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THE REVOLUTION AGAINST AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN CALIFORNIA: POLITICS, ECONOMICS, AND PROPOSITION 209

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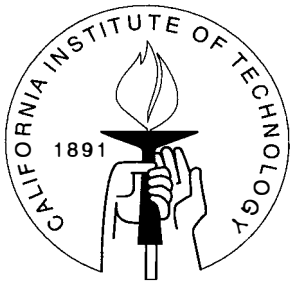

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The Revolution Against Affirmative Action in California: Politics, Economics, and Proposition 209*

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Abstract

We consider two possible explanations-economic anxiety and racial division-for the appeal of Proposition 209 to California voters during the 1996 election. Voter support for this proposition has been attributed to racial differences in opinion and to economic anxiety caused by poor economic conditions in the state and the perceived threat that affirmative action presented in school admissions or the workplace. Because the presidential candidates campaigned on and debated the merits of affirmative action policy during this election, we incorporate this endogeneity into our analysis.

We develop two competing hypotheses to explain voter behavior: (1) if voters are blaming affirmative action for the state's economic conditions, then voters who believe that California's economic condition is poor or who perceive that their personal financial situation is worse will be more likely to support Proposition 209; and (2) if voters are, instead, divided along more traditional racial lines on the merits of affirmative action (winners versus losers), then whites, males, Republicans, and conservatives will be more likely to support Proposition 209, and other ethnic group members, females, Democrats, and liberals will be more likely to oppose Proposition 209.

To test these hypotheses, we analyze voter exit poll data from the 1996 California election. We utilize a two-stage logit model to allow for the endogeneity of candidate endorsements. We find support for the second of our two hypotheses. These findings cause us to conclude that racial division fueled by a fear of arbitrary exclusion prompted voter support for Proposition 209.

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The methodological technique we used in this specific case has a broader application to other elections and in analysis of the influence of candidate endorsements on proposition voting.

1. Introduction

During recent years, the debate among the United States citizenry has intensified regarding the benefits and costs of affirmative action policy with many individuals expressing the belief that opportunities in school admissions and the workplace are being afforded to some at the expense of others, resulting in the now commonly heard cry of "reverse discrimination." However, at the same time, researchers have been divided as to the factors that shape an individual's affirmative action policy opinion. One prominent group has argued that what they term "symbolic racism"—a combination of traditional American values and antiblack affect—determines white attitudes toward affirmative action policies (Kinder and Sears, 1981; McConahay, 1986; Kinder, 1986; Kinder and Sanders, 1996). Another group has countered by asserting that "symbolic racism" fails as an explanation because it confounds policy choice and attitude and ignores the continuation of simple and pure antiblack affect as a determinant of white attitudes about affirmative action (Sniderman and Hagen, 1985; Sniderman and Tetlock, 1986; Sniderman and Piazza, 1993; Kuklinski et al., 1997). Still others have found evidence that white beliefs about affirmative action contain elements of both these different arguments (Alvarez and Brehm, 1997).

Primarily, these previous studies have relied on opinion surveys to reach their conclusions. In this paper, instead, we consider a new method by which to study the expression and determinants of affirmative action opinions, namely, the ballot box. We focus our analysis on California's experience with affirmative action because this state's recent and contentious debate of the issue culminated in the passage of an anti-affirmative action initiative. For example, in the 1990s, several lawsuits claiming reverse discrimination in undergraduate admissions were filed against the University of California after revelations that race was a primary criterion in determining admission to several of its campuses (*Los Angeles Times*, 1995b). In 1995, the Regents of the University of California adopted resolutions to end the university system's preferential treatment of disadvantaged ethnic groups in hiring and in school admissions. During the following year, the some of the state's residents introduced Proposition 209.

The purpose of Proposition 209 was to end affirmative action in California's

government hiring, public school admissions, and public contracting by eliminating preferential treatment of any candidate on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin.[1] Supporters termed Proposition 209 the California Civil Rights Initiative and argued that it would end California's legacy of quotas and morally wrong discrimination in hiring, job promotions, and school admissions, and save the state hundreds of millions of dollars by eliminating these unfair practices.

During the 1996 election, the presidential candidates debated the issue of affirmative action and offered positions on alternative policies and Proposition 209. This proposition was approved by 55 percent of California voters. Two explanations have been given for the appeal of this proposition—economic anxiety and racial division. To analyze these two competing explanations, we begin by discussing the proposition voting literature and the campaign messages and materials. Next, we develop hypotheses about how anti-affirmative action attitudes caused by economic anxiety and racial division might be reflected in the voting behavior of individuals, and we test these hypotheses using Voter News Service (VNS) exit poll data from the November 1996 California election. Then, we specify a two-stage logit model which allows for the endogeneity caused by the politicization of the issues by the presidential candidates. We conclude that racial division fueled by a fear of arbitrary exclusion prompted voter support for Proposition 209. Finally, we discuss the broader implications of our findings and the general applications of our methods to other related research.

2. Proposition Voting

The literature on proposition voting suggests what factors determine an individual's vote choices and what information he uses when making those choices (Lupia, 1994). Specifically, voting behavior on propositions has been found not to be necessarily or consistently a function of voter characteristics such as party identification, education, race, income, or region of residence, which are typically significant in candidate choice (Magleby, 1984).

In addition, the information that is available to the voter in a proposition race is different in two distinct ways from that which is available in a standard candidate

election. First, a brief summary of the initiative appears on the ballot, and additional detailed information is provided by the state in the ballot pamphlet. In California, this pamphlet summarizes the initiative, presents an impartial analysis of the measure by a legislative analyst, and offers arguments for and against it. However, the usefulness of this pamphlet is doubtful given its small font, confusing and complicated prose, and extensive length. Second, standard election information shortcuts, such as a party identification or past experience, on which candidate voting decisions are usually based, are typically absent (Downs, 1957; Key, 1966; Fiorina, 1981). Because the election literature routinely furnished by the registrar of voters provides too many details and the initiative campaigns do not provide adequate information shortcuts, voters may rely heavily on media and elite endorsements and on political ideology when appropriate to reduce the information costs of voting on propositions (Magleby, 1984; Cronin, 1989; Lupia, 1994).

In this particular election, the voters had access to and relied on both candidate and party endorsements to reduce their information costs. Presidential candidates campaigned on the issue of affirmative action, staked out opposing positions in their speeches, and offered opinions about this California initiative. For example, Pete Wilson, California's Republican governor, campaigned primarily on the issue of abolishing affirmative action and his support for Proposition 209 during his abortive race for the presidency. His short-lived campaign forced the other presidential candidates to confront this controversial issue and take a position on it. President Bill Clinton clearly voiced his opposition to this initiative and his concerns about ending affirmative action outright while the Republican presidential candidate, Bob Dole, openly supported it. Because of the endogeneity implied by this relationship (specifically, that an individual's vote on Proposition 209 could be influenced or affected by the presidential race), this important source of information is controlled for in our analysis.

