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Politics and crime in black & white

Egidio Farina[*]
University of Sussex
e.farina@sussex.ac.uk

Abstract: Does the race of a politician have an impact on the incidence of crime? I answer this question by focusing on large US cities, where active participation in the political life of the African-American candidates has undergone a strong upsurge since 1965. In order to deal with the endogeneity of black candidates to city characteristics, a regression discontinuity is used, exploiting the multi-racial elections decided by a narrow margin of victory. The results show that the number of motor vehicles stolen increases considerably the year after the election of an African-American candidate. I investigate, as a possible channel of influence, how police employment responds to the election of a black mayor, finding a negative effect the year after the electoral race.

JEL classification: D72; H70; J15

Key words: African-American mayor; close elections; regression discontinuity; crime.

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1 Introduction

In 1983 the magazine *Ebony*, in an article about the incidence of crime in American cities, emphasised the fundamental role played by African-American mayors in reducing crime with respect to the cities ruled by a white mayor[1]. According to the periodical, the possible factors behind this success were to be found in the black mayors' social and cultural background, which endowed the African-American officers with a *special sensitivity* (p. 116) that allowed them to tackle these kinds of problems more effectively than a non-black mayor. This, in turn, explained how the combination of measures aimed at improving the relationship between police and the black community[2], and the development of specific crime prevention programmes, resulted in such a strong and considerable reduction of the crime rates: for example, in cities such as Atlanta or Gary the incidence of crime fell by 6% and 11.2% respectively, compared to the previous year.

Although non-scientific and aimed at targeting public opinion, this article reflected a debate started in the 1970s when, in response to an increasing number of elected African-American mayors, political scientists and sociologists began to analyse what were the main lines along which a *black city* differed from a *white city*: Poinsett (1970), Campbell and Feagin (1975), Nelson and Meranto (1977), Keller (1978), Nelson (1978), Karnig and Welch (1980), assessed, mostly through case-studies, the main factors leading the African-American candidates to succeed against a white opponent and the type of policies adopted by a black mayor in contrast to those cities where a white official was elected[3].

My work takes a step in this direction, studying whether the race of a politician in large American cities has an impact on several categories of property and violent crimes. The motivation behind this study is twofold. On one hand, contrary to the works of Hotelling (1929) and Downs (1957), according to which the type of policies implemented by a politician merely reflect the preferences of the median voter, a recent array of studies has largely shown that the politicians' preferences play a crucial role in determining the set of economic

[1] *Can black mayor stop crime?* Ebony, Dec. 1983.

[2] The author of the article listed the citizens' participation in the police-department's decision-making process or their inclusion in citizens advisory committees and civilian review boards.

[3] As acknowledged by Hopkins and McCabe (2012), due to the low number of observations, a unique consensus on the relationship between the mayor's race and the type of policies adopted was never reached. Some studies found no differences between a city ruled by a white and or a black mayor (Nelson, (1978)); other works documented African-American mayors' predilection for social welfare policies coupled with a reduction in police spending (Karnig and Welch, (1980)) while other research presented evidence of higher police spending but no impact on welfare spending when a black mayor was elected (Keller, (1978)).

and political measures adopted (Besley and Coate, 1997; Levitt, 1996). In this case, if the politicians' preferences differ by race[4], the number of crimes in a city ruled by a black mayor might differ from a city where a white mayor is elected in response to the adoption of different policies. On the other hand, the relationship between race, crime and criminal justice in American society today attracts the interests of academics, media and public opinion and, non-ultimately, it has been the cause of social tensions, which has led to the creation of activist movements and protests across the whole of America. Understanding how and the possible mechanisms through which crime responds to the election of an African-American mayor can offer a new insight on this phenomenon.

To determine how the race of a politician can affect crime, I link the data collected by the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting programme to the interracial election dataset constructed by Vogl (2014). This dataset provides information on the race, partisanship and votes of the two top-candidates running for mayoral elections between 1965 and 2010 in American cities whose population in 1960 was at least 50,000.

In order to overcome potential sources of endogeneity related to the election of an African-American mayor, the identification strategy relies on a sharp regression discontinuity design (RDD), analysing the multi-racial electoral races decided by a narrow margin of victory. However, if a narrowly-decided election approximates a randomised experiment, as pointed out by McCrary (2008), this might not be a sufficient condition to ensure randomness in the outcomes of competitive elections. Following Vogl (2014), I check whether the African-American mayors exhibit a systematic advantage over the non-black candidates. As the test will show, in the sample characterised by cities outside the Southern States we can consider the election of an African-American mayor in a close multi-racial contest as good as random; unfortunately this is unlikely to happen in the South, where black candidates are more likely to win an electoral race decided by a narrow-margin of victory.

