Black Votes Count: The 2014 Republican Senate Nomination in Mississippi*

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Objective. This article examines the role of black votes in contributing to the renomination of 36-year Republican Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi. In 2014, Senator Cochran faced a formidable primary challenge from State Senator Chris McDaniel, a notably more conservative politician. After narrowly losing the primary, Cochran prevailed in the runoff because enough black voters decided to support him. Methods. We use precinct-level racial data to derive ecological inference estimates of turnout and then employ a racially homogenous precinct analysis to determine the percentage of the black and white vote won by Cochran and McDaniel. Results. Our empirical analysis provides convincing evidence that if not for the increase in black voters in the runoff and their overwhelming support for Senator Cochran, his opponent would have ended his lengthy political career. Conclusions. Race has always been the centerpiece of politics in the Deep South state of Mississippi. This is an empirical account of an unlikely electoral event that speaks to the importance of the changing state of southern politics and how a marginalized minority population can still play a pivotal role in a region dominated by a white Republican majority.

Thirteen years after passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act (VRA), Mississippi elected its first Republican senator since Reconstruction. In 1978, Democratic Senator James O. Eastland, president pro tempore at the time, finally decided to retire, creating an open-seat race featuring four candidates: white Democrat Maurice Danton, white Republican congressman Thad Cochran, black independent and NAACP leader Charles Evers, and black independent State Senator and civil rights activist Henry J. Kirksey. The presence of Evers, the brother of slain civil rights leader Medgar Evers, sealed the defeat of Danton and the election of Cochran. As explained by the late civil rights attorney Frank R. Parker in Black Votes Count, “Evers, by running as an independent, drained black votes away from the Democratic nominee, Maurice Danton, to insure the election of current Senator Thad Cochran” (1990:149).

The beginning and twilight of the lengthy Senate career of Thad Cochran was made possible by the critical role of black votes. In 1978, black votes, albeit indirectly, paved the way for the first Republican senator in Mississippi in nearly a century. Thirty-six

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1 The title of this article pays homage to Frank R. Parker and his award-winning book on Mississippi politics: Black Votes Count: Political Empowerment in Mississippi after 1965. The results of the 1978 Senate election were as follows: 45.29 percent for Cochran, 31.77 percent for Danton, 22.64 percent for Evers, and 0.30 percent for Kirksey (see www.ourcampaigns.com/RaceDetail.html?RaceID=5320)).

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years later, black votes directly contributed to Cochran’s primary runoff victory against the more conservative Republican State Senator Chris McDaniel. The contest between Cochran and McDaniel generated substantial media coverage because it involved several dynamics enticing to public consumption. First, Cochran was expected to prevail, but he would have lost in the initial primary if not for the 4,854 votes won by Thomas L. Carey, enough to deny McDaniel a majority. Second, the race was particularly nasty, easily exceeding the bounds of fair play, as one episode makes patently clear. Third, after Cochran lost the first primary, most political observers were ready to declare McDaniel the victor ahead of the ensuing runoff. Finally, and we contend most importantly, the participation of African Americans in the runoff was a highly unusual occurrence in contemporary southern Republican elections and their votes proved decisive in delivering an improbable comeback victory for a Grand Old Party (GOP) senator who heretofore never needed black votes to stay in office.

In Mississippi politics, race is the primary fault line and it has run deeper there than in any other state. More than 65 years ago, V. O. Key Jr. wrote that “Northerners, provincials that they are, regard the South as one large Mississippi . . . Yet Mississippi only manifests in accentuated form the darker political strains that run throughout the South” (1949:229). The extreme racial polarization and significance of the racial issue in the Magnolia State gives the reader a window into the rawest form of racial politics to be found not only in the South, but in the broader United States. More specifically, in historical perspective, the largest percentage of African Americans and the unrivaled brutality and authoritarian political and legal institutions designed for relegating blacks to a permanent second-class citizenship (Silver, 2012) makes the 2014 Mississippi Republican Senate nomination a salient event in the partisan transformation of the deepest of Deep South states.

We first assess this election by placing it within the broader historical context of Mississippi politics and note how partisan change has altered the influence of African Americans in Mississippi since their massive reentry into the political arena with the enactment of the 1965 VRA. Then we offer a brief account of the 2014 Republican Senate campaign, providing sketches of the candidates, events, and political issues. Next, we turn to empirical evidence of black participation in the Republican runoff, and then estimate black and white voting preferences. The 2014 Republican Senate nomination is a story of how mobilization of a marginalized group that almost never participates in GOP elections became the kingmaker. We conclude the article by restating the importance of our findings and placing this event in the broader setting of contemporary party politics in the American South.

The Rise and Fall of Black Influence in Mississippi Politics

One year prior to passage of the 1965 VRA, the percentage of adult black Mississippians who were registered to vote stood at a meager 7 percent (lowest in the South). Four years later, in 1968, the percentage of African Americans registered in the Magnolia State was a remarkable 59 percent (Stanley, 1987:97). The rapid and massive expansion of the

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2We define the South as the 11 former Confederate states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Further, we employ the commonly used subregional classification of Deep South (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina) and Peripheral or Rim South (Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia). This sectional distinction within the South is based first and foremost on the fact that the Deep South states have proportionally larger black populations and this contributes to greater racial polarization in all manners of behavior (see Black and Black, 1987; Hood, Kidd, and Morris, 2012; Key, 1949; Matthews and Prothro, 1966; McKee, 2012; McKee and Springer, 2015; Valentino and Sears, 2005; White, 2014).
enfranchised black electorate was like a huge pent-up reservoir of water that finally burst through the dam holding it back. Yet blacks’ reintroduction to Mississippi politics initially had very limited effects. The white ruling elite was prepared for black reenfranchisement and their legislative tactics were successful in holding back black political clout for many years to come. In 1966, the all-white Mississippi Legislature devoted most of its Regular Session and a subsequent Special Session to passing legislation that would dilute black electoral influence. Recognizing the impossibility of continuing to deny the franchise in the wake of the 1965 VRA, white lawmakers instead focused on redesigning the electoral rules so that they minimized black voting power.