In addition, because of the recent and consistent division between the two major political parties on this issue, individuals could rely on party identification and political ideology reinforced by the presidential candidates' campaigns in their vote choice. Since the advent of the national civil rights movement in the early 1960s and Republican Barry

Goldwater's unsuccessful 1964 presidential campaign, in which he sought to define racial issues as a regional concern and to keep the federal government from interfering with local custom, political ideology, party identification, and racial attitudes have been inexorably linked. Thus, for thirty years, Democrats have been associated with racial liberalism and the advocacy of racial preference policies and affirmative action programs while Republicans have been associated with racial conservatism and an opposition to such policies and programs (Carmines and Stimson, 1989; Gerber and Jackson, 1993).

In 1996, the parties reaffirmed this division. For example, the Republicans explicitly stated their support for Proposition 209 in the *1996 Republican Party Platform*: "We scorn Bill Clinton's notion that any person should be denied a job, promotion, contract or chance at higher education because of their race or gender. Instead, we endorse the Dole-Candy Equal Opportunity Act to end discrimination by the federal government. We likewise endorse this year's Proposition 209, the California Civil Rights Initiative, to restore to law the original meaning of civil rights." The Democrats responded by emphasizing their continued support of affirmative action programs which met President Clinton's four standards of fairness: "(1) no quotas in theory or in practice; (2) no illegal discrimination of any kind, including reverse discrimination; (3) no preference for people who are not qualified; and (4) as soon as a program has succeeded, it must be retired" (Democratic National Committee, 1997).

Also, Republican elected officials sent letters to their constituents in support of this initiative. For example, Republican California Assemblyman Mickey Conroy, representing the 71st district and serving as honorary co-chairman of the California Civil Rights Initiative, wrote a letter encouraging his constituents to gather signatures and raise money in support of this measure (Conroy, 1996). Clearly, during the election campaigns of 1996, both parties reiterated their previous positions—and the presidential candidates echoed these positions—so that both the parties and their candidates were providing voters with information to use in making their decision about Proposition 209.

The vocabulary used by both the candidates and the parties to describe the initiative is also important. The Republicans consistently spoke of it in terms of "racial quotas" and "set-aside programs," thereby framing the issue of affirmative action in a

divisive and negative way intended to increase racial tensions and intensify racial differences in opinion on this controversial proposition (Iyengar, 1991; Zaller, 1992). The Proposition 209 campaign literature reinforced this message by describing affirmative action as an unfair quota system. For example, in a letter to voters, Assemblyman Conroy asserted, "Government forced QUOTAS are wrong!" And Californians Against Discrimination and Preferences, the primary support group for Proposition 209, explained that this initiative was needed "to end the regime of race- and sex-based quotas and preferences and set-asides now governing state employment, contracting and education." By describing affirmative action in these derogatory terms, the initiative's proponents were widening the racial divide on this issue. Specifically, whites traditionally have been less supportive of affirmative action programs than blacks and other minority groups, and this difference in opinion is accentuated when affirmative action programs are portrayed in a negative way or characterized as being about racial quotas and set-asides (Steeh and Krysan, 1996).

Although, the proponents' means, the parties' methods, and the candidates' messages suggest that voter support for this initiative may have been divided along traditional racial and party lines, reporters and researchers alike have theorized that economic anxiety caused the recent backlash against affirmative action and provoked voters to support Proposition 209 (*Newsweek,* 1993; Guerrero, 1997). Therefore, we develop two competing hypotheses to explain voter behavior: (1) if voters are blaming affirmative action for the state's economic conditions, then voters who believe that California's economic condition is poor or who perceive that their personal financial situation is worse will be more likely to support Proposition 209; and (2) if voters are, instead, divided along more traditional racial lines regarding the merits of affirmative action (winners versus losers), then whites, males, Republicans, and conservatives will be more likely to support Proposition 209, and other ethnic group members, females, Democrats, and liberals will be more likely to oppose Proposition 209.

3. A First Look at the Data

To test these alternative hypotheses, we analyze Voter News Service (VNS) exit poll data

from the 1996 California election by Proposition 209 vote choice and by demographic and attitudinal measures (see Tables 1 and 2).[2]

Tables 1 and 2 go here

In Table 1, when race is considered, whites supported Proposition 209 with the highest percentage of yes votes (59 percent). The Hispanic and Asian votes were more evenly split with 37 percent and 42 percent in favor of the measure, respectively, while blacks voted predominantly against, 18 percent for and 82 percent against. At this level of analysis, the race of the voter appears to be a reliable predictor of an individual's vote for or against the proposition, especially for white and black voters.

Next, we consider gender. Women were evenly split on the measure, with 49 percent supporting and 51 percent opposing it. However, men were slightly more likely to support the measure than women, voting 55 percent in favor and 45 percent against. This result suggests that women may not have been viewing themselves as beneficiaries of affirmative action programs (*Los Angeles Times,* 1995a) and that the politicization of the proposition by the presidential candidates and the political parties may have led women to use party and political ideology cues when casting their votes.

Then, we consider educational attainment. We find that support for Proposition 209 was highest among college graduates (56 percent) and less among voters without a college degree or with some postbaccalaureate education. For example, high school graduates split their votes evenly between supporting and opposing the measure, and 53 percent of the voters with some graduate education opposed it.

Finally, in Table 1, we consider the effect of a voter's area of residence. Central Valley and Northern California residents voted strongly in favor of the measure (62 percent for versus 38 percent against). Bay Area residents were predominately against the measure (61 percent against), and Southern California residents were predominately in favor of it (65 percent for). These regional differences in support for Proposition 209 mirror regional differences in party identification—specifically, that Southern California is conservative and Republican and that the Bay Area is traditionally liberal and Democratic—and suggest that the politicization of the initiative by the political parties and candidates may have divided voters along traditional party lines. Thus, preliminary

findings with respect to race and area of residence give some support to the idea that voters were being divided along traditional racial and party lines in their response to this controversial initiative.

Turning to Table 2, we find strong support for our hypothesis that economic perceptions influenced reaction to Proposition 209. Sixty-six percent of those voters who viewed their personal situation as worse voted for the measure. When asked about state economic conditions, again those who thought the state was in poor condition voted predominately (65 percent) in favor of the measure. Obviously, strong negative opinions concerning the state's economy or personal finances strengthened a voter's support for Proposition 209.

When considering the measures of partisanship, ideology, and candidate support (see Table 2), we see that 78 percent of Republicans supported the measure while only 31 percent of Democrats did. Seventy-eight percent of voters who described themselves as conservatives favored Proposition 209. Moderates split evenly on the measure with 50 percent voting for and 50 percent voting against, and Liberals voted solidly against (75 percent). This result suggests that voters were probably responding to the division between the parties on affirmative action and that the candidates were reinforcing this division. When the presidential race is considered, 69 percent of those who voted for Democrat Incumbent-President Bill Clinton (who campaigned against Proposition 209) opposed the measure, while 82 percent of those who supported U.S. Senator Bob Dole, the Republican presidential candidate, voted in favor of it. Finally, when Perot voters are considered, 67 percent voted in favor of the measure while 33 percent opposed it. These preliminary findings support the idea that voters were using information from other campaigns to make their vote decision.