My main findings show that the election of a black mayor in a close multi-racial contest has a strong and positive impact on the number of motor vehicle thefts one year after the electoral race took place. On the other hand, other types of crimes do not seem to respond to the election of an African-American mayor. I follow the study on crime rates with an assessment of the possible channels through which car theft can be affected by

[4]According to Nelson and Meranto (1977), black mayors were more likely to be concerned with the living conditions of the black population, channelling the *"available resources toward the alleviation of poverty and hopelessness in the black community"*.

the election of a black mayor, implementing a regression discontinuity design where the dependent variables are the total number of police employees and the number of police officers per 1,000 inhabitants in the year following the electoral race. Coherently with the economics of crime literature, the increase in the number of car thefts might be explained by a decrease in the number of policemen the year after the election of an African-American mayor.

In order to gather further evidence in favour of my results, several robustness checks are performed: I increase the number of data points by looking at the total number of motor vehicle thefts in the two years subsequent to the election; I adopt a different estimator to test if my results still hold when a non-parametric strategy is adopted and, finally, I isolate the "race" effect from the "ethnic minority status" effect by looking at the election of an Asian-American or Hispanic mayor against a white runner-up only. The evidence emerging from these tests corroborates my original findings, pointing to an increase in the number of motor vehicles stolen following the election of a black mayor decided by a narrow margin of victory.

This paper contributes to different literatures: firstly, several studies in the economic literature have linked some aspects of a politician's identity such as gender, party affiliation, religion or race to different economic and social outcomes. However, to the best of my knowledge, this represents the first study addressing a causal relationship between the election of an African-American mayor and the incidence of crime. Secondly, the sociological and criminological literature have mostly focused on how the election of a black mayor correlates to the number of murders or the number of interracial killings, in order to test the classic social disorganisation theory, whereas in this paper it is my intention to establish a causal nexus, differentiating between violent and property crimes.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 offers a brief summary of the literature to which my study is linked; Section 3 describes the data used throughout the paper and provides some descriptive statistics; Section 4 explains the methodology and the econometric model adopted; Section 5 shows the main results achieved, Section 6 discusses the channels through which a black mayor can affect the number of motor vehicle thefts, Section 7 tests the robustness of my results and, finally, Section 8 concludes.

2 Related Literature

This work is strictly related to that strand of research conducted in criminology and sociology that has put a strong emphasis on how the race of a mayoral candidate can affect criminal behaviour. Also, more broadly, it is related to the research in political economy that has examined how the election of an African-American mayor can affect different outcomes.

Jacobs and Wood (1999), in their study on the incidence of interracial violence in American cities, claim i) a positive correlation between the election of a black mayor and the rates of white killings of blacks and, ii) a negative correlation between the presence of an African-American mayor and black killings of whites. On the other hand, Wadsworth and Kubrin (2004) do not find any significant relationship between interracial killings and black mayors. Jacobs and Charmichael (2002) present evidence of a lower occurrence of violent episodes against policemen in those cities where a black mayor is elected; this is because black mayors reduce the perception of injustice against minorities by increasing the number of black policemen.

Stucky (2003) explores whether the form of government (mayor vs city manager), the city council electoral systems (district-based electoral systems vs cities with at-large elections), the presence of partisanship elections and the race of local officials can affect the number of murders. The author shows that there exists a significant and negative correlation between the city council electoral system (i.e. the presence of district-based city council representation) and crime, and mixed evidence on the relationship between the race of elected officials and delinquency. The impact of black city council representation on crime is not statistically significant, whereas the presence of a black mayor is associated with a reduction of 20.6% in violent crimes when compared with a city where a non-black mayor wins the electoral race. Stucky (2011) finds a negative correlation between the share of black residents and black violent crime arrest rates in those cities where an African-American mayor is elected.

