantial black population between 1990 and 1992 and which shifted to the Republicans by 1994, notes that many of these seats could have been kept in Democratic hands if the black population in the district had been kept at its previous levels. Lublin (1995a, emphasis ours) concludes that "the creation of new majority-minority districts assured that the Republicans won *solid* control of the House in 1994." However, we should not read too much into this claim. Even using Lublin's method of calculation, it seems to us unlikely that drawing new black majority seats during the 1990s round of districting cost the Democrats more than 10 of the 62 seats they dropped between 1990 and 1994.

More importantly, if we look at the question of the link between Republican gains and districting using a methodology that is sensitive to the overall consequences of changes in the distribution of black strength for the probability of Democratic success rather than just singling out just those districts where the loss of black population might have affected close contests, we get an estimate of the impact of racial districting that is considerably lower than that obtained by Lublin. In net terms, taking into account countervailing factors such as the certainty of Democratic success in the new heavily black seats, we find that as few as 2-5 of the 24 Southern congressional seats lost by the Democrats between 1990 and 1994 might be seen as the direct result of the racial aspects of 1990s redistricting. The rest of the Democratic losses are attributable to a quite simple fact—Republican congressional candidates across the board got a lot more votes in the South in 1994 than they did in 1992 and fewer votes in 1992 than in 1990 as well. Indeed, Republicans showed greater vote gains in 1994 in the deep South than in the rest of the country.⁴

² However, we would have to answer yes to the first question for a 1996 versus 1994 comparison.

³ Moreover, in House elections, a swing ratio near 2 has characterized the past several decades (Brady and Grofman, 1991). Given the striking decline in Democratic mean congressional vote share from 1992 to 1994, a seat loss of 52 seats is not that out of line.

Before we can explain the basis for our empirical results about this second question, we need to lay some methodological groundwork.

Let us imagine a population (e.g., an electorate) decomposed into a set of mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories, C_j through C_n . These may be based on characteristics such as attitudes or demographic attributes. Let Y be the variable whose change in value we seek to account for, i.e., let Y be the dependent variable (e.g., turnout). Let P_{it} be the proportion of the total population that group i comprises at time t . Let Y_{it} be the (perhaps estimated) value of the dependent variable in the i th group at time t . We wish to explain the change in Y over time, i.e., to account for

$$\Delta Y = Y_0 - Y_t$$

as a function of changes in composition (i.e., differences between P_{it} and P_{i0} , in each of the categories), and changes in behavior (i.e., differences between Y_{it} and Y_{i0} , in each of the categories).⁵

Now let

$$(1) \Delta Y_i = Y_{i0} - Y_{it}$$

$$(2) \Delta P_i = P_{i0} - P_{it}$$

Abramson and Aldrich (1982) use the formula in Eq. (3) below as a measure of the impact on behavior (in their case turnout) of changes in the variables (e.g., partisanship) they study.⁶

$$(3) \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n Y_{it} \Delta P_i}{\Delta Y}$$

The numerator of Eq. (3) is the difference between the value of the independent variable that would have been found had the proportion of the population in each category remained unchanged from time 0 to time t while the behavior of each of the population groups was that found at time t , and the value of the independent variable that actually obtained at time t ,⁷ i.e., it can be thought of as a measure of the compositional change.⁸

⁴ It is also important to note that, thanks to reapportionment and sun-belt population gains relative to the rest of the country, there were more 9 seats in 1994 (or 1992) in the South than in 1990. Thus, 1990s Republican gains in vote share had a greater impact on Republican seat gain in the South relative to 1990 than in areas of the country with constant or declining congressional delegation size.

⁵ For example, using the notation of Cassel and Luskin (1981: 1327-28), $P_{it} = S_{ijt}/i$ where, in their notation, i indicates the proportion of the electorate in the i th category of partisanship, j the j th category of efficacy, and k the k th category of some third variable, while t is, as here, a subscript for time. This example demonstrates how the C_j categories can be based on one or more polychotomous variables.

⁶ Their notation is somewhat different from ours.

⁷ The expression shown in Eq. (3) is what Cassel and Luskin (1988) denote as A_t .

