

His bivariate correlation analysis failed to show any causal effect because he did not perform what social sciences called controlled comparisons. To do so, the scientist needs to at least control an additional variable, other than party, to show that partisan effect still holds. None of Dr. Bonneau's tables holds party constant to test the effect of race, or holds race constant to test the effect of party.⁶ But he mistakenly asserts that his findings are controlled comparison to show the causal effect. He even stated "holding other things constant" when he discussed his findings in Table 4 on page 16 which is only a bivariate regression table without any "other things" held constant in the first place.

To compare the effect of party with that of race, and also to directly address the question of whether the Black voters in Alabama always voted for the Democratic Party regardless which racial candidate is on the ballot, once again I used Dr. Bonneau's own data at the county level. Five Alabama State Senate elections involved both a Black and a white candidate, i.e., a biracial election. These five districts are State Senate Districts 2, 7, 23, 27, and 33 in 2022. I ran an RxC RPV analysis for these five biracial elections, and the results are shown in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, these biracial elections were racially polarized in that more than 64% of the Black voters voted for the Democratic candidates who are also Black whereas only about 29% of the white voters voted for these Black Democratic candidates.

Table 1
Analysis of Racially Polarized Voting in the Biracial State Senate Elections

Group	Black Cand	White Cand	All-others
White	0.288 (0.273, 0.309)	0.709 (0.686, 0.725)	0.003 (0.002, 0.005)
Black	0.642 (0.62, 0.666)	0.35 (0.325, 0.373)	0.008 (0.005, 0.01)
Total	0.461	0.535	0.004

I further tested whether it was only because of party, rather than race, that led to the racially polarized voting. To do so, I also examined the 2022 non-biracial State Senate elections in Senate Districts 12, 21, and 29 for which Dr. Bonneau provided the data. All these State Senate elections involved Democratic and Republican candidates, but none of the candidates were Black. Thus, the racial cue was taken away and partisan cue remained. As shown in Table 2, using Dr. Bonneau's own data and assuming its accuracy, these elections were not racially polarized: Black voters were no more likely than white voters to cast their vote for the Democratic candidates. Both racial groups cast about 25% of the vote for the white Democratic candidates. In short, based on this limited analysis of the elections data relied on by Dr. Bonneau, RPV only existed in the State Senate elections which involved both Black and white candidates based on Dr. Bonneau's data. It is, therefore, highly likely that race, above and beyond party, led to RPV in these elections based on his data.

⁶ For the importance of controlling variables to establish causal relationships in social science research, see, for example, Gerring, John. (2012). Social Science Methodology: A Unified Framework. 2nd edition. Cambridge University Press.