Nye *et al.* (2015), studying whether a black mayor rewards members from their own ethnic group, find that black employment and labour force participation rise relative to white employment as a result of the election of an African-American officer. Hopkins and McCabe (2012) show that narrow black electoral victories do not induce many policy changes with few exceptions: a city with a narrow black victory will reduce the city?s share of employees at the police department by 2.9 percentage points, while, for police pay, they find a 3.6 percentage point decline in police pay as a share of total pay. Vogl (2014) studies the nature

of multi-racial elections that occurred in the US from 1965 to 2010. According to the author, close black victories were more likely to occur than close black losses in the Southern States, involved higher turnout, and were more likely to be followed by subsequent black victories. Elections contested by black and non-black candidates have also been studied at a wider political level; Washington (2006), for example, finds that black candidates running for Senate and gubernatorial elections increase voter turnout.

This paper is also linked to that branch of research in political economy studying how different aspects of a politician's identity can affect political and economic outcomes. Lee (2007), exploiting data relative to the elections to the US House of Representatives (1946-1998), presents strong evidence that incumbency has a causal positive effect on the probability of winning the subsequent elections. Dal Bó *et al.* (2009) find that legislators who hold power for longer become more likely to have relatives entering Congress in the future; Ferreira and Gyourko (2009) show that in large American cities there exists no significant relationship between the mayor's party and the size of city government, the allocation of public spending and crime rates. Other studies have focused on the gender of local officials rather than the party to which they belong. Beaman *et al.* (2009) and Beaman *et al.* (2012) show that exposure to a female politician reduces gender stereotypes and influences adolescent girls' career aspirations and educational attainment; Clots-Figueras (2011) studies the impact of female political representation in India on public goods, policy and expenditure. Gagliarducci and Paserman (2012) show that in municipalities headed by female mayors, the probability of early termination of the legislature is higher. Clots-Figueras (2012) finds that female political representation increases the probability of an individual attaining primary education in urban areas; Ferreira and Gyourko (2014) replicate their first work focusing on the gender of US mayors without finding any significant difference between cities ruled by women or men. Bhalotra and Clots-Figueras (2014) show that a 10 percentage point increase in women's representation in state legislatures in India results in a 2.1 percentage point reduction in neonatal mortality. Finally, economists have recently begun to analyse how the religious identity of a politician can affect human capital accumulation: Bhalotra *et al.* (2013) find that increasing the political representation of Muslims has a positive effect on health and education outcomes in the district where the legislator is elected; Meyersson (2014) finds that Turkish cities exposed to an Islamic party are characterised by a higher female secular high school education.

3 Data and Descriptive Statistics

3.1 Election Data

The interracial election data provide information on the mayoral elections that occurred between 1965 and 2010 in 122 large US cities whose population in 1960 was at least 50,000. The data were generously provided by Vogl (2014), who expanded the initial data provided by Ferreira and Gyourko (2009)[5] using newspaper archives, elections bureaux, and websites to address the race of the first two mayoral candidates. For each election it is possible to establish the partisanship of the first two candidates, the incumbency status of the mayor, the turnout associated with each election, and the specific form of local government (city manager vs mayor-council system). Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for the election sample. Overall, 318 out of 1,571 elections are interracial; the electoral races involving two African-American candidates are 83, denoting a disproportionate prevalence of non-African-American candidates. On average a city experienced 12.98 elections from 1965 to 2010; the average number of interracial elections is 2.63. Finally, 54% of the cities have been ruled at least once by a black mayor.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics - Election sample

# Elections	1571
# Interracial Elections	318
# Elections - same race	1085
# Black-Black elections	83
# Black mayors	277
# Non-Black mayors	1293
Average elections/city	12.98
Average Interracial Elections/city	2.63
Share cities with black winners	54%
# Cities	122

In Appendix B, Figure B.1 shows different aspects related to the proportion of multi-racial elections over time, testifying a considerable upsurge in the participation of African-American candidates in political life over the last 40 years. The top panel presents the share of elections with at least one black candidate from 1965 to 2010, denoting a positive trend from the 1970s, which became flatter in the 2000s. The central panel graphs the number of elections

[5]The authors originally mailed a survey to the election office of every US city that directly elects its mayor with a population greater than 25,000.

won since 1965 by an African-American candidate over the total number of elections that occurred in a given year, whereas the bottom panel reports the number of electoral races won by an African-American candidate as a share of the number of elections involving a black against a non-black candidate. In this case, multi-racial contests are more likely to be won by a non-black candidate as the range of black victories is always below 50%.