4. A Multivariate Model of Support for Proposition 209

The data presented in Tables 1 and 2 provide some support for both hypotheses—economic anxiety and racial division—about why Californians voted for Proposition 209. However, it is difficult to discern from these bivariate statistics the relative importance of these personal characteristics and attitudes in determining a voter's support for

Proposition 209. To make this comparison, we employ a multivariate statistical model.

Because we are studying why an individual supported or opposed Proposition 209, we need a multivariate model which allows for a binary dependent variable. In this case, we use a logit model which takes the form:

$$\text{Prob(Support Proposition 209)} = F(X_i\beta)$$

where X_i is our matrix of independent variables, β are the coefficients we estimate, and F is the logistic function.

As we asserted earlier, there is reason to believe that support for Proposition 209 is endogeneous with respect to presidential candidate support. In other words, it is likely that voters used candidate campaign messages as cues or information shortcuts when deciding how to vote on this initiative (Popkin, 1991; Alvarez and Butterfield, 1998), and if we ignore this endogeneity, our coefficient estimates will be biased and our inferences incorrect. Therefore, we must develop a multivariate model of presidential candidate choice as well, and we must allow for simultaneous relationships between proposition and candidate choice.

In the 1996 presidential election, voters selected among three candidates—Democratic Incumbent-President Bill Clinton, Republican Bob Dole, and Independent Ross Perot—so our analysis requires a multivariate model that allows for a three-category, unordered dependent variable and does not impose the questionable political behavioral assumption of the "independence of irrelevant alternatives" (Alvarez and Nagler, 1995, 1997). Therefore, we use a generalized extreme-value model where the probability that a voter chooses a particular candidate (where i = 1, 2, or 3 denotes a presidential candidate choice, in this case, Dole, Clinton, or Perot) is a function of a set of independent variables (Z) and the parameters (G), and the systemic component for each candidate choice is $Y_i = \exp^{(ZG)}$.

Now, given this model form and assumed distribution, we can write the probabilities of selecting each one of the candidates as follows:

$$P_1 = Y_1 / G(Y_1, Y_2, Y_3)$$
$$P_2 = Y_2^{1/(1-\sigma)} (Y_2^{1/(1-\sigma)} + Y_3^{1/(1-\sigma)})^{(1-\sigma)} / G(Y_1, Y_2, Y_3)$$
$$P_3 = Y_3^{1/(1-\sigma)} (Y_2^{1/(1-\sigma)} + Y_3^{1/(1-\sigma)})^{(1-\sigma)} / G(Y_1, Y_2, Y_3)$$
$$\text{where } G(Y_1, Y_2, Y_3) = Y_1 + (Y_2^{1/(1-\sigma)} + Y_3^{1/(1-\sigma)})^{(1-\sigma)}$$

Given these models of proposition and presidential candidate voting and our expectations about endogeneity, we suppose that a voter's predisposition to support Proposition 209 is a function of a set of independent variables and the predisposition to support a presidential candidate and that a voter's predisposition to support a presidential candidate is a function of other independent variables and the predisposition to support Proposition 209. Now, given this functional form, we can follow a simple two-stage estimation procedure which closely resembles that in previous research except that our models assume a logistic distribution instead of a normal distribution so we estimate a two-stage logit instead of a two-stage probit (Alvarez, 1997; Alvarez and Butterfield, 1998).

The two-stage estimation procedure is as follows. We begin by writing the reduced-form equations for Proposition 209 support and for presidential candidate support using all of the exogeneous variables in the model. We estimate these equations using logit and generalized extreme-value model specifications, respectively. From the reduced-form estimates, we produce predicted values for the three underlying voter predispositions (propensity to support Proposition 209, to support Clinton or Dole, and to support Perot or Dole).[3] Next, we substitute these predicted values for the right-hand-side endogeneous variables, and then we estimate the models for Proposition 209 support and for presidential candidate support.

In addition, this specification and estimation procedure provides us with an obvious and reliable statistical test for endogeneity. Specifically, if we consider our models that correct for endogeneity as our unrestricted models and then we estimate restricted models that do not correct for endogeneity (excluding the calculated instruments, the propensity to support Proposition 209, and the propensity to support a presidential candidate), then the ratio of the log-likelihoods from each set of estimations

gives us a statistical test for the assumed endogeneity. This test has a chi-square distribution, with the number of degrees of freedom being the number of restrictions imposed. We use this method to test our assumption of endogeneity.

Given this estimation procedure for the model, we now consider the model specification. We discuss how we specify the independent variables for the Proposition 209 model below. In the appendix, we discuss the reduced-form estimates (see Tables 5 and 6) and how we specify the presidential candidate voting model (see Table 4).

In our specification of voting for Proposition 209, we include political ideology, political party affiliation, state economic and personal financial perceptions, and several socioeconomic variables. Political party affiliation and political ideology were included to measure these influences on the vote and to see if the vote on Proposition 209 was divided by party and political ideology as hypothesized. Both of these variables were included as two binary variables, Republican and Democrat for political party affiliation and Liberal and Conservative for political ideology with Independent and Other Party being the excluded categories for party affiliation and Moderate being the excluded category for political ideology. Race is included to enable us to test the way in which different racial groups responded to Proposition 209.

Next, the voter's assessments of the change in her personal finances from one year ago and the condition of the state's economy were included to measure the influence of economic evaluation on her vote and to test the economic anxiety hypothesis. These variables were coded with 1-to-3 and 1-to-4 scales, with 1 denoting worse or poor, respectively.

Race consists of three binary variables: white, Hispanic, and Asian. The black category was excluded. In addition, a gender variable was included to see if more women favored the measure as suggested by the racial division hypothesis. This variable is a binary variable with 1 denoting a female voter.

Respondent education level was included and was coded with a 1-to-5 scale assuming a linear relationship with 1 denoting less than a high school education and 5 denoting postcollege education.[4] To allow for possible regional effects on voter choice, binary variables were included for four of the five major regions that the survey included,

Los Angeles City, Los Angeles Suburbs, Other Southern California, and Central Valley and Northern California. The Bay Area was the region excluded. Also, the instruments calculated for an individual's presidential vote were included.

Given this estimation technique and model specification, the two possible explanations for support for Proposition 209—economic anxiety and racial division—can be tested. In the next section, we present the estimated results of this model specification.

5. Determinants of Support for Proposition 209

5.1 Two-stage logit results

The two-stage logit results are presented in Table 3. The following discussion of the coefficient estimates is brief, given the difficulty inherent in attempting to interpret these coefficients, particularly the inability to compare the relative influence of the coefficients on a voter's choice. For these reasons, our discussion emphasizes the statistically significant coefficients and the preliminary implications of these results for the proposed explanations for the appeal of Proposition 209 to California voters. Next, we present a more thorough discussion in which a hypothetical voter is selected allowing probabilities to be computed, and then we compare the relative magnitude of voter characteristics and attitudes on Proposition 209 voting.

Table 3 goes here

First, when the two-stage logit coefficients are considered, there is support for our theory of the politicization of the issue of affirmative action by the candidates. The Clinton variable is statistically significant and negative indicating that an individual who voted for Clinton was more likely to vote against Proposition 209 than an individual who voted for Dole. Also, the endogeneity test is significant. Both of these results suggest that voters were using the presidential candidate endorsements to determine their position on this initiative.