As assiduously documented and analyzed by Parker (1990:40–41), the 1966 Mississippi Legislature passed a raft of election-related bills that furthered black vote dilution. Broadly speaking, the election reforms diluted black votes by changing the geographic parameters of the electorate in order to ensure that white votes would constitute a majority—a pressing imperative in places such as the Delta region in the northwestern counties of the state (Cobb, 1992), where blacks greatly outnumbered whites. For instance, congressional lines were drawn to split the Delta into multiple districts that contained white majorities by running the boundaries eastward to the Alabama border. Numerous school board, county, and state legislative districts were reconfigured from single-member to multimember, and “members were to be elected at-large, countywide and districtwide [sic], thus submerging the votes of black population concentrations in majority-white legislative districts” (Parker, 1990:41). Many heretofore elective positions were then made appointive to prevent the election of African Americans in majority-black localities. The qualifications for getting on the ballot as an independent candidate were made much more cumbersome: “increasing the number of signatures required on nominating petitions tenfold or more and prohibiting anyone who has voted in a party primary from running as an independent candidate” (Parker, 1990:40).

Raising the qualifications for independent candidates speaks directly to the unrivaled racial strife in Mississippi politics. No other southern state contained a high-profile black faction affiliated with the Democratic Party. When the storied civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer voiced her displeasure with the seating of an all-white Mississippi delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, she spoke as a member of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). The MFDP existed as an African-American alternative to the all-white “regular” or “loyalist” Democratic Party of Mississippi. Tension existed between black leaders who saw it in the best interests of African Americans to work within the Democratic Party versus others who preferred the MFDP as a viable alternative because white Mississippi Democrats were reluctant to integrate the party (Parker, 1990:71–72). In addition, because the initial white Democratic reaction to black reenfranchisement was massive resistance evidenced by the electoral reforms cited above, no other southern state witnessed such a large number of black candidates who abandoned the Democratic label entirely, running instead as political independents. At least at the local level, in majority-black settings, several black independent candidates were successful whereas at the state level they occasionally played the spoiler role, as was true of Charles Evers in the 1978 Senate election.

Throughout this study, we use the 16-county definition of the Mississippi Delta as defined by Cobb (1992:335). Hence, in all of our empirical analyses, the following counties are coded 1 as being part of the Delta: Bolivar, Carroll, Coahoma, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Panola, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington, and Yazoo. The latest census numbers show that only three Delta counties are not majority black (Carroll, Panola, and Warren).

In 1967, “six black independents were elected in the November general election . . . [including] Robert G. Clark, a schoolteacher from Holmes County . . . Mississippi’s first black legislator since the 1890s” (Parker, 1990:72).
Curiously, the only measure (House Bills 436 and 793) that the 1966 Mississippi Legislature failed to enact was a law that would have created an open primary system in which a candidate needed a simple vote majority to win elective office (Parker, 1990:40). Regarding the attempt to modify the primary system, Parker noted that:

the bills were touted as an effort to eliminate party politics and to emphasize individual qualifications for office, without any mention of their racial implications. Although the bills passed both houses of the legislature with strong majorities, they were vetoed by Governor Johnson—the only veto of election law legislation during the entire massive resistance session. (1990:62)

Governor Johnson vetoed the legislation because he expected it to draw a swift civil rights challenge in the federal courts (Parker, 1990:62). The purpose of switching to an open primary was to avoid the possibility of the white vote being split between white Republican and white Democratic candidates to such an extent that a black independent candidate could win election with a plurality of all-black votes. Twenty years later, in 1986, Mississippi changed to a semi-open primary system effective at the start of 1987. The statute from the Mississippi election code (§ 23-15-575) is as follows: “No person shall be eligible to participate in any primary election unless he intends to support the nominations made in the primary in which he participates.”

The statutory language is interesting because it strongly implies that if a voter participates in a party primary then she must remain loyal to the candidate who wins the party nomination. In practice, this means that voters who participate in a given party primary (e.g., the 2014 Democratic Senate primary) cannot participate in the runoff of another party primary (e.g., the 2014 Republican Senate runoff) in the same election cycle. In addition, if a voter abstains from participating in a party primary and there is a runoff, then she is eligible to vote. What Mississippi law has never enforced but what is clearly suggested from the election code is that a voter must remain committed to supporting the nominee of the party whose primary she participated in when it is time to vote in the general election. Ironically, the move to a semi-open primary system is of course what allowed the Cochran campaign to expand the electorate by mobilizing black voters in the 2014 Republican Senate runoff.

In the late 1970s, right around the time Thad Cochran won his Senate seat, most of the black vote dilution measures passed in 1966 were either overturned or soon to be struck down by the courts. According to Parker, “[b]y 1979 the victory over the Mississippi Legislature’s 1966 massive resistance program was all but complete” (1990:127). It took years of legal battles to remove the impediments to black representation, but once they were, black influence began to assert itself in earnest. In the late 1970s and into the 1980s, the number of black elected officials increased dramatically (Davidson and Grofman, 1994) and showed further gains in the 1990s with the Justice Department’s aggressive enforcement of expanding the number of majority black districts following the 1986 *Thornburg v. Gingles* decision (Cunningham, 2000; Lublin, 1997). Among southern politics scholars, there was a question of just how influential African Americans were because, even though they became a key component of the Democratic majority, whites continued to control the party (see Black and Black, 1987).