3.2 Crime Data

The data on crime, expressed per 1,000 inhabitants, are provided by the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) reports issued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The FBI records crime statistics from law enforcement agencies across the US that have voluntarily participated in the UCR programme since 1930. The UCR programme collects statistics relative to violent crimes (murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) and property crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft)[6]. Although on the one hand the UCR represents one of the best sources providing data at city level on a yearly basis in the United States, on the other hand, the data collection process might be affected by measurement error: my results could be downward biased as police departments might have an incentive to underreport the number of crimes to the FBI. Crimes are reported at US Nation and State level since 1960 and, starting from 1985, also at city level; this is why my analysis cannot exploit the elections that occurred between 1965 and 1983.

The FBI does not include data on violent and property crimes if the collection methodology followed by a police department does not comply with UCR guidelines. In order to minimise potential measurement error, I dropped two cities from my final sample, Augusta and Charlotte, as the data on crimes are provided at County level (Richmond and Mecklenburg, respectively). Finally, it is common practice for the police departments to collect and submit all the data to the FBI in December in order to take into account the total number of crimes that occurred over the entire solar year. However, for 74 observations the data recorded refer to the number of crimes that occurred in a shorter span of time; also in this case, observations were deleted. Tables C.1 and C.2 in Appendix C group the American States and the cites from the election sample into four macro-regions, according to the definition provided by the

[6]See Appendix A for a rigorous definition of the different types of crime provided by the FBI.

US census[7]; for each region the average and relative standard deviation from 1985 to 2010 of different types of violent and property crimes expressed per 1,000 inhabitants is computed. With the only exception being robberies in the Northeast and burglaries in the South, we do not observe much variation across the US regions over time. As expected, property crimes are more frequent than violent crimes; urban crimes, regardless of the particular category considered, are, on average, higher than crimes reported at State level.

3.3 Municipal Characteristics

Table 2: Sample Representativeness

	Election Sample (1)	**US Cities** (2)
Population	417824	10896
	(862196)	(88599)
% Pop < 18	26.61	27.18
	(3.92)	(6.51)
% Pop > 65	12.15	16.24
	(2.49)	(7.82)
% Black Pop.	31.19	6.85
	(20.72)	(15.85)
Median family income	42756	43489
	(10169)	(16913)
% Poor families	14.99	11.01
	(5.68)	(8.75)
% Unemployment	8.38	6.05
	(3.02)	(4.87)
% education	76.61	76.70
	(7.94)	(11.97)

Note: All variables refer to the 2000 US Census. Each entry reports the mean and standard deviation relative to several city characteristics. Column (1) presents descriptives for the election sample while Column (2) reports descriptives for all the US cities.

The US Census of Population and Housing delivers information, collected with decennial frequency, on the municipal characteristics used as controls in the following sections: total population, share of black population, share of population younger than 18, share of population older than 65, share of population that completed at least secondary education, median

[7]Northeast: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania; Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota; South: Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma/Indian Territory, Texas; West: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington.

family income expressed in 1999 dollars, the share of poor families living in a given city, and the unemployment rate at city level.

Table 2 presents summary statistics on the representativeness of the election sample. The cities in column (1) are more populous than the typical jurisdiction (column (2)); the share of people younger than 18 is similar across the two different groups, while the share of inhabitants older than 65 is 4 percentage points lower in the election sample if compared to column (2). The share of African-American inhabitants is considerably higher in the election sample; on the other hand, we do not observe a strong difference between the two groups of cities in terms of income. The election sample is characterised, on average, by a higher share of poor families and a higher unemployment rate, whereas the share of people with at least high school education is basically identical in the two samples.

4 Empirical Strategy

The identification strategy, as anticipated in Section 1, is based on a parametric sharp regression discontinuity (RDD)[8]. In order to exploit the RD design, I convey my analysis on the so called *close elections*: identifying the impact of a black mayor on crime could be biased by city specific factors, but, for elections decided by a narrow margin, which candidate will win is likely to be determined by pure chance. In order to evaluate how the election of a black mayor can affect crime, the following model is adopted:

$$crime_{c,t+1} = \alpha + \beta BlackMayor_{c,t} + f(MV_{c,t}) + \gamma BlackMayor_{c,t} * f(MV_{c,t}) + u_{c,t+1} \quad (1)$$

where the dependent variable $crime_{c,t+1}$ can be either property or violent crime per 1,000 inhabitants for city c in the year following the mayoral election; $BlackMayor_{c,t}$, the treatment indicator, is a dummy variable taking value 1 if the election winner in city c at time t is African-American and 0 otherwise; $f(MV_{c,t})$ is a first order polynomial function, which controls for the linear term of the margin of victory[9,10], (defined as the difference