Now, we consider the other significant coefficients in the two-stage logit model. The Democratic Party identification and the political ideology coefficients are significant. If a voter identified with the Democratic Party or considered herself liberal in political matters, she was significantly more likely to oppose Proposition 209. If she considered

herself conservative in political matters, she was significantly more likely to support Proposition 209. These preliminary findings suggest that voters were using the parties' positions in making their vote choice and that voters were being divided along traditional party and ideological lines.

The voter's perception of the state's economy is statistically significant, and that of her personal finances is not. However, it is important to note that the state economy coefficient is not negative. Instead, it is positive. This result means that, as an individual's view of the economy improves from poor to excellent, she is more likely to support the initiative. These results are opposite that of the economic anxiety hypothesis, which states that a voter will support Proposition 209 if she believes the state's economic conditions are poor or if she perceives her personal financial situation is worse.

Next, when we consider the race coefficients, we find that whites are significantly more likely to support the measure than other racial groups. This finding suggests that voters were being divided by the politicization of the issue by the parties along traditional racial lines and that the campaign messages, which emphasized "quotas" and "set-asides," may have mobilized white support for the measure.

The gender coefficient is not significant. Although gender was predicted to be significant because women can be the beneficiaries of affirmative action programs, this result suggests that women may not have viewed themselves as recipients of these benefits, and the politicization of the proposition by the presidential candidates and the political parties may have led women to use party and political ideology cues when casting their votes.

Finally, when the education and region of residence coefficients are considered, we find that the education coefficient is not significant, and the other Southern California and Central Valley or Northern California coefficients are significant. These regional differences in support mirror the regional differences in party identification and further suggest that politicization of the issue of affirmative action by the candidates was dividing California's residents along party lines.

These findings with respect to party identification, political ideology, economic perceptions, race, and area of residence support the racial division hypothesis rather than

the economic anxiety hypothesis.

5.2 Relative magnitudes of the estimated effects

To better understand the degrees to which these different variables influence a voter's probability of supporting Proposition 209, we first define a hypothetical voter. This hypothetical voter is a white, female, Central Valley or Northern California resident with an average education (some college but no degree). She thinks her family's financial situation is the same as it was a year ago and that the state's economy is good. In addition, she considers herself a Democrat and, in most political matters, a moderate.[5]

Now, using these fixed voter opinions and characteristics, we can calculate probabilities that show the effect of changing one independent variable at a time on the probability of supporting the measure (see Figures 1-5). This technique allows us to test our hypotheses of racial division and economic anxiety.

If we change the hypothetical voter's race, the results are convincing evidence for the racial division hypothesis (see Figure 1). For example, if the hypothetical voter's race is changed from white to black, Asian, or Hispanic, ceteris paribus, she will change from a supporter to an opponent of the measure. Her probability of supporting the measure decreases from 60 percent to 43 percent if she is black, to 40 percent if she is Asian, and to 44 percent if she is Hispanic. This result strongly suggests that supporters and opponents of Proposition 209 were divided by race and according to whether they perceived themselves to have gained or lost ground as a result of affirmative action programs.

Figure 1 goes here

Next, we consider the effect of the voter's economic perceptions on Proposition 209 voting (see Figure 2). The first-difference calculations confirm the previous results that a voter's economic perceptions of the state's economy did influence her vote decision, but her perceptions of her own personal financial situation did not. Again, as the positive significant coefficient suggested, when an individual's view of the economy improved from poor to excellent, she was more likely to support the initiative (48 percent versus 65 percent). There was no significant change in her level of support if she perceived her own financial situation to be worse instead of better (62 percent versus 57

percent). She still supported the measure. These results contradict the economic anxiety hypothesis, which states that a voter will support Proposition 209 if she believes the state's economic conditions are poor or if she perceives her personal financial situation is worse.

(Figure 2 goes here)

Then, we consider the effects of political ideology and political party affiliation on the hypothetical voter's probability of supporting Proposition 209 (see Figures 3 and 4). Changing her political ideology from moderate to conservative increases her propensity to support the measure from 60 percent to 68 percent. However, changing her political ideology from moderate to liberal decreases her probability by 20 percent (60 percent versus 40 percent), changing her from a supporter of the measure to an opponent of it. When the hypothetical voter's party affiliation is changed from Democrat to Republican, ceteris paribus, her probability of supporting the proposition increases dramatically from 60 percent to 73 percent. Although, party affiliation alone could not change a supporter into an opponent of the measure, clearly it was an important factor in a voter's decision regarding Proposition 209.

(Figures 3 and 4 go here)

These results indicate that a voter's race, political party affiliation, and political ideology were all important factors, as assumed by the racial division hypothesis. In addition, a voter's perception of the state's economy and personal financial situation did not influence a voter's decision in the way assumed by the economic anxiety hypothesis. These results strongly support the racial division hypothesis that the campaign, its rhetoric, the parties, and the candidates framed the issue in exclusionary terms and successfully divided the electorate along racial and party lines, and between winners and losers in affirmative action programs.

5.3 How important was presidential candidate choice?

To verify the influence of presidential candidate endorsements on a voter's decision making, we varied the hypothetical voter's probability of supporting Clinton relative to Dole and of supporting Perot relative to Dole and predicted her probability of supporting Proposition 209 (see Figure 5). The results strongly suggest that an individual who was

more likely to support Clinton relative to Dole would oppose the proposition while an individual who was more likely to support Perot relative to Dole would support the measure. Specifically, as we increase the hypothetical voter's likelihood of voting for Clinton relative to Dole, her probability of supporting Proposition 209 decreases from 98 percent to 17 percent. Likewise, as we increase an individual's probability of supporting Perot relative to Dole, the probability of supporting the measure increases from 11 percent to 92 percent. These results suggest that the politicization of affirmative action by the presidential candidates did sway the vote on Proposition 209.

(Figure 5 goes here)

6. Conclusions and Discussion

Our analysis of the exit poll data supports the second of the two competing explanations, racial division, for Proposition 209's appeal to California voters. Because of the politicization of Proposition 209 by the presidential candidates and the recent and consistent positions of the two major political parties on the issue of affirmative action, the voters were systematically divided by political party affiliation, political ideology, and race in their support for or opposition to this initiative.

The racial division hypothesis assumed that race, gender, political party affiliation, and political ideology would be important factors in a voter's support of Proposition 209. With respect to race, we found that whites, who potentially are the affirmative action losers, were more likely to support the measure than members of other ethnic or racial groups, who are typically seen as affirmative action winners. Second, we found that gender was not a significant factor in vote decision. Although this result was somewhat surprising, we attributed it to the fact that women may not view themselves as beneficiaries of affirmative action programs and that the issue was politicized by the presidential candidates and their political parties. Third, political party affiliation and political ideology were both shown to be significant and important factors in an individual's vote choice. Simply, by changing the hypothetical voter's political ideology, we could transform a supporter into an opponent of the measure. Clearly, race, political party affiliation, and political ideology were all important factors in determining support for Proposition 209.

