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PAPER FORMAT

- a. Typed 12-point font
- b. Readable font (Times new Roman or Arial)
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- e. No extra space between paragraphs

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INTRODUCTION (SAMPLE)

Research on the question of whether increased black descriptive representation produces more empowerment and substantive policies for blacks remains unsettled. On the one hand, scholars who study black Americans' legislative representation have vigorously debated the issue by asking, is black substantive representation best achieved by what Hanna Pitkin (1967) called *descriptive representation*, defined as when a representative reflects the social traits of his or her constituency's race and social class? On the other hand, is the black constituency better served by *substantive representation*, defined as when a representative reflects the policy interests of his or her constituency regardless of the representative's background? Pitkin further alludes to representation as being *symbolic* in nature, which refers to the constituent's feelings of being fairly and effectively represented¹.

However, in addressing the descriptive and substantive representation questions, previous scholarly research has produced mixed answers. For example, in her study of responsiveness by members of Congress to black interests, Swain (1993) argues that while some value can be accorded to descriptive representation, it is the constituency that motivates the behavior of legislators. Similarly, Lublin (1997) argues that the creation of majority-minority districts, which have led to an increase in black representatives, may also result in losses in substantive representation. Conversely, Whitby (1997), in his study of black substantive representation, argues that both race and constituency can have a positive effect on descriptive representation.

Additional research has also shown that although minority representatives propose and support minority interest legislation to a greater extent than white representatives, they also tend to be less successful in seeing their policies eventually pass through the legislative process

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(Hedge, Button, and Spear 1996; Bratton and Haynie 1999; Canon 1999; Tate 2001; Hawkesworth 2003). In sum, empirical support for the impact of minority descriptive representation to positively advance black constituency interests is somewhat ambiguous.

A Theory of Strategic Representation

Perhaps descriptive representation does involve other dimensions that can further explain the level of representation blacks receive. Representation of black interest does not occur in a legislative vacuum. Legislators must consider various competing forces, such as party or constituency pressure, when they make their decision to either support or not support black interest legislation. These forces can become very problematic, particularly when black Democrat legislators seek to provide their black constituency representation in a legislative chamber controlled by Republicans. In those instances, black Democratic members must strategically decide what actions they should undertake to provide meaningful political representation to their black constituents. Under such circumstances, can descriptive representatives produce a representation, which may not be merely descriptive, but still substantive in nature? In other words, does descriptive representatives provide representation that produces salient black constituency policies, yet not be strictly black interest substantive policies? Do these black Democrats still “substantively represent” their black constituents and if so, to what extent? More importantly, what legislative actions do they undertake to represent their black constituents? Do they negotiate with legislative committees in such a way as to trade votes and influence? Moreover, can these black Democratic legislators form strategic alliances successfully to prevent passage of policies detrimental to the interest of their black constituency?

Can they form alliances to enhance passage of their strategically sponsored measures? In building their alliances, do they play one part of the Republican caucus against another? Do they

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pursue “strange bedfellows” approaches to creating negative vote coalitions? These are serious questions that require a thorough analysis in regards to the study of descriptive representation.

In seeking answers to these questions, this study poses a new theory- *A Theory of Strategic Representation*- as a guide to this inquiry. This theory posits that minority caucus members strategically engage in three distinct legislative actions to pursue interests germane to their minority constituents when acting as representatives within a *politically constrained legislative environment*. I define a politically constrained legislative environment as a legislative institution in which minority legislators are pursuing interests germane to a minority community, inside a majoritarian institution controlled by a different political party.

The legislative process is multi-faceted with strategic behavior amongst legislative members taking place. I argue that black descriptive representatives in politically constrained legislative bodies engage in strategic behavior throughout the legislative process to provide favorable representational outcomes for their black constituents. These legislative actions, namely, strategic bill sponsorship, strategic self-selection committee assignments, and strategic coalition formations, including negative veto coalitions, allow black representatives to provide substantive measures of descriptive representation while serving in a majoritarian institution controlled by a different political party. Through their strategic behavior, black representatives can provide meaningful, descriptive representation despite representing their constituents within the politically constrained environment. This project employs the strategic representation theory to examine fully, the descriptive representation offered by black representatives in those situations.

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Carolina Legislative Black Caucus (SCLBC) representational behavior within the South Carolina House of Representatives to conduct this study. The South Carolina House of Representatives is currently under firm Republican Party control. All SCLBC members are black Democrats and are currently pursuing their minority constituents' legislative interest in the politically constrained legislative environment. I surmise that first, rather than attempting to engage in descriptive representation through sponsorship and perhaps, passage of strictly black interest legislation during all legislative sessions, SCLBC members will seek to sponsor more *primary legislation* strategically during legislative sessions when the Democrats control of the House of Representatives. Primary legislation as characterized by Whitby and Krause (2001) is legislation that contains "concentrated effects" or black interests, explicitly. Conversely, during a constrained legislative environment that occurs under Republican dominant legislative sessions, SCLBC members will sponsor more *secondary legislation*. Secondary legislation is legislation that "have diffused effects for the general population" or black interest implicitly². While not strictly black interest legislation, secondary legislation may still be significant black constituency measures.