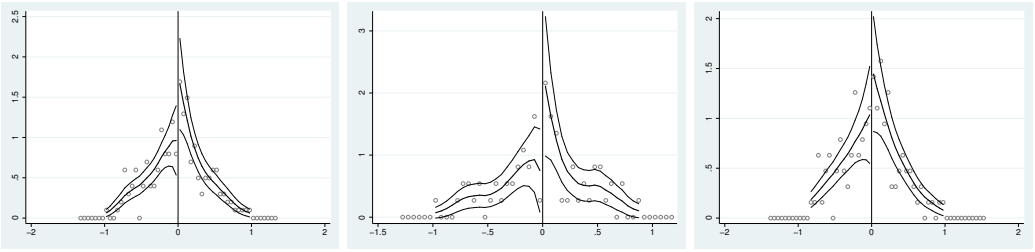
[8] See Imbens and Lemieux (2008), Van der Klaauw (2008), or Lee and Lemieux (2010) for a comprehensive survey on RDD.

[9] The literature on RD has not yet reached a unique consensus on the choice of the functional form of the running variable. According to Imbens and Lemieux (2008) the polynomial with the lowest AIC should be used; Porter (2003) argues that odd polynomial orders have better econometric properties.

[10] For robustness purposes, in this paper I present estimates of model (1) using different higher order

between the black candidate's votes and the non-black candidate's votes divided by their sum), while the interaction term $BlackMayor_{c,t} * f(MV_{c,t})$ allows the running variable to adopt different slopes on both sides of the cut-off.

Provided that the rating variable is measured prior to the start of treatment, the cut-off point is determined independently of the rating variable, and assignment to treatment is entirely based on the candidate ratings and the cut-off point, the internal validity might still be threatened by the presence of vote manipulation by the winning candidate. Hence, I follow McCrary (2008) to estimate possible discontinuities in the distribution of the forcing variable: the presence of a statistically significant discontinuity in the margin of victory around the cut-off would suggest that the rating variable has been subject to manipulation.



(a) All cities **(b)** Southern cities **(c)** Non-Southern cities

Figure 1: Continuity of the running variable

In Figure 1, panel (a) shows the distribution of the margin of victory of an African-American candidate against a white candidate for the entire sample; the magnitude of the estimated log difference in height (0.61) and the relative standard errors (0.33) confirm that the election of a black mayor in a close contest cannot be considered as good as random; this is due to the presence of vote manipulation. Hence, I disaggregate my sample into cities belonging to the Southern States and cities belonging to the remaining regions. The estimated discontinuity in Figure 1(b), with a log difference equal to 1.32 and relative standard errors equal to 0.68, reinforces Vogl's (2014) main results, which state that, in US Southern cities, close black victories were more likely than close black losses, involved higher turnout than close black losses, and were more likely to be followed by subsequent black victories. As suggested by Vogl (2014), these results are "consistent with the idea that the historical exclusion of African-Americans from the political process makes them considerably more sensitive to mobilisation efforts than whites" (p. 109).

polynomial specifications.

Finally, panel (c) in Figure 1 allows the conclusion that the election of an African-American candidate in a close contest was not decided by vote manipulation in the cities outside the Southern States (the estimated log difference is equal to 0.35 while the relative standard errors are equal to 0.34). Therefore, for the purpose of my analysis, I will focus on the non-Southern sample only, since the estimates of the effect of a black mayor on crime would be biased in the Southern cities.