In addition, when we considered the effects of area of residence and presidential vote choice, we found secondary support for the racial division hypothesis. Specifically, the regional differences in support for the measure correspond to the regional differences in party identification, with residents of the heavily Republican region (Southern California) supporting the measure and residents of the heavily Democratic region (Bay Area) opposing the measure. Also, when we focused our analysis on presidential candidate choice to determine its effects on a voter's initiative decision, we found that there was a strong relationship between candidate choice and proposition vote. The results suggest that an individual who was more likely to support Clinton relative to Dole would oppose the proposition. These results give additional support to the theory that the politicization of affirmative action by the presidential candidates did influence the vote on Proposition 209.

Although Proposition 209 may have had no immediate public policy impact since it immediately was challenged in court, it may have long-term implications for politics in California and throughout the nation. The Republican Party's open support for both Proposition 187 and 209 has caused ethnic minority and women voters to question this party's goals and has motivated some new citizens to register as Democrats instead of as Republicans (*Los Angeles Times*, 1995c). As the two major political parties compete for both minority and women voters in the presidential election of 2000, it will be interesting to see how each party reinvents itself to attract and keep these voters.

In addition to finding an explanation for voter support for Proposition 209, the larger contribution of this work is its methodology, namely, how candidate elections can affect proposition voting and how to model this important source of endogeneity. Our results show that failing to control for the effect of campaign rhetoric can cause the researcher to make inappropriate assumptions and inaccurate inferences. The politicization of initiative campaigns in California and in other states (two recent examples in California are Proposition 187, the anti-immigrant initiative, in 1994 and Proposition 209, the anti-affirmative action initiative, in 1996) by vote-seeking politicians is a phenomenon of contemporary politics which cannot be ignored in future studies of initiative voting and must be incorporated into empirical research.

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Appendix

Specification of the Presidential Model

To specify the presidential model, we include the voter characteristic and opinion variables used in the Proposition 209 model (see Section 4): race, gender, educational attainment, area of residence, opinion of California's economic condition, opinion of personal financial situation, political ideology, and political party affiliation. In addition, because the presidential candidates politicized the issue of affirmative action, a voter's propensity to support Proposition 209 is also included in the model. Finally, we also included the relevant presidential issue variables. The survey asked each voter which issue from a list of nine mattered most in his vote for President. The issues were taxes, medicare/social security, foreign policy, federal budget, economy/jobs, education, and crime/drugs. In the model, we excluded the issues of foreign policy and economy/jobs because of the low selection rate and concern about multicollinearity, respectively. We coded identically all of the issue variables as binary variables. If a voter marked an issue as important in his vote choice, then the issue was coded as a 1 for the voter; otherwise, the issue was coded 0 for the voter. The estimated results of this model are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 goes here

When we consider the results of the presidential model, Table 4, we find that the political ideology and political party affiliation coefficients are primarily significant and appropriately signed. For example, when the coefficients of Clinton relative to Dole are considered, both party affiliation coefficients are significant and the Democratic coefficient has a positive sign, meaning that Democrats were more likely to support Clinton than they were to support Dole, and the Republican coefficient has a negative sign, meaning the Republicans were more likely to support Dole than they were to support Clinton. In addition, the Conservative political ideology coefficient is significant and has a negative sign, meaning that individuals who consider themselves conservative in political matters are more likely to support Dole than Clinton. Next, when the coefficients of Perot relative to Dole are considered, the only significant political affiliation or political ideology coefficient is the Republican coefficient, implying that

Republicans were more likely to support Dole than Perot. These results are consistent with voting theory that voters use shortcuts, such as party identification and ideology, in partisan races to help make candidate choices (Popkin, 1991).

When the issues that were important to the voter in his presidential candidate choice are considered (taxes, medicare/social security, and federal budget deficit), they correspond to the election issues (cutting taxes, welfare reform, and balancing the federal budget). The voter's opinion concerning California's economy is significant, and his perception of personal finances is not, which is consistent with the fact that individuals usually do not vote their pocketbooks.

Next, when we consider the socioeconomic variables (race, educational attainment, and area of residence), we find that Asians were significantly more likely to support Dole relative to either Perot or Clinton, and Hispanics were more likely to support Dole relative to Clinton. Also, women were no more likely to support one candidate than another. The educational coefficients are both significant and negatively signed, signifying that, as an individual's educational attainment increased, he was more likely to support Dole than either Clinton or Perot. None of the regional variables are significant, implying that, in this election, presidential candidate choice was independent of a voter's area of residence.

Finally, an individual's vote on Proposition 209 was not significant in determining a voter's presidential candidate choice, once we control for all of these other influences on candidate choice. Also, the endogeneity test here is not significant. Thus, an individual's presidential candidate choice did influence his vote on Proposition 209, but his vote on this proposition did not influence his candidate choice. This finding suggests voters were relying on the presidential candidates to guide them in their vote choices regarding Proposition 209 but did not consider the proposition a national issue and, therefore, were not basing their presidential candidate choice on this issue. The last coefficient estimate in Table 4 is σ, the inclusive value. This coefficient provides a test for the appropriateness of the IIA assumption. The value of σ should fall within the unit interval. When this value falls outside this interval, there is a model specification problem. In this case, σ lies within the unit interval, indicating that the model is specified

correctly and verifying that the IIA assumption does not hold.

The Reduced-Form Estimates

The reduced-form estimates are presented in Tables 5 and 6. As discussed in Section 4, the reduced-form estimates permit us to calculate the instrumental variables for the right-hand-side endogeneous variables—the predisposition to support Proposition 209, the predisposition to support Clinton relative to Dole, and the predisposition to support Perot relative to Dole. The reduced-form equations must include all of the exogeneous variables in both the proposition and presidential voting models. Therefore, in addition to the voter characteristic and attitudinal variables of race, gender, educational attainment, area of residence, opinion of California's economic condition, opinion of personal financial situation, political ideology, and political party affiliation (for a thorough discussion of these variables and how they were coded, see Section 4 of the paper), we also included the relevant presidential issue variables discussed in the specification of the presidential voting model (see discussion above). Next, using these estimated coefficients, we imputed the propensities for each voter to support the initiative and Clinton relative to Dole and Perot relative to Dole. Finally, using these calculated values, we estimated the specified Proposition 209 and presidential voting models.

Tables 5 and 6 go here

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[1] On April 8, 1997, in Coalition for Economic Equity v. Wilson, the Ninth Circuit United States Court of Appeals held that Proposition 209 was constitutionally valid under both the equal protection and supremacy clauses of the U.S. Constitution. The United States Supreme Court subsequently denied certiorari.

[2] The Voter News Service (VNS) exit poll was part of the nationwide survey effort conducted by the VNS (a consortium of national media and public opinion polling organizations) in which 3,282 registered voters leaving polling booths in California were asked to respond to a short questionnaire. Unfortunately, the question asking the voter how he voted on Proposition 209 was placed on the backside of the questionnaire resulting in a considerable number of nonresponses. Only 1,597 of the 3,282 registered voters surveyed answered this particular question. These data were obtained from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR).

[3]These presidential candidate comparisons arise from the normalization we use to estimate the candidate model. We normalized by Dole. We used this particular normalization because we wanted to know the voter's propensity to support the two candidates who voiced clear and contrasting opinions on the issue of affirmative action and Proposition 209, Clinton and Dole.