Cassel and Luskin (1988) strongly critique Eq. (3) as a measure of the contribution of compositional change (to total turnout decline) by noting that the value of the expression in Eq. (3) can readily exceed one.⁹ We can also readily provide examples in which its value is negative. Cassel and Luskin take such findings to mean that the expression cannot possibly measure the proportion of the change in behavior (turnout) that can be accounted for by any given factor. In like manner it can be shown that the equation analogous to Eq. (3) for attributing the magnitude of *behavioral* change, shown as Eq. (4) below, is also flawed in that it can take on values below zero or above one.

$$(4) \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n P_{it} \Delta Y_i}{\Delta Y}$$

To understand what is going on we make use of the following algebraic identity:

$$(5) Y_0 - Y_t = \sum_{i=1}^n Y_{i0} \Delta P_i \quad \text{(a) composition effect}$$

$$+ \sum_{i=1}^n P_{i0} \Delta Y_i \quad \text{(b) behavioral effect}$$

$$+ \sum_{i=1}^n \Delta P_i \Delta Y_i \quad \text{(c) interaction effect}$$

Like Abramson and Aldrich we treat Expression (5a), which has a ΔP_i term in it, as a measure of compositional change for a fixed value of the Y_{it} , namely Y_{i0} . In like manner we treat Expression (5b), which has a ΔY_i term in it, as a measure of behavioral change for a fixed value of the P_{it} , namely P_{i0} .¹⁰ However, we have added an *interaction term* to complete the algebraic identity.

⁸ A similar formula is used by Boyd (1981) and Cavanagh (1982), each of whom looks at the effects on turnout of growth in the proportion of the eligible electorate falling into the oldest and the youngest age cohorts, and at the turnout consequences of permitting eighteen-year-olds to vote. Both authors estimate effects by computing a hypothetical turnout in 1976 on the assumption that age-specific turnout rates had stayed constant over the period and that the only thing that changed was the proportion of eligibles who fell into each age grouping. Each then takes the difference between hypothetical turnout and actual turnout (normalized by the total decline in turnout) to be the measure of age-related compositional changes, i.e., they calculate an expression identical to that of Expression (3) except that Y_{i0} is used instead of Y_{it} . In our terminology here the C_j are age segments of the population and Y again is turnout.

⁹ Categories based on efficacy, partisanship, etc. See earlier footnote.

¹⁰ We may readily develop an analogue to Expression (5) where we look at the value of our fixed parameters at time zero rather than at time t . See below.

This decomposition model has been used in published work by only a few political scientists (Grofman and Handley, 1991; Krehbiel and Wright, 1993). John Jackson, at the University of Michigan, like one of the present authors, independently derived the above methodology, but then discovered it to be already known in the sociology literature (John Jackson, personal communication, October 1989). Eq. (5) provides a useful methodology to estimate the relative magnitude of changes in districting lines (composition) and changes in voting (behavior) on Democratic congressional success from 1990 to 1994 (and/or from 1990 to 1992).

For the states with above 10% black population, we show in Table 1 the percent Democratic in the House in 1994 by percent African-American in the district. The format for this table parallels that in Tables 15 and 18 (page 30 and page 33) in the Handley, Grofman and Arden chapter in this volume. Those earlier tables show data for 1990 and 1992, respectively.

We shall make use of the data in these tables and the formulas of Eq. (5) to calculate the impact of redistricting related changes in the distribution of black population across districts on Democratic seat share in the House for the South. It is in the South where we expect large effects to be present. If they are not found there, they will be found elsewhere in the nation. When we calculate the three formulas shown in Eq. (5) for the data in Table 1 in this chapter and Table 15 in the Handley, Grofman, and Arden chapter for the eleven Southern states for which data is provided, what we are doing is as if we were rerunning the 1994 House elections in the South with 1990s district lines and rerunning the 1990 House elections in the South with 1994 levels of Republican success in the various racial categories.¹¹ Similarly, when we calculate the three formulas shown in Eq. (5) for the data in Tables 18 and 15 in the Handley, Grofman, and Arden chapter, what we are doing is as if we were rerunning the 1992 election with 1990s district lines and rerunning the 1990 election with 1992 levels of Republican success in the various racial categories.