Nonetheless, there is no denying that the emergence of a biracial coalition of black and white voters in the late 1970s and into the 1990s sustained Democratic voting majorities in most southern states (Lamis, 1988). But this state of affairs was temporary because throughout this period southern whites continued to decline as a portion of the Democratic coalition and were increasing their numbers as part of the ascending Republican opposition
(Black and Black, 2002; Stanley, 1988). At the height of their influence, black Democrats comprised an important minority segment of the ruling Democratic Party in most southern state legislatures and congressional delegations. United black voting delegations were often capable of blocking passage of undesirable legislation, even in Mississippi (see Parker, 1990:136). This is no longer the case.

Mississippi is the exemplar for demonstrating evidence of the theory of relative advantage, as espoused by Hood, Kidd, and Morris (2012) in their book *The Rational Southerner*. According to the authors, the primary reason why the Republican Party has become electorally dominant in the South is because the mobilization of blacks into the Democratic Party became the root cause for white realignment to the GOP. Reinstatement of black suffrage after the VRA eventually led to a point in time where the black electorate (especially in the Deep South states) became a substantial component of the Democratic Party and rather than share power with an increasingly influential black segment of the party, which typically held conflicting policy preferences, more and more whites sought political hegemony by embracing the Republican banner. This dynamic has clearly played out in Mississippi, where blacks now comprise the majority of a minority of Democratic identifiers and officeholders, whereas a majority of whites identify as Republicans and white Republicans now run the state.5

With data on the partisan and racial composition of the Mississippi Legislature from 1978 to 2014, Figures 1a and b show in graphic form the rise and fall of black representational influence in the upper and lower chambers, respectively. When Thad Cochran was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1978 there were no black state senators in Mississippi—which would

5Including independent leaners, the 2012 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) data for Mississippi place the percentage of whites identifying as Republicans at 66 percent ($n = 253$) and the percentage of blacks identifying as Democrats at 92 percent ($n = 128$).
change a year later in the 1979 elections. In 1978, there were four African Americans serving in the Mississippi state house. In both chambers, the Democratic Party was dominant until the new millennium. But as both figures make clear, the percentage of Democrats underwent a long-term decline and this descent was hastened, not coincidentally, by the marked increase in the number and percentage of African-American Democrats in the early 1990s. Democrats are now in the minority in both chambers, African Americans comprise 60 percent or more of the Democratic senate and house delegations, and an all-white Republican Party rules the legislature. In short, after enjoying a brief partnership in a majority Democratic coalition, black political influence in Mississippi has reached a new low, a condition now common throughout the Deep South (McKee and Springer, 2015). It is within this political context that black votes would become critical to the political survival of embattled Republican Thad Cochran as he sought a seventh term in the U.S. Senate.

**Down in Mississippi and Up to No Good: The 2014 Republican Senate Nomination**

Thad Cochran versus Chris McDaniel in 2014 was one of the most divisive nomination contests ever waged between two southern Republicans. Given the notable differences between these candidates, the closeness of the race, campaign shenanigans, and manner in which it was ultimately decided, the 2014 Republican Senate nomination in Mississippi received widespread national media coverage. Starting with the political differences, the 76-year-old Thad Cochran represents an unusually moderate (for a southern politician), establishment, big government, Republican U.S. Senator. By contrast, 41-year-old state senator Chris McDaniel is a Tea Party, hard right, conservative Republican. Although we cannot make a standardized comparison of these candidates along a single ideological continuum, the measures applicable in the U.S. Senate and for state legislatures reveal the marked gulf in the positioning of Cochran and McDaniel. In the most recent Congress (113th) for which we have DW-Nominate data, among Senators, Cochran was the fifth least conservative Republican. According to the methodology of Shor and McCarty (2011), of 390 Mississippi state legislators going back to 1993, Chris McDaniel rated the ninth most conservative. Dubbed the “King of Pork” by his detractors, Cochran’s most salient policy fight with McDaniel concerned fiscal issues. Whereas Cochran cultivated a deserved reputation as one of the most successful appropriators to ever serve in the U.S. Senate, his opponent vowed to sever the spigot of federal largesse flowing back to Mississippi. Indeed, the biracial appeal of Cochran in the Republican runoff was partly due to his remarkable record of procuring billions in federal dollars for numerous Mississippi causes that benefited blacks and whites alike. But this campaign was much more than a simple policy disagreement. There was a palpable difference between the candidates on the most significant issue in Mississippi: race. Although a Republican, Senator Cochran never cultivated the image of a race-baiter, a common tactic used by many of his contemporaries (e.g., Jesse Helms) who proved

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6 Only Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee was less conservative among southern Republicans; the other three Republican Senators less conservative than Cochran were Mark Kirk (IL), Lisa Murkowski (AK), and Susan Collins (ME).

7 At 413 of 20,198, Chris McDaniel’s ideological score places him among the top 2 percent most conservative legislators in the Shor data set spanning 1993 to 2013 (data can be accessed at ⟨http://americanlegislatures.com/data⟩).

masterful in their use of the so-called southern strategy as the GOP took off in the 1980s and 1990s. On the other hand, Cochran’s opponent was viewed as walking dangerously close to, and perhaps crossing, the line into racist behavior. For instance, and perhaps most infamously, in 2013 McDaniel spoke at a neo-Confederate conference (Murphy, 2013). The marked contrast between the candidates on both fiscal policy and race manifested an obvious preference for African Americans, if in fact they cared to participate in a Republican nomination.