Secondly, SCLBC legislators strategically seek membership on committees that have jurisdiction over minority interest policies to help facilitate passage of their sponsored legislation. This action is extremely beneficial for SCLBC legislators since previous research indicates that committee action and informal discussions are the primary loci for legislative deliberations (Bessette, 1994; Hall 1996). The third activity involves strategic alliance formation for strategic bill passage and derailment of anti-minority measures (*negative veto*) purposes. I posit that SCLBC members will strategically seek to build inter-party alliances and intra-party alliances to move their sponsored bills further through the legislative process. They will also

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seek to create coalitions to block unwanted anti-minority legislation. Previous research involving descriptive representation has neglected to consider the idea that the promotion of black interests may come in the form of “blocking” unwanted or detrimental legislation. When linked together, these three legislative actions provide a depiction of the strategic behavior SCLBC members undertake to represent their constituency.

Conceptual Framework

The following model illustrate my conceptualization of political representation. Figure 1.1 details Pitkin’s Theory of Representation. Pitkin’s theory posits that representation is a complex concept that includes four forms of representation. The four components of representation (formal, substantive, descriptive and symbolic) are linked together, and each is a part of the larger whole. However, the strategic representation theory expands Pitkin’s (1969) Theory of Representation by including the dimension of strategic representation as a viable component of both substantive and descriptive representation.

Figure 1.2 shows how strategic representation occurs when minority legislators seek to represent minority interests in a majoritarian legislature controlled by members of a different political party. For instance, the model shows that there may not be a clear-cut monotonic relationship between substantive and descriptive representation but that this relationship may, in fact, be recursive in nature. The ongoing debate in the current

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Republican- Controlled Politically Constrained Legislative Environment

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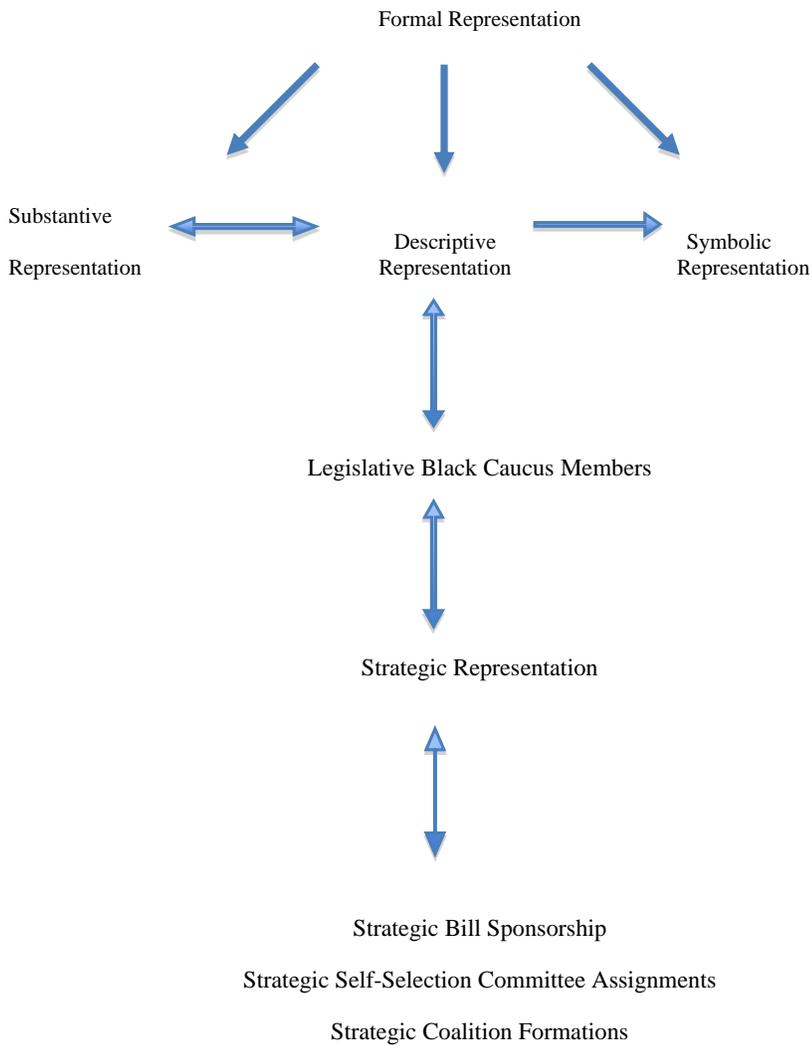


Figure: 1.2 Model of Strategic Representation

Literature Review

There are some observations that are either implicit or explicit in most studies of descriptive and substantive representation that need to be recognized. Some scholars argue that descriptive representation is not necessary to provide blacks with meaningful, substantive representation. They reason that white representatives can be responsive to all of their constituents regardless of race (e.g., Thernstrom, 1987). Conversely, other scholars suggest that white legislators are less likely than black legislators to represent the substantive interests of the black community (Bratton and Haynie 1999; Whitby 1997; Tate 2003).