Performing these calculations for the 1990 to 1994 comparison, we find that a 17% decline from 1990 to 1994 in the percentage of House seats held by Democrats in the (eleven state) South is apportioned into 17 points of behavioral change (i.e., increased Republican vote share) and only 4 points of compositional (i.e., redistricting-related) change, with -4 points of interaction effect. If we allocate the interaction equally to the compositional and behavioral components, then only 2 percentage points, equaling a little over 2 seats (2/7 x .17 x 125) would be attributed to the impact of race-related districting in the South. If, more plausibly, we allocate the interaction effect in proportion to the magnitude of the behavioral and compositional effects, we would still only attribute 4 Southern seats (4/21 x .17 x 125) to the race-related effects of 1990s districting. Even if we allocate the interaction effect entirely to the compositional component, we would still only attribute 5 seats (4/17 x .17 x 125) to the race-related effects of 1990s

¹¹Because we do our calculation in percentage terms, there is an additional factor that needs to be taken into account, namely the additional nine seats added to Southern congressional delegations after the 1990 census.

TABLE 1. Percent Democrats in Congress by Percent African-American in District 1994

	Percent African-American In District				
	0-9.9	10-19.9	20-29.9	30-39.9	40-49.9
South	0-9.9	10-19.9	20-29.9	30-39.9	40-49.9
Alabama	50.0 (2)	100.0 (1)	33.3 (3)	—	50+ (N)
Arkansas	0.0 (1)	100.0 (2)	0.0 (1)	—	100.0 (1)
Florida	18.8 (16)	33.3 (3)	100.0 (1)	—	100.0 (3)
Georgia	50.0 (2)	0.0 (4)	0.0 (2)	—	100.0 (3)
Louisiana	—	33.3 (3)	50.0 (2)	—	100.0 (2)
Mississippi	0.0	100.0 (1)	0.0 (1)	100.0 (1)	100.0 (1)
N. Carolina	0.0 (4)	50.0 (2)	25.0 (4)	—	100.0 (2)
S. Carolina	—	0.0 (1)	0.0 (3)	100.0 (1)	100.0 (1)
Tennessee	25.0 (4)	33.3 (3)	100.0 (7)	—	100.0 (1)
Texas	52.6 (19)	100.0 (7)	50.0 (2)	—	100.0 (2)
Virginia	33.3 (3)	40.0 (5)	100.0 (1)	100.0 (1)	100.0 (1)
Total	33.3 (51)	53.1 (32)	33.3 (19)	100.0 (3)	100.0 (17)
Non - South					
Delaware	—	0.0 (1)	—	—	—
Illinois	33.3 (15)	100.0 (2)	—	—	100.0 (3)
Maryland	0.0 (3)	66.7 (3)	—	—	100.0 (2)
Michigan	41.7 (12)	100.0 (2)	—	—	100.0 (2)
Missouri	57.1 (7)	—	100.0 (1)	—	100.0 (1)
New Jersey	16.7 (6)	50.0 (6)	—	—	100.0 (1)
New York	45.5 (22)	33.3 (3)	—	100.0 (3)	100.0 (3)
Ohio	15.4 (13)	100.0 (3)	0.0 (1)	0.0 (1)	100.0 (1)
Pennsylvania	44.4 (18)	100.0 (1)	—	—	100.0 (2)
Total	36.5 (96)	66.7 (21)	50.0 (2)	75.0 (4)	100.0 (15)

districting. Thus, the *direct* effect on Democratic seats of changes in the distribution of black population across Southern districts¹² is at least a two-seat loss in the House for the Democrats and at most a five-seat loss for the Democrats.¹³

¹²Of course there are also some non-South states with substantial black populations, but the partisan effects of black population shifts across House districts in these states is of a much smaller magnitude than for the South.