Table 3: Discontinuity in the covariates

	log(pop)	**% <18**	**% >65**	**% black**	**log(inc.)**	**% poor**	**unemp. rate**	**education**
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**	**(8)**
black mayor	−0.084	−0.865	0.594	4.39	−0.015	0.463	0.702	−2.224
	(0.33)	(1.17)	(0.76)	(4.36)	(0.07)	(1.95)	(1.01)	(3.25)
N	127	127	126	126	126	124	124	124

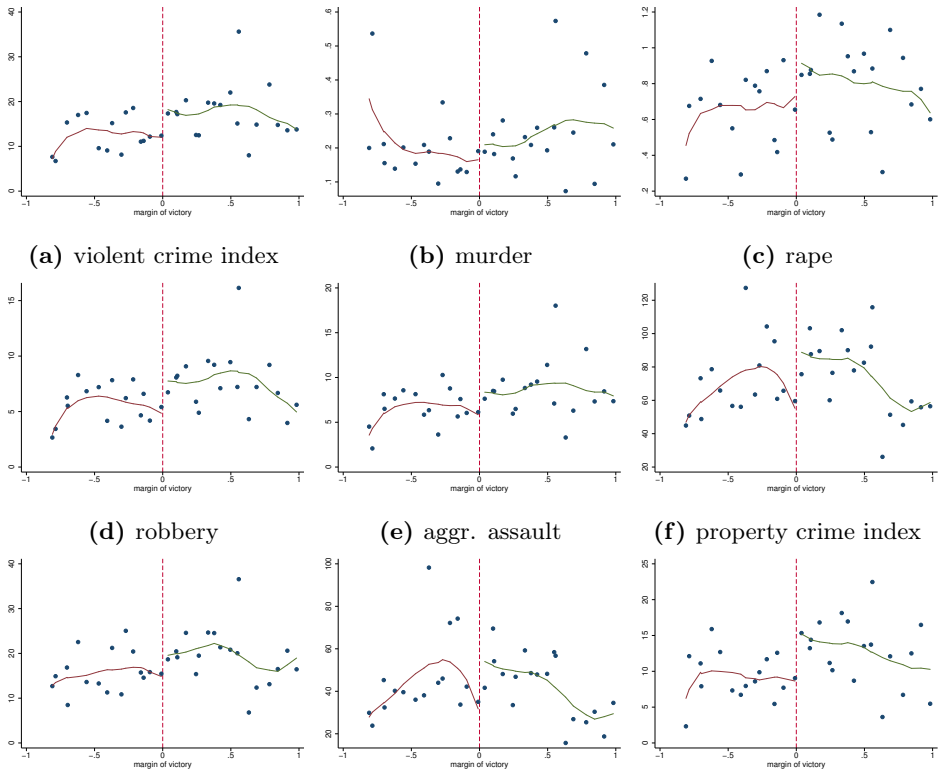
Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor on several city characteristics using a flexible linear polynomial term in the margin of victory. Std. errors are clustered at city level.

As a last test to support the internal validity of the discontinuity design, I check whether the distribution of the baseline covariates varies smoothly at the threshold. Table 3 reports the RD estimates of model (1) using the municipal characteristics introduced in Section 3.3 as dependent variables. Overall the municipal characteristics do not seem to be affected by the treatment indicator. In order to gather further evidence in favour of this result, I perform two more tests: I firstly estimate model (1) for each covariate controlling for all the remaining municipal characteristics and, following Lee and Lemieux (2010), I run a Seemingly Unrelated Regression (SUR) model followed by a test for the discontinuity gaps in all questions being zero[11] (p. 331). The results, not reported here for brevity, confirm that the municipal characteristics are not discontinuous around the threshold.

5 Results

Figure 2 offers a preliminary graphical inspection where different types of crimes are plotted against the rating variable, i.e. the margin of victory of the candidates competing in an interracial mayoral election. The discontinuity observed in panel (a) for the violent crime

[11] The test is robust across different polynomial specifications.



(a) violent crime index **(b)** murder **(c)** rape

(d) robbery **(e)** aggr. assault **(f)** property crime index

(g) burglary **(h)** larceny **(i)** motor vehicle theft

Figure 2: The impact of the election of an African-American mayor on crime

index, defined as the sum of the violent crimes collected by the FBI, is mostly driven by rape (panel (c)), robbery (panel (d)) and, to a minor extent, assault (panel (e)). The number of murders per 1,000 inhabitants does not seem to be affected by the election of an African-American mayor. Concerning property crimes, motor vehicle theft (panel (i)) and larceny (panel (h)) drive the discontinuity observed in the property crime index (panel (f)), whereas in panel (g) we observe only a mild jump relative to burglary.