Other studies seek to explain how different factors produce substantive representation.

One stream of research along this line, suggests that the representative's political party may have an effect on substantive representation, (Lublin 1997; Whitby, 1997; Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Swain 1995). A few of these scholars argue that Democrats are more likely to provide blacks with substantive representation than are Republicans. For example, in her work entitled *Black Faces, Black Interests: The Representation of African Americans in Congress*, Swain contends that the best way to maximize substantive representation is to increase the number of Democrats elected to Congress (Swain, 1995). In this respect, blacks can acquire effective representation through political parties.

The second stream of research theorizes that the race of the legislator is the significant factor in substantive representation (Bratton and Haynie 1999; Guinier 1994, Mansbridge 2001, Whitby 1997; Tate 2003; Canon 1999; Grose, 2005; Minta, 2009; Peruh, 2005). For instance, Whitby maintains that the race of the representative makes a difference in substantive representation of black interests, even when controlling for party and region variables (Whitby 1997, 110). He writes "All things being equal, black representatives are the most supportive of black interests, followed by=[white non-southern

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Democrats (Whitby 1997, 111).” Given his findings, Whitby (1997) reasoned it is misleading to conclude that race does not matter in providing blacks with substantive representation.

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The third stream of research indicates that constituency factors play a pivotal role with the racial composition of the district being a key determinant of substantive representation (Sharp and Garand 2001, Lublin 1997; Herring 1990, Whitby 1985; Endersby and Menifield, 2000; McKee, 2004; Grose, 2005). The underlying assumption behind this line of reasoning is that the higher the percentage of the black population within the district, then, the more likely the black voters will elect someone who will respond to their needs.

Additionally, recent scholarly works by both Christian Grose and Michael Minta have also made outstanding contributions to the literature by looking at previously unexamined factors associated with substantive representation. Grose’s work titled *Congress in Black and White: Race and Representation in Washington and at Home* (2011), expanded the traditional definition of how substantive representation is generated by looking at constituent services as a form of representation. In this work, Grose argues that working in the “interests of black constituents” should not be limited to roll call votes as evidence for substantive representation but should also include the type of “racial electoral environment” in which the representation occurs. He examines various congressional districts and categorizes them as low black population (less than 25%); black influence (25–49%) and black majority (50%+) districts. Grose argues that representative scholars should give consideration to how the black constituency interact with the types of representatives elected: black or white Democrats or white Republicans. He calls this interaction “racial trust” (Grose, 2011, p. 29).

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Minta’s work entitled *Oversight: Representing the Interests of Blacks and Latinos in Congress* (2011), pushes the representation literature even further through his examination of legislators’ advocacy efforts in oversight hearings as a measure of representation. In general,

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Minta finds that black and Latino legislators devote more time to speaking out for the interests of minorities and the poor and are more likely to speak out on these issues on committees to which they have not been assigned. He also finds that although Democrats were more likely than Republicans to advocate on behalf of minorities and the poor, even after controlling for party, black and Latino members of Congress were still significantly more likely to become advocates on these issues.

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Minta argues that this type advocacy is evidence of these racial minority legislators' true passion and conviction to represent minority concerns beyond their natural constituency. He further develops this argument through the concept he calls "strategic group uplift." He goes on to define this concept as "the belief that, as minority legislators, they have to defend the interests of the disadvantaged nationally, as well as the interests of their constituency" (Minta, 2011). In sum, all of these works suggest that all of the previously mentioned predictors will impact substantive representation outcomes for the black constituency. Still, each work placed its focus on congressional representation at the national level rather than state-level representation.

Bill Sponsorship and Passage (Sample Hypotheses)

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Presumably, any member of the South Carolina House of Representatives is free to sponsor any bill he or she desires. However, prior research has consistently shown significant differences in the sponsorship behavior of legislative minorities such as black legislators, and women. (Bratton, 2006; Bratton, 2005; Haynie, 2000; Swers, 2002). Black lawmakers' bill sponsorship patterns offer a number of insights for research involving black representation. For example, the black lawmakers sponsorship patterns illustrate their efforts to address the problems and concerns of distinct constituencies that establish and maintain their "electoral connections" with constituents based on policy responsiveness (Mayhew, 1974).