¹³Using a variety of statistical methods, Petrocik and Desposato (1995) reach nuanced and relatively conservative conclusions about the impact of race-related districting on Democratic success that are not that different from those of the present authors. They note (p. 16, emphasis in original) that "had the political mood been less hostile (especially in 1994) it's doubtful that Democratic losses would be so large. They also emphasize that Democrats in the South did a rather good job of redrawing lines given the two severe constraints they faced: (1) the need to draw additional black majority seats lest plans be denied pre-clearance; (2) a reduction in both the number of and the loyalty of Democratic party identifiers in the South (see esp Figure 2). In particular, they argue that many of the black voters used to form the new black majority seats were pulled from districts that were already Republican, thus minimizing the costs to Democrats, and that the burden of running in a district with radically redrawn district lines was placed on Republican incumbents to the greatest extent possible. Nonetheless, since there were more Democratic seats to begin with, more 1990 Democratic incumbents were impacted by changes in their old district lines than were Republican incumbents. They also point that, especially in 1994, there was both a decline in black turnout relative to white turnout in the South and a major decline in the willingness of white voters to support Democratic congressional candidates. Their bottom line is that "New voters, the loss of loyal black voters, and the anti-Democratic mood were all necessary for the losses."

However, this estimate of redistricting effects is almost certainly an understatement because it skips over what happened in 1992. One reason the Republicans got more votes in 1994 than in 1990 is that 1990s line drawing impacted white Democratic incumbents. There were somewhat fewer white (Southern) Democratic incumbents in 1994 than there otherwise might have been as a result of the 1992 elections.¹⁴ and some Democratic incumbents were induced to withdraw from politics prior to the 1992 election.¹⁵ Thus, some of the impact of the 1990s line drawing on Democratic seat loss will be missed if we simply do a 1994 versus 1990 comparison.¹⁶ Taking these earlier effects into account would increase the importance of the VRA as a factor in Southern Democratic congressional decline, and would give estimates of the magnitude of the racial districting effect that come somewhat closer to the magnitude of the effect estimated by Lublin. But, even taking into account both direct effects in 1994 and the continuing effects of the 1992 election and pre-election choices made by Democratic office-holders, we would still conclude that the consequences of drawing new black majority seats cannot be blamed for the shift in control of the House in 1994.

Now let us turn to the third of our questions about redistricting impact: "Would the optimal arrangement of black voting strength across congressional districts have permitted the Democrats to hold on to some of the seats they lost?" In 1994, in the South, districts with between 20 and 30 percent black population show evidence of a possible backlash effect in that these districts are actually less likely to elect Democrats than districts with only 10-20 percent black populations. Thus, based on 1994 election results, in the South, it would appear that Democrats would have been well-advised to avoid creating districts with between 20 and 30 percent black population. By turning two districts with 20-30 percent black population into one district with 30-40 percent black population and one district with 0-10 percent black population, they would have raised the expected number of Democratic successes in 1994 in the two seats from .67 to 1.33.

¹⁴ Using an eight state definition of the South, and using a methodology that draws on ideas in Gleaming and King (1994), Hill (1995) estimates that redistricting cost the Democrats four seats in the South in 1992.

¹⁵ Performing analogous calculations to those above for the 1990 to 1992 comparison, we find that a 5% decline in the percentage of seats in the (eleven state) South from 1990 to 1992 held by Democrats is apportioned into 5 points of behavioral change (i.e., increased Republican vote share) and 6 points of compositional (i.e., redistricting-related) change, with -6 points of interaction effect. If we allocate the interaction equally to the compositional and behavioral components, then only 3 percentage points, equaling a little under 4 seats ($3/5 \times .05 \times 125$) would be attributed to the impact of race-related districting. This result does not really change much if we allocate the interaction effect in proportion to the magnitude of the behavioral and compositional effects. Even if we allocate the interaction effect to the compositional component to the greatest extent possible, we would still only attribute 6 seats ($5/5 \times .05 \times 125$) to the race-related effects of 1990s districting in 1992.

¹⁶ Also, some half-dozen white Democratic House members shifted their allegiance to the Republican party in the 1990s. As we discuss later, we see some of these changes as responsive to a new climate in the South in which the Democratic party is increasingly seen as the party of blacks, both in terms of voters and, increasingly, in terms of office-holders as well.