[4]Although this linear assumption is common for education variables, its appropriateness can be questioned; however, in this case, it seemed better to have one variable to measure this effect versus four binary variables.

[5] Formulating a hypothetical voter when a model contains so many variables that cannot be easily averaged, such as party affiliation, is a difficult task because there is no correct method or rule to apply. The following logic was used in formulating this hypothetical voter. This particular voter seemed to best represent the exit poll sample. For example, more whites voted than any other racial group. More women voted than men. There were more voters from the Central Valley/Northern California than from the other regions. Women were on average affiliated with the Democratic Party, and the hypothetical voter was given the most prevalent political ideology of Moderate. In addition, she was given the most common economic perceptions of all the voters surveyed.

Table 1: Demographics of Support for Proposition 209

	Support	Opposition
Total sample	52.1	47.9
	832	765
Whites	59.3	40.8
	666	458
African-Americans	18.2	81.8
	24	108
Hispanics	37.4	62.6
	80	134
Asian-Americans	42.0	58.0
	34	47
Women	49.2	50.8
	406	419
Men	55.2	44.8
	426	346
No High School	41.9	58.1
	26	36
High School	49.6	50.4
	117	119
Some College	54.4	45.6
	271	227
College Graduate	56.1	43.9
	252	197
Post-College	47.2	52.8
	166	186
Central Valley	61.5	38.5
and North	264	165
Bay Area	39.3	60.7
	222	343
Southern CA	64.5	35.5
	225	124
LA County	57.1	42.9
	36	27
LA City	44.5	55.5
	85	106

Table 2: Political and Economic Aspects of Support for Proposition 209

	Support	Opposition
Clinton voters	31.2	68.8
	283	623
Dole voters	81.7	18.3
	478	107
Perot voters	67.0	33.0
	71	25
Democrats	30.5	69.5
	222	507
Independents	55.7	44.3
	167	133
Republicans	78.0	22.0
	433	122
Liberals	24.8	75.2
	98	297
Moderates	50.0	50.0
	359	359
Conservatives	78.4	21.7
	362	100
Finances Better	44.3	55.7
	266	334
Finances Same	52.2	47.8
	344	315
Finances Worse	65.7	34.3
	222	116
Economy Excellent	59.5	40.5
	46	32
Economy Good	47.9	52.1
	373	406
Economy Not Good	53.8	46.2
	329	283
Economy Poor	65.4	34.7
	83	44

Table 3: Voting for Proposition 209

	Logit	Two-stage logit
Constant	-.38	-.28
	.38	.59
Democrats	-.80**	-.40*
	.15	.25
Republicans	.56**	.19
	.17	.31
Liberals	-.84**	-.78**
	.15	.21
Conservatives	.78**	.37**
	.15	.22
State economy	.12*	.24**
	.09	.12
Personal finances	-.23**	-.10
	.08	.10
Whites	.99**	.69**
	.20	.28
Asian-Americans	.009	-.11
	.32	.49
Hispanics	.30	.07
	.25	.27
Women	-.10	-.02
	.12	.12
Education	-.01	-.00
	.12	.06
LA City	.22	.21
	.20	.23
LA County	.11	.07
	.31	.32
Southern CA	.37**	.30*
	.16	.19
Central and Northern	.35**	.32**
	.15	.19
Clinton v. Dole		-.66**
		.36
Perot v. Dole		.56
		.48
Sample N	1597	1597
χ^2	456.1**	463.61**
percent correct	73.9	73.5
Endogeneity test		7.48(2)†

Note: * indicates significance at the p=.10 level (one tailed test for the model coefficients) and ** indicates significance at the p=.05 level (one tailed test for the model coefficients). † indicates a χ^2 test which is significant at the p=.05 level for the given degrees of freedom.

Table 4: Presidential Voting in California

	Perot v. Dole	Clinton v. Dole
Constant	1.8**	1.8**
	.74	.76
Democrats	.76	1.1**
	.70	.56
Republicans	-1.2**	-1.4**
	.43	.39
Liberals	.19	.17
	.63	.59
Conservatives	-.33	-.78*
	.67	.59
Taxes	-.53	-.98**
	.48	.36
Medicare and	.60**	.56**
Social Sec.	.30	.29
Federal Deficit	-.51	-.80**
	.42	.36
Economy and Jobs	-.47	-.27
	.59	.50
Crime and Drugs	-.23	-.15
	.43	.41
State economy	.04	.24*
	.23	.16
Personal finances	-.00	.15
	.24	.20
Whites	-.42	-.66
	.84	.80
Asian-Americans	-1.8**	-1.6**
	.57	.52
Hispanics	-.42	-.65*
	.55	.52
Women	-.06	.05
	.21	.18
Education	-.14*	-.12**
	.08	.08
LA City	-.32	-.28
	.35	.33
LA County	.15	.17
	.39	.37
Southern CA	-.26	-.29
	.34	.32
Central and Northern	-.33	-.31
	.34	.32
Prop. 209	-.75	-.73
	.73	.68
σ	.72**	
	.34	
Endogeneity test	-1.25(2)	
Sample N	1597	

Note: * indicates significance at the p=.10 level (one tailed test for the model coefficients) and ** indicates significance at the p=.05 level (one tailed test for the model coefficients). † indicates a χ^2 test which is significant at the p=.05 level for the given degrees of freedom.

Table 5: Reduced Form Equations for Proposition 209 Voting

	Proposition 209 support
Constant	-.36
	.40
Democrats	-.77
	.15
Republicans	.46
	.17
Liberals	-.78
	.15
Conservatives	.78
	.16
Taxes	.30
	.18
Medicare and	.006
Social Security	.19
Federal Deficit	.20
	.22
Crime and Drugs	-.53
	.20
Economy and Jobs	.47
	.24
State economy	.11
	.09
Personal finance	-.20
	.08
Whites	.97
	.21
Asians	.01
	.32
Hispanics	.29
	.25
Women	-.10
	.12
Education	.02
	.06
LA City	.16
	.21
LA County	.02
	.32
Southern CA	.32
	.17
Central and Northern	.34
	.16

Table 6: Reduced Form Equations for Presidential Voting

	Clinton v. Dole	Perot v. Dole
Constant	2.1	2.2
	.68	.65
Democrats	1.7	1.3
	.24	.43
Republicans	-1.7	-1.5
	.21	.26
Liberals	.74	.78
	.25	.26
Conservatives	-1.4	-.91
	.27	.39
Taxes	-1.2	-.73
	.29	.43
Medicare and	.54	.57
Social Security	.29	.30
Federal Deficit	-.95	-.66
	.33	.39
Crime and Drugs	.12	-.07
	.32	.44
Economy and Jobs	-.48	-.58
	.29	.31
State economy	.16	-.06
	.14	.21
Personal finance	.31	.15
	.13	.18
Whites	-1.4	-1.1
	.43	.45
Asians	-1.6	-1.8
	.53	.58
Hispanics	-.87	-.63
	.47	.51
Women	.10	-.02
	.18	.21
Education	-.13	-.14
	.07	.09
LA City	-.42	-.47
	.31	.33
LA County	.13	.11
	.37	.39
Southern CA	-.54	-.52
	.23	.24
Central and Northern	-.55	-.58
	.22	.23
σ	.71	
	.34	