Leading up to the initial primary on June 3, operatives affiliated with the McDaniel campaign were arrested for breaking into the nursing home of Rose Cochran, the wife of Senator Cochran, who for years suffered from dementia (Bash, 2014). Pictures of Cochran’s ailing wife were posted in order to make the point that the Senator was carrying on an affair with his long-time staffer Kay Webber, whom the Senator rented living space from when he stayed in the District of Columbia. One of the four culprits committed suicide in August 2014, and in December, Rose Cochran passed away. In a hush ceremony over Memorial Day Weekend this past May (2015), Senator Cochran married Kay Webber. Despite the egregious invasion of Senator Cochran’s personal life, McDaniel eked out a narrow victory in the initial primary: taking 1,415 more votes than Cochran, but not enough to avoid a runoff because of the presence of a third candidate (Thomas L. Carey) who won enough votes to deny McDaniel a majority. There were a total of 318,895 votes cast in the primary. In the runoff the number of votes increased by almost 20 percent, a total of 382,221. As we will demonstrate, a nontrivial share of the increase in votes is attributable to black mobilization in favor of Cochran.

As widely reported by various news outlets, as the runoff approached, the main strategy of the Cochran campaign was to mobilize black voters (see Parker and Martin, 2014). This is of course a most peculiar campaign tactic for a contemporary southern Republican. Nonetheless, the clear contrast between Cochran and his notably more racially and fiscally conservative opponent made the strategy credible and ultimately successful. Elites among the black community—particularly pastors—actively made the pitch for getting out the black vote in favor of Cochran. For example, strong evidence of black mobilization for the embattled Republican Senator is apparent in Cochran’s home county of Hinds, encompassing the capital city of Jackson, where the number of votes in black precincts exhibited a marked increase in the runoff (Cohn and Willis, 2014). Another exemplary anecdote of black support in favor of Cochran comes from an ad produced by African-American Pastor Arthur L. Siggers of Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, who exhorts:

I know that traditionally we as a community don’t vote Republican. But for this special election we need to turn out in record numbers to push back against this Tea Party effort. Thad Cochran’s record speak[s] for itself from hiring the first black staff member in the Seventies to supporting the Martin Luther King Memorial. He’s been good for Mississippi. He’s been good for black folk.9

When the dust, or should we say mud, had settled in the Senate runoff on June 24, 2014, Cochran amassed a 7,723-vote margin over McDaniel—a 9,138-vote swing in favor of the Senator. As Table 1 shows, Cochran outspent McDaniel by a 7-to-1 margin, but outside groups closed the spending gap in favor of McDaniel. In terms of money raised either to support or oppose, the Super PAC funds broke in favor of the more conservative McDaniel. This was not a race decided by a money disparity since both candidates received plenty of financial help, in addition to gobs of free media due to the sensational nature of

9The entirety of the ad is available on YouTube at (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayNrxYl_tek).
TABLE 1
Money in the 2014 Republican Senate Nomination in Mississippi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Dollars Raised by Candidate</th>
<th>Dollars Raised by Outside Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thad Cochran</td>
<td>$6,798,583</td>
<td>$2,428,234 $3,779,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris McDaniel</td>
<td>$928,537</td>
<td>$3,563,491 $2,175,797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cochran</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>41% 63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: The money-raised-by-the-candidates data are from FollowTheMoney.org ([www.followthemoney.org]). The money-raised-by-outside-groups data are from OpenSecrets.org ([www.opensecrets.org]).

the campaign. In the end, as we will show, the outcome came down to a small but pivotal share of black votes that put Senator Cochran over the top.

Empirical Narrative on the Significance of Black Votes

Since individual-level data are not available for the 2014 Mississippi Republican Senate primary and runoff, we use ecological inference (EI) to draw a number of conclusions regarding the importance of black votes in these contests. Specifically, we use precinct-level vote returns and census data on racial composition. From these sources we were able to determine the black and non-Hispanic white voting-age population (VAP) and vote shares for the Republican candidates in each precinct.

Our first inquiry examines the racial composition of turnout in the 2014 Mississippi Republican primary and runoff, respectively. In order to perform this analysis we created an indicator (Turnout) at the precinct level to denote the percentage of the total VAP that participated in the GOP primary and runoff. We also calculated the Percent Black (VAP) and Percent White (VAP) for each precinct. Finally, because of significant geographic differences in the share of the vote won by Cochran and McDaniel, we base our analyses according to key sections of the state: (1) Hinds County—Cochran’s home county, (2) the Delta (16 total counties), and (3) the rest of the state. Cochran dominates his home county of Hinds and the heavily black Delta, whereas McDaniel performs better in the remainder of the state. Also like Cochran, McDaniel does exceptionally well in his home county of Jones. Indeed, the remarkably strong electoral performance by McDaniel in Jones County ensured his statewide majority of the white vote.

10 If individual-level survey data were available we suspect that the findings might be different. For instance, due to issues of social desirability, it is likely that many African Americans would misreport their voting preferences since the Republican Party in Mississippi is so unpopular among this group. Also, because such a small percentage of blacks are estimated to have participated in the GOP Senate nomination, one would need to at least draw an oversample of African-American respondents to have a plausible estimate of voting preferences.

11 Precinct-level vote returns were collected from the Mississippi Secretary of State and in some cases election officials from specific counties.

12 We used GIS precinct shapefiles collected from the state or specific counties coupled with census block-level data on race to calculate the black and non-Hispanic white VAP for each precinct.

13 This variable was calculated by dividing the total number of votes cast in the Republican Senate primary/runoff by the total voting-age population.