Based on calculations like these, we can show that, in theory, *ceteris paribus*, had the Democrats made near optimal use of black voters to shore up Democratic seats in the South against the Republican tide, as many as 10-11 seats might have been saved. However, this maximum estimate of 10-11 seats is unrealistic, because, given the geography, it would have been impossible without excessively tortuous lines to convert a large proportion of the 20 to 30 percent black population districts into the districts with between 30 and 40 percent black population that were optimal for Democratic election chances in the South. Moreover, even if compactness could have been achieved given the constraints of geography, gerrymandering that would have been optimal from the perspective of maximizing Democratic congressional seat share in the South (i.e., districts with 30 to 40 percent black population) would seem to be incompatible with the creation of districts from which African-Americans would have had a realistic chance of being elected to Congress from that region, since the latter (except where there are already black incumbents in place) appear to require black populations closer to 50 percent (see e.g., Grofman and Handley, 1995a; Handley, Grofman, and Arden, this volume, and references cited therein; cf. Cavanagh, 1995; Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran, 1995).

In the non-South, in 1994, in contrast, districts with 10-20 percent black population seemed desirable to maximize Democratic chances. These findings parallel those in Grofman, Griffin and Glazer (1992). Higher black populations are needed to maximize Democratic success in the South than in the non-South, and spreading black population so as to avoid creating majority black districts is desirable in both South and non-South from the standpoint of maximizing the aggregate election chances of (white) Democrats. However, there is one very important difference between the conclusions reached from examining the data in Table 1 and that reached in the earlier analyses of Grofman, Griffin and Glazer (1992). In the 1990s, in the South, as Democratic support has continued to fall among white Southerners, an even higher black population share is now optimal from the standpoint of maximizing Democratic chances in the House than was true in previous decades. In the 1980s, in the South, what had been optimal for Democratic chances was to maximize the number of districts with between 20 and 30 percent black population. Now, such districts are no longer safe.

Of course, we must be cautious in trying to use the Grofman, Griffin, Glazer (1992) methodology to second-guess (Democratic) districting strategies; the methodology only provides an estimate of the partisanly optimal allocation rule, and it neglects complications such as geographic constraints and incumbency advantages.¹⁷ Moreover, our belief about what is the best districting strategy with respect to black population placement from a partisan point of view may change with new election results, as is evident from our earlier point about the difference between the Grofman, Griffin and Glazer (1992) findings for the South in the

¹⁷ Very similar notes of caution are sounded in Hill (1995: 400).

1980s and our own findings for that region in 1994.¹⁸ Another important point to note is that, as can be seen by reviewing the data in Table 1, it is harder for Democrats to make districting mistakes in the non-South than in the South with respect to how best to locate black population for purposes of partisan advantage.

Impact of Districting/Black Population Distribution on Mean and Median Congressional Liberalism

Lublin (1995a, b) argues that Republican gains made possible by the creation of (additional) black seats, especially those in the South, has the net effect of reducing congressional liberalism, and thus reducing the likelihood that bills supported by black legislators will pass. Also, he notes that the creation of such districts made it more likely that Republicans would win/keep control of Congress. We have already commented on the extent to which Republican gains that can be linked to the VRA can be said to have caused a change in partisan control of the House. Here we wish to evaluate the claim that the net effect of creating black seats is a loss of congressional liberalism. We believe this claim is wrong. Only insofar as the spillover effects of the new seats vis-à-vis Democratic loss operate to shift partisan control of the House will creating new black seats reduce the liberalism of House policy outcomes.