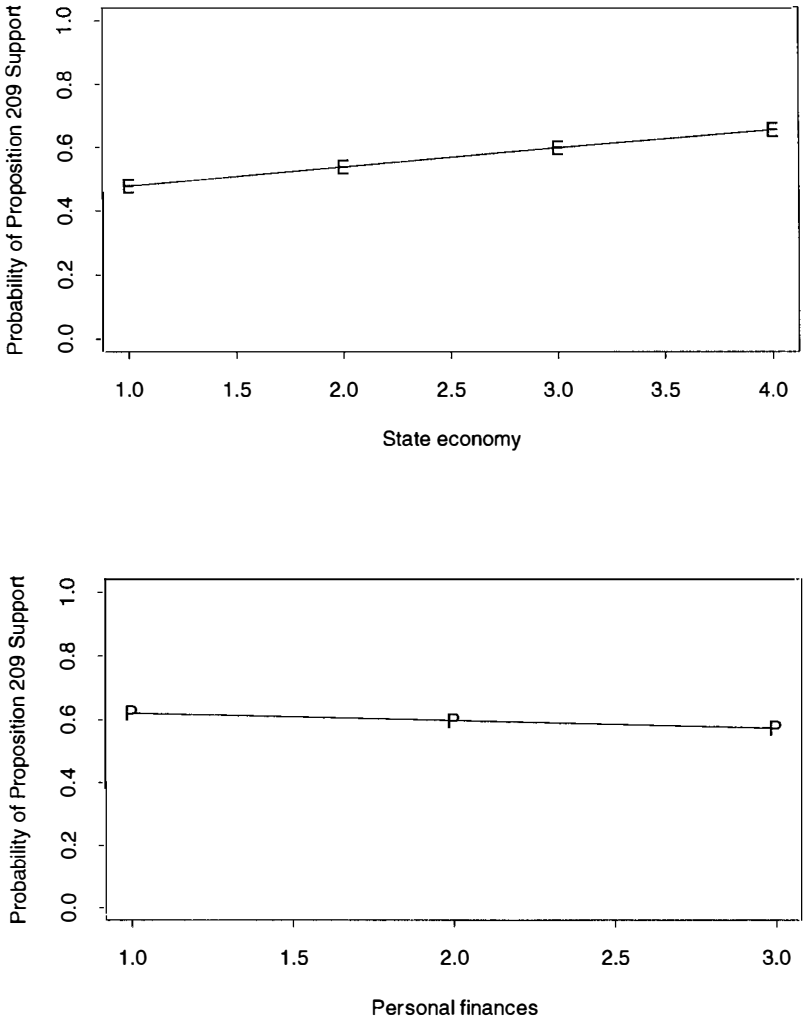

Figure 1: Race, Ethnicity, and Proposition 209 Support

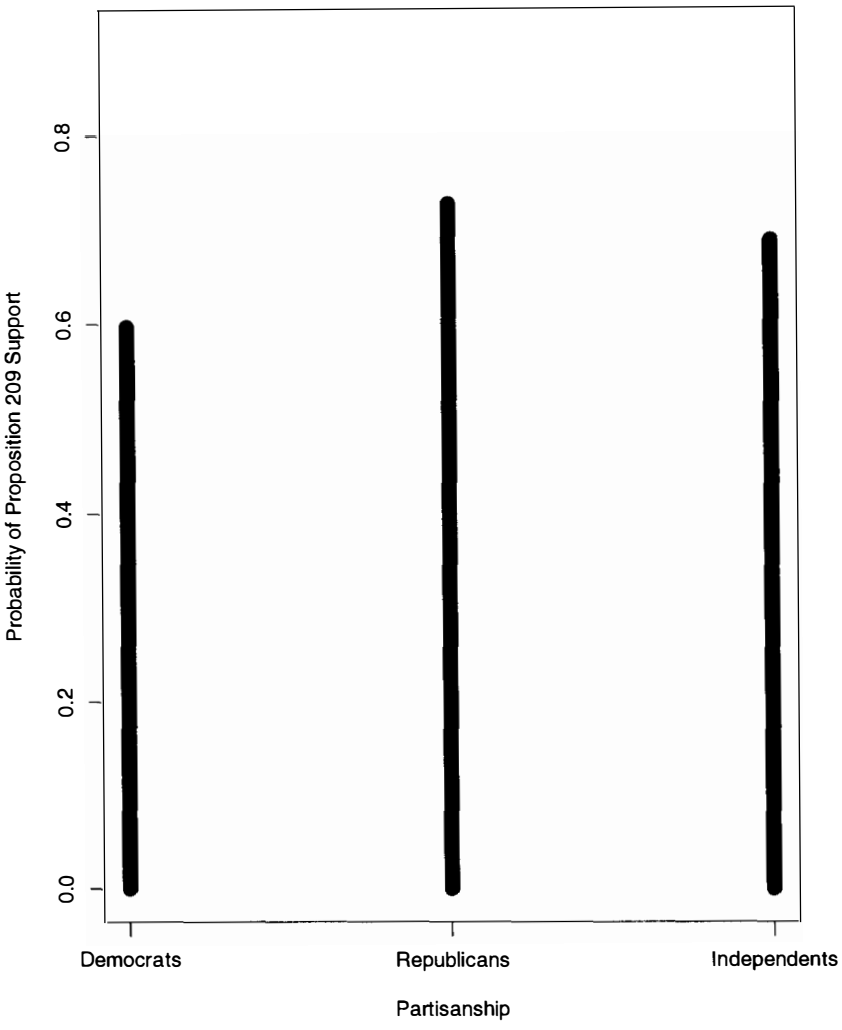

Figure 2: Economic Perceptions and Proposition 209 Support

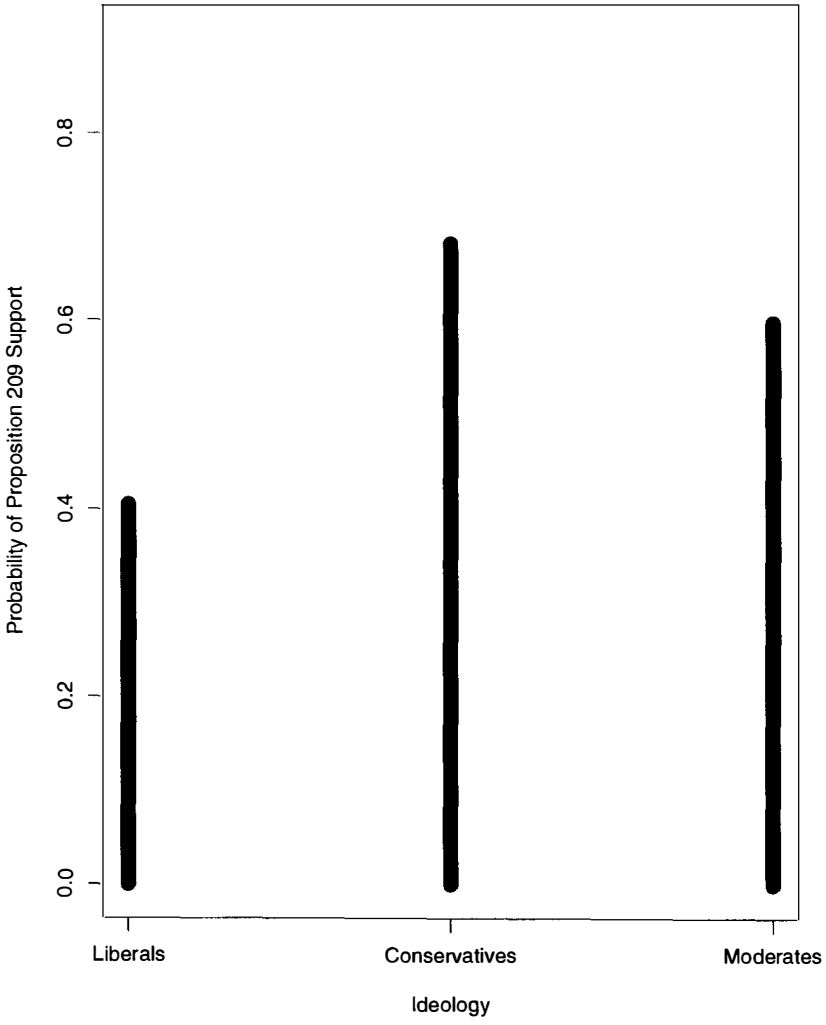