14 These variables were calculated by dividing the black and non-Hispanic voting-age populations by the total voting-age population.
TABLE 2

El Estimates of Turnout in the Republican Primary and Runoff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Black Primary Turnout</th>
<th>Black Runoff Turnout</th>
<th>White Primary Turnout</th>
<th>White Runoff Turnout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hinds</td>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>Hinds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Voting</td>
<td>99.5%</td>
<td>99.5%</td>
<td>99.7%</td>
<td>97.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1,407</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We make use of racially homogenous precincts (see Hayes and McKee, 2012; McCrary, 1990) to draw an inference about race and turnout in the Republican contests. In precincts where the Percent Black was equal to or exceeded 90 percent (n = 108), 0.8 percent of the total VAP participated in the Republican primary. We next produce a set of turnout estimates using EI. The EI results in Table 2 predict that only 0.3 percent of African Americans voted in the Republican primary, while 23.7 percent of white Mississippians cast a ballot in this election. According to subregion, black primary turnout was 0.5 percent in Hinds and the Delta, and 0.3 percent in the rest of the state. By comparison, white primary turnout was 32.4 percent in Hinds, 23.9 percent in the Delta, and 24.4 percent in the remainder of the state. From these estimates one can deduce that black participation in the GOP primary was close to 0. Instead, the lion’s share of African Americans who voted did so in the Democratic Senate primary.

This result is not a surprise given the fact that blacks in the South overwhelmingly identify as Democrats. This point is important, however, as it pertains to participation in the Republican runoff election. As mentioned, a voter who participated in the Democratic primary is not eligible to vote in the GOP runoff. Eligibility is restricted to any voter who participated in the Republican primary or any qualified elector who did not vote in either party’s initial primary election (Democratic or Republican). The turnout by race in the Republican runoff using EI predicts that 2.7 percent of blacks and 26.6 percent of whites voted in this contest. While still small, the predicted turnout for blacks increased more than sevenfold compared to the turnout for this segment of the electorate in the Republican primary. White turnout increased in the runoff as well, but was only 1.1 times larger. According to section, black runoff turnout was 2.8 percent in Hinds County, 1.6 percent in the Delta, and 1.4 percent in the rest of the state. By comparison, white runoff turnout was 39.3 percent in Hinds County, 29.6 percent in the Delta, and 27.7 percent in the remainder of the state.

Next, we turn to an analysis of precinct-level turnout that compares the increase (or decrease) in the number of votes cast from the GOP primary to the Republican runoff. For this analysis, we create a turnout ratio calculated as

\[
\text{Turnout Ratio} = \frac{\text{Votes cast in the Republican runoff}}{\text{Votes cast in the Republican primary}}.
\]

Positive values denote an increase in the number of votes cast in a particular precinct from the primary to the runoff. A value of 1 would indicate that votes cast in the runoff were exactly equal to the votes cast in the primary. We then take the natural log of this figure, which ranges from –0.27 to 3.61. In this form, a value of 0 would denote no change in turnout across the two elections.
Looking at homogenous black precincts ($n = 88$) the mean value for our logged turnout ratio is 1.80, indicating that heavily black precincts saw an increase in votes cast in the GOP runoff as compared to the Republican primary. In overwhelmingly white (90 percent white VAP or higher) precincts ($n = 342$), the average value for this measure is 0.11. Through exponentiation we can reverse taking the natural log of the turnout measure. Doing so reveals a mean value of 6.05 for black precincts and 1.12 for white precincts. Hence, the average black precinct saw a 505 percent increase in turnout across these two elections, compared to the average white precinct registering a 12 percent increase in turnout.\(^\text{15}\) Figure 2 provides a graphical representation of this pattern showing an increase in runoff over the primary turnout as the percentage black at the precinct level rises, especially for precincts 80 percent black and higher.

The results of an OLS model to explain change in turnout across these two contests are presented in Table 3.\(^\text{16}\) Model 1 displays the positive and significant relationship between Percent Black and the logged turnout ratio. The model estimates an all-black precinct has a predicted value of 1.01, or an exponentiated value of 2.74. This value indicates that homogenously black precincts saw an increase in turnout of about 174 percent from the Republican primary to the GOP runoff. Model 2 reveals that in addition to Percent Black, a specific geographic area, namely, Hinds County, was also positively related to our turnout ratio. The predicted logged turnout ratio for an all-black precinct in Hinds County would be 1.24. In a black precinct in Hinds County then, turnout across the two elections is estimated to have increased by 246 percent. The coefficient for the Delta is not significant, indicating that the change in turnout for counties in this subregion is not statistically different from counties in the remainder of the state, with the exception of Hinds.

\(^{15}\)A 0 increase in turnout has a logged value of 0 and an exponentiated value of 1. Therefore, the exponentiated value of 5.93 for a black precinct would translate into an increase of approximately 493 percent.

\(^{16}\)The OLS models were weighted by total voting-age population.
TABLE 3
Ecological Regression Estimates of Change in Turnout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent Black</td>
<td>1.0065***</td>
<td>0.8789***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0285)</td>
<td>(0.0313)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinds County</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.3612***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0307)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.0351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0259)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>−0.0313**</td>
<td>−0.0211*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0126)</td>
<td>(0.0122)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$N$</td>
<td>1,756</td>
<td>1,756</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Weighted OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.  
* $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

In Table 3 not all precincts could be used to assess the change in the turnout ratio by comparing the total votes cast in each precinct for the runoff versus the total votes cast in the primary since a value greater than 0 in the runoff cannot be divided by 0 in the primary (e.g., five votes cast in the runoff cannot be divided by 0 votes cast in the primary). However, this reality sheds light on another important finding. In the Republican primary there were a total of 54 precincts where Cochran and McDaniel received the same number of votes. But of this 54-precinct total there are 23 precincts where the candidates tied because neither received a single vote: a 0-to-0 tie. These cases are particularly interesting because it is plausible to assume that they are located in heavily black population centers since African Americans are not expected to participate in the GOP primary.