Even if we posit that every new black congressional seat in the South led to a net loss of one white Democrat,¹⁹ calculations using the methodology in Grofman, Griffin, and Glazer (1992), updated by using 1994 ADA scores, shows that creating black seats is pretty much a wash as far as mean liberalism. The average black southern congress member has an ADA score of 85; the average white southern Democrat has an ADA score of only 46 or so, with only minimal variation as a function of how black the seat is in population (except for a couple of seats in the 40-50% black population range where there is evidence of backlash insofar as these district representatives are actually less liberal than those from

¹⁸ Indeed, in our view, the definitive word on how best to understand what population percentage is now needed to give black House candidates in the South a realistic opportunity to be elected has yet been written. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the lack of black registration was the principal barrier to black electoral success. In the late 1970s and through the mid-1980s the principal reason that blacks could not be elected from non-majority black seats was that blacks could not win the Democratic primary given polarized voting patterns and the advantages possessed by white incumbents. Now, the principal barrier to black electoral success in a district that is, say, 35-40% black, is no longer the Democratic primary; rather it is the general election. Because so many whites in the South have become Republicans, for any given (substantial) black population proportion, black success in the Democratic primaries is easier to achieve than it ever has been. On the other hand, being the nominee of the Democratic party is no longer anything like the royal road to inevitable success that it once was, especially if you are black. Growing Republican strength in the South has reversed the relative importance of primaries and generals as barriers to black representation. Republican gains have made it easier for blacks to get elected (in primaries) while Republican gains have also made it harder for blacks to get elected (in general elections). The exact nature of the trade-off between these two countervailing effects is subtle. Modeling the effects of this two-stage electoral game on both partisan and minority representation is a task on which the present authors are currently engaged.

¹⁹ It is highly implausible that we can expect a net loss of more than one Democratic seat for each new black majority seat created—at least in terms of the direct effects of districting.

districts with fewer blacks). In 1994, the average southern Republican has an ADA score around 6, independent of how black in population the district is, with mean decile scores ranging between 4 and 8, thus if we replace two white southern Democrats with a Republican and a black Democrat, we go from a combined ADA of 92 to a combined ADA of 93. Yes, white Republicans are a lot more conservative than white Democrats, but black southern Democrats are equally more liberal than white Democrats elected from non-majority black seats!

Lublin (1995b) argues that the correct way to look at roll-call voting impact is in terms of medians rather than means. In the scenario above the median member of Congress remains the same if we replace two moderates with one extreme conservative and one extreme liberal.²⁰ However, even though the impact on race-related districting on the overall House median is a wash, since we would argue that the location of the median party voter in the majority party is also important for policy outcomes in the House, if Democrats control congress, policy liberalism is almost certainly aided by the election of black Democrats who shift the Democratic median to the left; on the other hand, if Republicans control congress, policy liberalism is harmed by the election of very conservative Southern Republicans who shift the Republican median even farther to the right. Thus, given the 1994 and 1996 election results, gains in descriptive minority representation have required a price to be paid in terms of negative consequences for policy liberalism in House votes.²¹

DISCUSSION

We have shown that

(1) Through 1994, Democrats did not suffer greater levels of decline in those states where black majority districts had been drawn than in those states where they had not been.

(2) Given the substantial increase in support for Republican congressional candidates from 1990 to 1994, the Republican seat gains in Congress were generally consistent with previous patterns of seats-votes relationships over the past two decades.

(3) Almost all of the Democratic congressional loss in the South from 1990 to 1994 can be attributed to one simple fact: namely, Republican candidates made substantial vote gains in virtually all districts.

(4) Given the national scope of the Republican 1994 tidal wave, even had no

²⁰ Lublin's counterexamples rest on an attempt to determine median voters by simulating outcomes of certain important (and close) roll calls under alternative districting schemes with hypothetical votes recreated using Poole-Rosenthal "Nominate" scores (Poole and Rosenthal, 1987). The problem with this method is that it relies on a string of complicated projections. Because the predictive equations are far from perfect, results based on a precise location for the median voter are highly suspect.

²¹ Of course, even this analysis is still perhaps too simplistic. The rise to power of the extreme conservative wing of the Republican party in the House may have led Newt Gingrich to overreach, provoking a voter backlash to conservative initiatives.

new black majority seats been drawn in the 1990s districting round, the Republicans would still have gained control of the House.

(5) Had there been no need to create additional black seats and had African-American voters in the South been treated as "sandbags" and optimally deployed to protect Democratic beachheads from the Republican tide, even skillful partisan gerrymandering could not have reduced the level of Democratic congressional loss between 1990 and 1994 by more than at most 10-11 seats in the South.