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Sponsorship patterns also indicate levels of interest or intensity with which representatives pursue certain issues (Swers, 2002; 32–33). Sponsorship efforts also reveal information about legislative priorities (Hall, 1996; Whitby, 2002). Thus, these arguments support the notion that SCLBC members’ patterns of bill sponsorship related to black issues and interests highlight their efforts to effectively represent the black constituency. Therefore, I pose the following hypotheses:

Sponsorship patterns also indicate levels of interest or intensity with which representatives pursue certain issues (Swers, 2002; 32–33). Sponsorship efforts also reveal information about legislative priorities (Hall, 1996; Whitby, 2002). Thus, these arguments support the notion that SCLBC members’ patterns of bill sponsorship related to black issues and interests highlight their efforts to effectively represent the black constituency. Therefore, I pose the following hypotheses:

- H₁: SCLBC members will be as likely as white Democrats and white Republicans members to sponsor legislation in equal proportion to their membership within the House during each legislative session.*
- H₂: SCLBC members will be more likely to sponsor more primary black interest legislation as opposed to secondary legislation during periods of Democratic control*
- H₃: SCLBC members will be more likely to sponsor more secondary legislation as opposed to primary black interest legislation during periods of Republican control.*

In addition, because I expect differences in the passage rates between black interest legislation and non-black interest legislation, I test the following hypothesis:

- H₄: SCLBC members will have a higher probability of getting their secondary sponsored legislation passed compared to primary black interest legislation, regardless of party control of the House.*

Committee Assignments

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Previous studies also show that given minority legislators tendency to sponsor black interest legislation, this propensity may also be reflected in their committee assignments requests (Haynie, 2001). Thus, it is reasonable to expect that SCLBC members will seek committee assignments to those committees which handle issues specifically relevant to their black constituency. I pose the following hypothesis to test this expectation:

H₅: SCLBC members will be more likely to seek membership on committees that handle black interest legislation rather than non-black interest committees.
Negative Veto Coalition

A unique dimension of the strategic representation theory involves SCLBC members' negative veto coalition formation behavior. Although some work has been done on the legislative success of different types of coalition formation, the literature is lacking in studies involving negative veto coalition formations by black legislators. I test the following hypotheses to begin addressing this oversight.

H₆: SCLBC members will be more likely to form a winning coalition to defeat anti-black legislation during periods of Democrat control of the legislature.

H₇: SCLBC members will be less likely to form a winning coalition to defeat anti-black legislation during periods of Republican control.

Data, Methods, Measurements and Models (SAMPLE)

The overall argument in this section is that one dimension of the strategic representation theory is measured by SCLBC members' strategic bill introduction choices and bill passage efforts. An overview of all data used in this study was presented in the previous chapter. The data that are used to test hypotheses 1, 2, 3 (bill sponsorship hypotheses) and hypothesis 4 (the bill passage hypothesis) consist of various general bills introduced in the House of Representatives during the 109th, 110th, 114th, 115th, and 119th legislative sessions.

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Specifically, the data used to test hypothesis 1 consisted of the general population of bills collected for all House legislative sessions involved in this study. The data used to test hypotheses 2 and 3 consisted of all bills identified as having the characteristic of being a primary or secondary bill gleaned from the population of sponsored bills. The data used to test hypothesis 4 consisted of all bills introduced and passed during the legislative sessions involved in this study.

All of the above-referenced data was obtained by electronic means from the South Carolina Legislative Internet Portal, <http://www.scstatehouse.gov>, and various South Carolina legislative manuals published for each legislative year of this study. Information was also gathered from these sources regarding each bill sponsors' race, gender, party, committee membership, and the number of bills introduced. These sources also provided information for each bill's characteristic such as the type of legislation and final legislative disposition. Information involving each House member's district characteristics, (percentage for black, median income) was gathered from data housed in the US Census Bureau Internet portal, <http://www.census.gov>, and the South Carolina Office of Research and Statistics Internet portal, <http://rfa.sc.gov/demo>.

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Conclusion (SAMPLE)

Are there instances when descriptive representation produces a representation that is not entirely substantive but is more than symbolic? This dissertation seeks to answer this question along with others raised in this chapter. It explores strategic representation involving SCLBC members and will employ a longitudinal and cross-sectional approach to test my strategic representation theory. It will examine patterns of legislative sponsorship, bill content and outcomes, committee assignments, and alliance formations among SCLBC members and Non-SCLBC members within the South Carolina House of Representatives. This study will analyze their strategic legislative behavior during the 109th, (1991-1992), 110th (1993-1994), 114th (2001-2002), 115th (2003-2004) and the 119th (2011-2012) legislative

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sessions. The ultimate goal of the study is to add to the overall understanding the impact black representatives may have on the representation process.

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References

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