Fortunately, in all 23 of these 0-to-0 tie precincts at least one vote was subsequently cast for either Cochran or McDaniel in the runoff. It turns out that in the runoff, Cochran won all 23 of these precincts, and in 14 of them McDaniel was shutout, failing to garner one vote. In fact, the vote differential was 97-to-3 percent in favor of Cochran—the embattled incumbent hauled in 361 votes versus just 11 for McDaniel—in these 23 precincts that failed to register one vote for either Republican candidate in the first primary. In line with expectations, most of these precincts are heavily black and over half are in the Delta (57 percent: 13 of 23). The median Black Voting-Age Population ($BVAP$) is 96 percent and the mean value is 91 percent. The data from these 23 precincts provide clear evidence of black mobilization in favor of Cochran. The results are summarized in Table 4.

With respect to the 31 precincts where Cochran and McDaniel were tied in the first primary and votes were cast for both candidates, Cochran ended up winning 19 of these precincts in the ensuing runoff. In the runoff, McDaniel won nine of these precincts that were tied in the primary and three precincts remained tied in the runoff. In the 19 precincts Cochran won in the runoff, he took 56.4 percent of the votes ($n = 2,893$) versus 43.6 percent for McDaniel. In the nine precincts McDaniel carried in the runoff, he took 56.5 percent of the votes ($n = 956$) compared to 43.5 percent for Cochran. In other words, the vote split in the precincts Cochran and McDaniel won in the runoff among initially tied precincts are practically mirror images of each other and neither candidate was dominant in the precincts they won (in the aggregate). Of course, the percentage $BVAP$ varies considerably in these erstwhile tied precincts carried by Cochran and McDaniel in the runoff. In the 19 precincts where Cochran prevailed the median $BVAP = 56$ percent and the average $BVAP = 55$ percent. In sharp contrast, in the nine precincts won by McDaniel, the median $BVAP = 26$ percent and the average $BVAP = 32$ percent. In the runoff, Cochran and McDaniel tied in 26 precincts, including two 0-to-0 ties. In the 24 tied precincts where votes were cast, the median $BVAP = 25$ percent and the average
### TABLE 4
Precincts with 0-to-0 Ties in the Primary That Then Cast Runoff Votes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Precinct</th>
<th>Delta County</th>
<th>BVAP (%)</th>
<th>Cochran-Votes</th>
<th>McDaniel-Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolivar</td>
<td>East Central Cleveland</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claiborne</td>
<td>District 1C</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claiborne</td>
<td>District 4C</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coahoma</td>
<td>Jonestown</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinds</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinds</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinds</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinds</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>Chancery Clerk</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leflore</td>
<td>East Greenwood</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leflore</td>
<td>South Greenwood</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leflore</td>
<td>Southwest Greenwood</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowndes</td>
<td>Coleman</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Family Life Center</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Tougaloo</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharkey</td>
<td>Rolling Fork 2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharkey</td>
<td>Rolling Fork 4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunflower</td>
<td>Indianola 2 East</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunflower</td>
<td>Indianola Southeast</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Greenville Daycare Center</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Metcalfe City Hall</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yazoo</td>
<td>3-1 West</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yazoo</td>
<td>Jonestown 3-3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** In these precincts no votes were cast for Cochran or McDaniel in the first Republican primary. The votes shown are the precinct totals for Cochran and McDaniel in the runoff.

So far, our analysis provides strong evidence in support of the claim that substantial increases in turnout from the Republican primary to the ensuing runoff occurred in heavily black precincts. By comparison, white precincts showed modest increases in turnout. In the next section we investigate the evidence that black votes not only disproportionately went to Cochran, but that they actually are responsible for his margin of victory.

### Race and Preferences

The county-level data presented in Table 5 paint a clear picture of the sectional and racial dynamic delineating the support given to Cochran (and McDaniel) in the 2014 Mississippi Republican Senate contest. The data display the Cochran share of the vote versus McDaniel in the primary and runoff according to section (Hinds, Delta, Jones, and the rest of the state). In addition, Table 5 shows total votes cast in each section, the percentage point change in the Cochran vote between the primary and runoff, the percentage increase in this change, and the percentage black VAP (BVAP percentage). In the primary, Cochran wins a landslide portion of the vote (>60 percent) in Hinds County and the Delta, and performs even better in the runoff, taking 72 percent in Hinds and 65 percent in the BVAP = 36 percent. The percentage BVAP in the two 0-to-0 tie precincts (both in Claiborne County) was 85 percent in District 4B and 60 percent in District 5B.
Delta. By comparison, Cochran registers an abysmal performance in his opponent’s home county (Jones). In the rest of the state Cochran is held to under 50 percent of the vote. Interestingly, in Jones County, Cochran does better in the runoff, going from 14 percent to 18 percent of the total vote. Thus, even in McDaniel’s backyard, Cochran gained ground.

In the percentage terms, Cochran is most effective in mobilizing support in his home county, where the percentage increase in Hinds is +5.5 points, which amounts to an impressive 47 percent increase in vote share. Cochran does 3.3 percentage points better in the Delta, which translates into a 38 percent increase in vote share. By contrast, outside of Jones County, in the remainder of the state, Cochran’s minority share of the vote between the primary (49.5 percent) and runoff (49.6 percent) is essentially constant, increasing only 0.1 percentage points. In Hinds County and the Delta, Cochran’s strongholds, the percentage BVAP is markedly higher than in Jones County and the rest of the state. Combining Hinds County and the Delta yields a 62 percent BVAP, whereas the BVAP for the remainder of the state (including Jones County) is 28 percent: a remarkable 34-point disparity. It is evident from Table 5 that Cochran triumphs in the runoff by-notch ing impressive gains in Hinds County and the Delta—those sections of the state with the largest African-American populations. However, county-level data alone cannot tell us anything definitive about black and white voting behavior. To examine this question, we conduct an analysis that incorporates information from our precinct-level data.