(6) For all practical purposes, unless there is a black incumbent already in place, Southern districts that are not majority black do not elect African-Americans (at least ones who are candidates of choice of the African-American community) to the House. Thus, gerrymandering that appears to have been optimal from the perspective of maximizing Democratic congressional seat share in the South (i.e., districts with a 30-40% black population) appears incompatible with the creation of districts from which African-Americans have in the past had a realistic chance of being elected to Congress from the South.

(7) The consequences for Democratic success of a failure to "optimally" allocate black population across districts are (considerably) greater in the South than in the non-South.

(8) The implications of Democratic districting for congressional liberalism appears a wash, were Democrats to have kept control of the House. Even if every new black majority seat in the South led, on balance, to the replacement of a white Democrat with a Republican, the mean liberalism of the combination of one new Republican and one new black Democrat would be virtually indistinguishable from the mean liberalism of the two white Southern Democrats who had been replaced.

MORE SPECULATIVE CONCLUSIONS

We propose the following general conceptual framework for thinking about the impact of race-conscious districting in the South—what we call the theory of the "triple whammy." This theory has three components: (1) *ceteris paribus*, reducing black population proportion in a district reduces the likelihood that the district will be won by a Democrat, and, on balance, creating black majority seats is not an "optimal" allocation of black votes from the standpoint of maximizing the number of Democrats to be elected, especially in the South. (2) The "blackening" of the Democratic party in the South has a kind of chain reaction effect, making it ever less likely that Democrats will regain white support as the center of gravity within the Democratic party in the South shifts toward black interests (cf. Edsall and Edsall, 1991). (3) We can expect a kind of top-down realignment based on "progressive ambition," as the incumbency advantage shifts to the Republicans, in which the potential for Republican success at the congressional level makes it more likely that strong Republican candidates will seek state legis-

lative office as a springboard to the higher and more desirable office,²² and the increased Republican state legislative strength in the South will provide an increased pool of strong Republican congressional candidates which will make it more likely that Republicans will be able to hold on to their recent gains in congressional seats in the South. Eventually, Republican gains will even percolate down to lower levels of office in most Southern states.²³

When Lyndon Johnson pushed for the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, he did so with the belief that it might doom the Democratic party's future chances in the South, although he also recognized that without it, the Democratic party in the South was probably doomed anyway (Grofman and Davidson, 1994). Over the past 30 years, the greatest loss of Democratic strength at the presidential level has taken place in the South, with the decline greatest in the areas of the South with the greatest black population, despite the fact that these voters (some not enfranchised until the late 1960s) vote solidly Democratic (Grofman and Handley, 1995).

If we look at the relationship between Democratic vote shares and black percentage in congressional districts in the South, we find that, while it used to be true that Democrats had a better than 50% chance of winning even the districts where there was minimal black voting strength (Grofman, Griffin and Glazer, 1992), by 1994, it was only in districts with more than 30% black population that Southern Democrats could be sure of winning more than half the seats (see Table 1 [page 57]; Tables 15 and 18 in Handley, Grofman and Arden [page 30 and page 33, this volume]).

As black population becomes ever more key to Democratic success in the South, and as Republicans win more and more of the heavily white seats, the character of the Democratic constituency and of Democratic elected officials begins to change accordingly. Increasingly, in the South, the Republicans will become even more the white party and the Democrats the party of blacks. Consider two groups, B and W, and their support levels for the Democratic party, P_{BD} and P_{WD}. The strength of each group within the Democratic party is given by

²² Similarly, we would argue that one reason for recent Republican House gains in the South is the fact that Republicans have been doing better in recruiting House candidates due in part to the fact that Republicans now have a realistic chance to be elected to the U.S. Senate in most Southern states, and being a Republican member of the House is a good place from which to seek a Senate seat.