Figure 3: Ideology and Proposition 209 Support

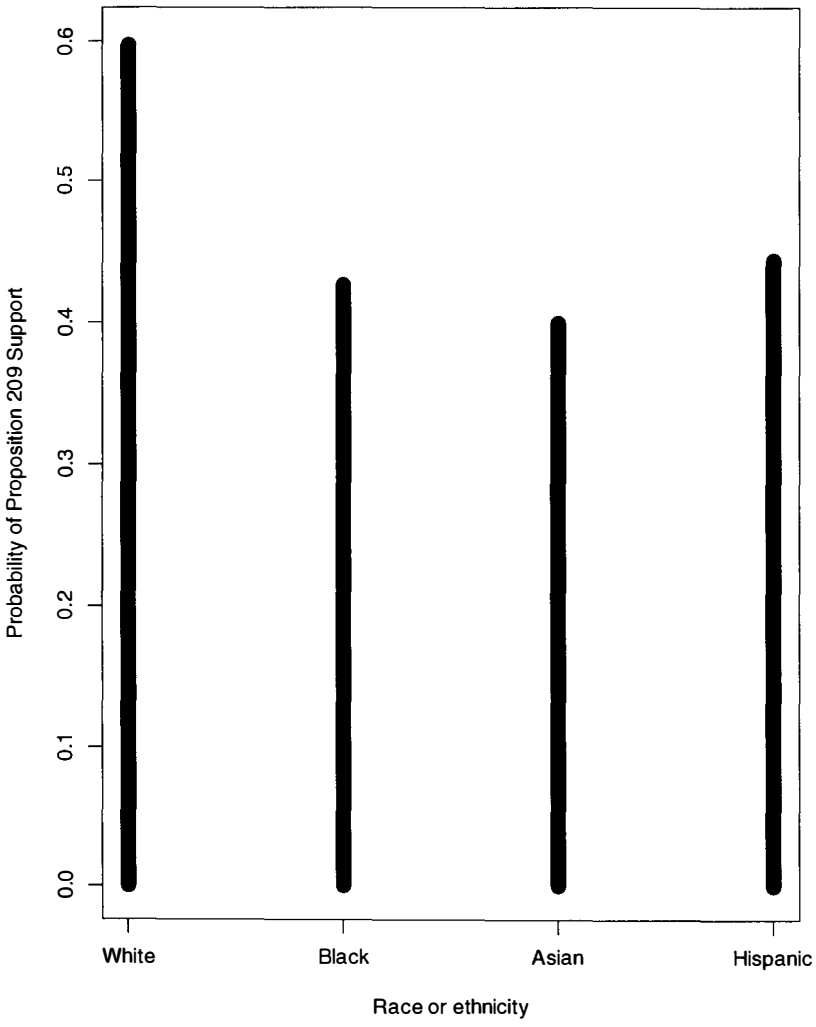

Figure 4: Partisanship and Proposition 209 Support

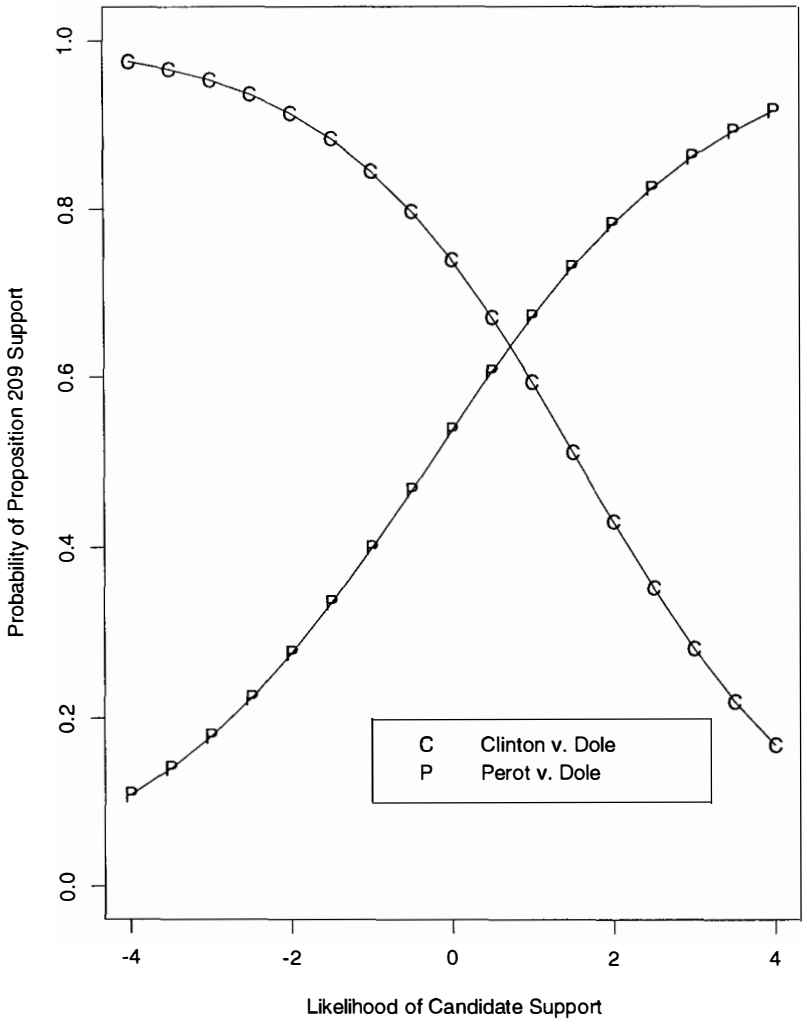

Figure 5: Candidate and Proposition 209 Support