**Estimating the Black Vote Share for Cochran**

The highly variable component of the runoff vote lies with white voting behavior. By comparison, the black vote is more stable, behaving almost as though Cochran is the Democrat and McDaniel is the Republican in a Mississippi general election. We can support this claim by once again looking at homogenous black precincts. We do this by
setting the precinct percent BVAP at three thresholds: (1) ≥90 percent; (2) ≥92 percent; and (3) ≥94 percent. Among 90 percent black precincts, the vote went 91.7 percent for Cochran (n = 109 precincts). In 92 percent black precincts, the Cochran vote share was 92.2 percent (n = 99). Finally, for 94 percent black precincts, Cochran takes 93.6 percent of the vote (n = 76). Obviously, the number of cases drops as we move to more uniformly black precincts, but this simple assessment gives us confidence that the black vote for Cochran is conservatively greater than 90 percent.¹⁸

**Estimating the White Vote Share for Cochran**

At this point we have produced estimates of the black turnout rate in the runoff and the percentage of the black vote cast for Cochran. We can use these figures along with known parameters of votes cast to produce an estimate of the white vote cast for Cochran. Given that the black turnout rate in the runoff differed by subregion, we will produce separate estimates for Hinds County, the Delta, and the rest of the state (see Table 2 for black turnout estimates). For the percentage of the black vote cast for Cochran, we rely on the estimate produced by the homogenous precinct analysis of 91.7 percent.¹⁹ We begin by estimating the number of black votes cast for Cochran (BC) in each of the three subregions (i) using Equation (1) given below:

\[
BC = [(BT_i \times t_i) \times BP],
\]

where \(BT\) is black share of total turnout, \(t\) is total votes cast, and \(BP\) is the percentage of black vote for Cochran.

Using the estimate of \(BC\), we can then derive an estimate of the number of white votes cast for Cochran (WC) in each of the three subregions using Equation (2).

\[
WC = tc_i - BC_i,
\]

where \(tc\) is total votes cast for Cochran. Having calculated the number of white votes for Cochran, we can then use Equation (3) to calculate the percentage of the white vote won by Cochran (PC).

\[
PC = WC_i / [(t_i - (BT_i \times t_i)].
\]

Finally, we simply aggregate the vote estimates from the three subregions and again use Equation (3) to estimate the statewide share of the white electorate who cast a ballot for Cochran. The results of this exercise are presented in Figure 3.²¹ Cochran performed very well among the white electorate in his home county (70.4 percent in Hinds) and the Delta

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¹⁸ For 90 percent or greater BVAP precincts, the 95 percent confidence interval for the Cochran runoff vote percentage estimate ranges from 90.2 percent to 93.2 percent.

¹⁹ There is a slight differential in the percentage of the black vote cast for Cochran in the runoff by subregion. Using precincts with 90 percent or greater black VAP (n = 109) we regressed the percentage of the vote won by Cochran in the runoff on dummy variables for Hinds County and the Delta. This model produced the following estimates of the black vote cast for Cochran: Hinds County = 94.0 percent, the Delta = 86.6 percent, and the remainder of the state = 91.0 percent. Even if we vary the proportion of the black vote for Cochran by subregion, the final estimate for the percentage of the white vote won by Cochran presented in Figure 3, remains unchanged at 48.9 percent.

²⁰ The black share of total turnout is calculated as follows: black turnout rate/(black turnout rate + white turnout rate).

²¹ Detailed calculations of the vote estimate are located in Table A1 in the Appendix.
Black Votes Count

FIGURE 3
Percentage of the White Vote Won by Cochran in Runoff

(64.0 percent). Cochran’s white support in the Delta is interesting because a normally polarized black and white population in general elections provides overwhelming support for the same Republican candidate in the GOP runoff. However, outside Cochran’s strongholds, he does much worse, winning 45.9 percent of the white vote in the remainder of the state. Aggregating these figures into a statewide estimate, Cochran fails to win a majority of the white vote (48.9 percent). Under this scenario, Cochran obviously needs black votes to reach a majority in the runoff. In other words, black votes gave Senator Cochran another term because without them, his minority share of the white vote would have ended his political career.

Conclusion

In this study, we provide strong support for what the media claimed and what the defeated McDaniel campaign railed against: black votes kept a 36-year incumbent Republican Senator in office. With precinct-level data, we were able to get an accurate estimate of black support for Senator Cochran in the runoff because of the large number of Mississippi precincts with overwhelmingly black populations. After determining the turnout rate in the runoff for black and white voters and combining it with an estimate of the black vote for Cochran, we were able to derive the white share of the vote won by Cochran (and McDaniel). Our findings indicate that Cochran would have lost the runoff if not for black votes since McDaniel won a majority of white votes.

The dynamic in the 2014 Mississippi Republican Senate nomination appears unprecedented in contemporary southern politics. Rarely, if ever, do African Americans make their presence felt in Republican primary election contests. But rational political behavior on

22Racial polarization in general elections in the Delta is perhaps the highest in the United States. For instance, the bivariate correlation between the percentage black and the percentage Republican vote in the 2012 presidential election in the 16 Delta counties was an astounding –0.983 (p < 0.001, two-tailed; analysis conducted by McKee, 2015:142).
the part of a desperate incumbent and a marginalized segment of the electorate makes this anomalous event sensible and perhaps a harbinger of future black involvement in Republican primaries. Mississippi has a semi-open primary, allowing any registered voter to participate in a party runoff if she did not vote in the first primary of a different party, so it was a brilliant strategy by the Cochran campaign to mobilize black voters—expanding the electorate so that it comprised a majority of Cochran supporters in the runoff.

From the vantage of African Americans, although their runoff turnout was miniscule compared to white participation, the motivation to vote and vote for Cochran was clear. First, it was essentially a fait accompli that whoever won the Republican Senate nomination would triumph in the general election because the Democratic Party is no longer viable in almost any statewide election in Mississippi. Second, in terms of black interests, Cochran was obviously a better choice than McDaniel. Whereas Cochran cultivated a reputation for bringing home the bacon to the poorest state in the nation, his upstart challenger embraced the Tea Party label and its philosophy of scaling back federal largesse, some of which reaches its way to the Magnolia State in the form of economic assistance to impoverished African Americans.