²³ This model of "top-down" realignment (Bruneil and Grofman, 1998, forthcoming) begins at the presidential level. It is in voting for president that the cracks in the "Solid South" first appeared, next in U.S. Senate elections, then in gubernatorial elections, then in House elections, and only very recently in elections for lower office. However, this realignment has been what Bruneil and Grofman (1998, forthcoming) call a "glacial realignment," whose pace has been hindered by the rise of "candidate-centered politics" (Wattenberg, 1991) and, in the South, by the long shadow cast by the Civil War. But, like an avalanche, this realignment picked up speed in 1994 and began sweeping congressional Democrats out of its path. In 1996 despite a Democratic presidential victory and net losses overall, the Republicans made gains in the House in the South. The solid South was an historical anomaly; once the Democratic party began to change its stance on civil rights after WWII, and especially after Lyndon Johnson's "great betrayal" in supporting passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, no one would ever be able to put Humpty-Dumpty together again (cf. Huckfeldt and Kohfeldt, 1989; Carrmeson and Stimson, 1989).

BP_D/(BP_D + WP_D). As P_D goes down, then this ratio goes up. Thus, the greater the decline in white support for the Democrats, the greater the proportion of that party's support that comes from black voters and the more visible blacks will be in the Democratic coalition.²⁴

The same kind of argument applies at the office-holder level. A majority of Democratic party leaders in some Southern states are now black. In Georgia, thanks to the 1994 election debacle and one party switch by a Democratic incumbent, there were *no* white Democratic members of the 1994 Georgia congressional delegation.

Prior to the 1996 election one of the present authors made a bet with a congressional specialist that few of the House seats in the South that changed partisan affiliation in 1992 and 1994 would return to Democratic control and that the Republicans would make a net gain of House seats in the South regardless of what happened to them elsewhere in the country or for president. That prediction was an accurate one. Moreover, the full consequences of the 1990s districting have yet to be felt. In particular, we can anticipate further limited net congressional Democratic losses in the South over the remainder of the decade, as those few seats in which George Bush got more votes than Clinton in 1992 that are still in the hands of Democrats shift into Republican hands.²⁵ Indeed, in Congress, in the deep South, only in districts with at least a 30% black population are Democrats likely to be safe.

In our (admittedly pessimistic) view, the Democratic party in the deep South (with the probable notable exceptions of Mississippi and Louisiana) will eventually become a minority party at all levels of government. As it does so, it will necessarily become more and more a party of blacks, with an increasing proportion of African-Americans among its diminishing number of elected officials. The Republican party will be the party supported by most whites—as has long been true in the deep South in terms of presidential voting, and has already become true at the congressional level.

Shaw v. Reno will not rescue the Democratic party in the South by permitting them to return to earlier ways of using black voters as "sandbags." First of all, contrary to some interpretations of its significance, Shaw does not overthrow the *Thornburg v. Gingles* guidelines (see discussion in Grofman, 1997; Grofman and Handley, 1995a; Grofman and Handley, chap. 5 this volume). Second, and probably even more importantly, even though a number of Southern states already have been forced to redraw congressional lines in the light of *Shaw v. Reno*-type challenges and others will be forced to do so, as we can see from the results of the

²⁴Analogously, recent Democratic presidential nominees have received well over 20% of their total votes from African-Americans, making blacks a highly visible component of the national Democratic coalition—as reflected in the racial composition of delegates to recent Democratic National Conventions in which blacks have made up between 20% and 25% of the delegates.

²⁵The growing Republican strength in the South also means that the regional peculiarities that fostered split-ticket voting for congress and president will be decreasing (Grofman, McDonald, Koetzle, and Brunell, 1996).

1996 House elections, Democrats still failed to make net gains in the South despite doing so elsewhere in the country. Because white support for the Democratic party in the South is already so weakened and the top-down realignment in the South has already progressed quite far, it will take more than a handful of changes in congressional (or legislative) district lines to return the Democratic party to dominance in Dixie.²⁶

²⁶Of course, the South will never be as solidly Republican as it had been solidly Democratic for the obvious reason the blacks will anchor the Democratic party in the South and some whites will join them—especially when economic hard times (or fear thereof) remind Bubba that, while the "new" Republicans love their country they also love their country clubs, and that, even if Republicans are right that "welfare" is just another code word for "giving money to blacks," it can be even more important to decode "free men and free markets" as "low-wage jobs without health care, pension rights, or concern for worker safety."