Black participation in the Republican Senate runoff is a logical reaction to the current state of African-American influence in Mississippi politics. Put plainly, the black takeover of the Democratic Party has caused white Mississippians to control public affairs by comprising an almost lily-white Republican majority (Hood, Kidd, and Morris, 2012). As is true throughout the South (Black, 2004; McKee, 2012) and especially in the Deep South (McKee and Springer, 2015), the political clout of black Mississippians has approached a new nadir in the post-VRA era because whites have overwhelmingly realigned to the GOP and no longer need Democratic votes to implement their preferred policies. Under these conditions, black votes matter if they can affect the outcome of Republican contests, since the GOP nominee is practically assured election against the Democratic opponent in the general election—an opponent who is increasingly likely to be African American (see Hayes and McKee, 2008) because blacks now constitute the majority of Democratic supporters in most southern states.

Given these circumstances, the extraordinary event in the 2014 GOP runoff in Mississippi might become a more regular occurrence, especially if the black vote can again unify behind a Republican candidate who is perceived as the lesser of two evils. However, several conditions would have to be met to create a similar rendition of this historic nomination battle. For one, there would have to be a rise in Republican factionalism such that we find many primary contests where the political differences between the leading candidates are palpable. This rift within the GOP would also need to once again take place alongside a

23 Until the 2015 election of John Bel Edwards as Louisiana governor, Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood was the only statewide elected Democrat in the Deep South.

24 In the 2008 general election Thad Cochran defeated his Democratic opponent Erik R. Fleming (61.44 percent to 38.56 percent), an African-American state representative. In the 2014 general election Thad Cochran defeated a white Democrat, former Mississippi congressman Travis Childers (59.90 percent to 37.89 percent; a Reform candidate took the remaining 2.21 percent). According to the exit poll in the 2008 Senate election, the white vote split 92 percent to 8 percent in favor of Cochran and the black vote split 94 percent to 6 percent in favor of Fleming (N = 1,000; ⟨www.foxnews.com/politics/elections/2014/exit-polls/year=2008&type=senate&filter=MS⟩). According to the exit poll in the 2014 Senate election, the white vote split 81 percent to 16 percent in favor of Cochran and the black vote split 92 percent to 8 percent in favor of Childers (N = 939; ⟨www.foxnews.com/politics/elections/2014/exit-polls/year=2014&type=senate&filter=MS⟩). The white vote was much more unified in favor of Cochran in 2008 when the Senator faced an African American. By comparison, the black vote was not nearly as variable between the 2008 and 2014 elections. Despite a Public Policy Polling (PPP) survey conducted shortly after the 2014 Republican Senate runoff indicating that 37 percent of African Americans would back Cochran and 36 percent would vote for Childers in the general election (Jensen, 2014), once again the typical racially polarized voting pattern manifested itself in the general election.
Democratic primary in which the eventual nominee would be a hapless opponent in the general election. Finally, the battle between the top Republican candidates would need to be very close. If the aforementioned conditions held (and we acknowledge this is a big “IF”), then it would incentivize black participation in GOP politics.

There is no debate that the lion’s share of African Americans, and especially those residing in the Deep South, express an overwhelming preference for Democratic representation. But the current electoral dominance of southern Republicans in this region of the country (McKee and Springer, 2015) has rendered the Democratic opposition virtually hopeless; except perhaps in those instances where Republicans field scandal-plagued candidates and/or exhibit remarkably poor representation in their role as public servants and therefore provide an opening for a Democratic victory.25 As Frymer (2010) contends, blacks have become “electorally captured” by the Democratic Party, which has pernicious representational consequences (like being taken for granted), especially when Democratic candidates hardly ever win elections—the prevailing political reality in statewide Deep South elections.26

In the political milieu of contemporary southern politics, there is good reason under the scenario studied in this article for African Americans to hold their noses and pull the proverbial GOP primary lever. Indeed, a large bloc of African Americans uniting behind a decidedly preferable Republican candidate in a primary contest is a salient action that not only demonstrates some ability to escape electoral capture from the Democratic Party, but it may also prove pivotal in influencing the outcome of a contest that will most likely determine the eventual winner.

Appendix

TABLE A1
Calculating the White Vote Share for Cochran in the 2014 Republican Primary Runoff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Total Votes Cast (t)</th>
<th>Total Votes Cast for Cochran (tc)</th>
<th>Black Share of Total Turnout (BT)</th>
<th>Percentage of Black Vote for Cochran (BP)</th>
<th>Total Black Vote</th>
<th>Black Votes for Cochran (BC)</th>
<th>White Votes for Cochran (WC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hinds</td>
<td>25,361</td>
<td>18,211</td>
<td>0.0665</td>
<td>0.917</td>
<td>1,987</td>
<td>1,547</td>
<td>16,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>29,341</td>
<td>19,188</td>
<td>0.0513</td>
<td>0.917</td>
<td>1,505</td>
<td>1,380</td>
<td>17,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of state</td>
<td>327,519</td>
<td>157,573</td>
<td>0.0481</td>
<td>0.917</td>
<td>15,754</td>
<td>14,446</td>
<td>143,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>382,221</td>
<td>194,972</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>19,246</td>
<td>17,373</td>
<td>177,689</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFERENCES


25This is a somewhat veiled account of what transpired in the lead up to, and eventual result of, the 2015 Louisiana gubernatorial election.
26We thank an anonymous reviewer for referencing Frymer (2010) and how his concept of electoral capture applies to our study.