In order to establish whether the discontinuities observed in Figure 2 are statistically significant, Table 4 presents the RD estimates relative to the election of an African-American candidate in an interracial contest on several types of violent (Panel A) and property crimes (Panel B), occurring in the year subsequent to the electoral race[12]. The first column reports the average and standard deviation of each type of crime; the second column estimates model

[12]In Column (2) the number of observations is 112 for the violent crime index and rape and 127 for the remaining categories. In column (3) and (4) the number of observations is 109 for the violent crime index and rape and 124 for the remaining categories.

(1) without covariates; in column (3) I control for city characteristics, mayor's partisanship[13], mayor's incumbency status, year and state fixed effects, while in column (4) I adopt a stricter specification, adding year and city fixed effects to the set of municipal and mayoral characteristics.

Table 4: RD estimates of the impact of black mayor on crime

	Average (std)	**RD**		
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**
Panel A				
Violent crime index	11.67	**4.045***	−0.098	−1.354
	(7.14)	(**2.10**)	(2.17)	(1.54)
Murder	0.16	0.024	0.016	−0.025
	(0.15)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Rape	0.60	0.166	0.019	−0.077
	(0.36)	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.10)
Robbery	4.92	**1.972***	0.224	0.133
	(3.35)	(**1.11**)	(0.87)	(0.69)
Assault	6.16	1.033	−1.599	**−1.743*****
	(4.59)	(1.02)	(1.08)	(**0.71**)
Panel B				
Property crime index	64.42	10.894	−9.478	−8.942
	(31.41)	(9.16)	(12.26)	(6.60)
Burglary	15.37	3.106	0.184	−2.201
	(7.62)	(2.85)	(2.49)	(2.46)
Larceny	39.08	1.941	−12.739	**−9.643***
	(24.02)	(5.90)	(11.18)	(**5.64**)
Motor vehicle theft	9.97	**5.847*****	**3.077****	**2.902****
	(7.18)	(**2.00**)	(**1.37**)	(**1.22**)
Controls		No	Yes	Yes
Year f.e.		No	Yes	Yes
State f.e.		No	Yes	No
City f.e.		No	No	Yes

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Column (1) presents the average and standard deviation in parentheses relative to each crime category. Each entry in columns (2)-(4) reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor on different categories of violent (Panel A) and property crimes (Panel B), using a flexible linear polynomial term in the margin of victory. Controls include city and mayoral characteristics. Std. errors are clustered at city level.

The RD estimates relative to the violent crimes reported in column (2) show that the

[13]I include a dummy indicator equal 1 if the mayor is a democrat and 0 otherwise; a dummy indicator equal 1 if the mayor is a republican and 0 otherwise and, finally, a dummy indicator equal 1 if the mayor is independent and 0 otherwise (baseline category excluded in this case).

election of an African-American mayor has a positive and statistically significant effect on the violent crime index, which is mostly driven by an increase of 1.972 robberies per 1,000 inhabitants. However, these results are not robust to the inclusion of controls, year and state or city fixed effects, as shown in columns (3) and (4). The impacts on the remaining violent crimes are not statistically significant, regardless of the specification adopted.

In Panel B, RD coefficients and standard errors relative to the impact of the election of a black mayor on property crimes are displayed. Column (2) shows that the property crime index, defined as the sum of burglaries, larcenies and motor vehicle thefts per 1,000 inhabitants, is not statistically different from a city where a non-black mayor has been elected against an African-American candidate. Passing to the single property crimes, the number of burglaries per 1,000 inhabitants is not affected by the election of a black mayor winning a close multi-racial contest. As regards the number of larcenies, in column (2) we see that the election of a black mayor in a close multi-racial contest does not have any statistically significant effect; my results do not change when I include controls, state and year fixed effects (column (3)), even though the coefficient is now negative. Finally, in column (4) we find a negative and statistically significant effect on the number of larcenies the year after the election of an African-American mayor when I add year and city fixed effects to the set of municipal and mayoral controls. Compared to column (3), the magnitude of the coefficient shrinks in absolute value from 12.739 to 9.643 per 1,000 inhabitants.

Contrary to the previous cases, a strong, positive and significant impact is found on the number of motor vehicles stolen: as we can see from column (2), the election of a black officer in a close multi-racial contest increases the number of motor vehicle thefts by 5.847 per 1,000 inhabitants; this effect turns out to be statistically significant at the 1% level. The inclusion of city and mayoral characteristics, as well as year and state fixed effects in column (3), reduces the magnitude of this effect to 3.077 per 1,000 inhabitants, which is now significant at the 5% level. The inclusion of city fixed effects in column (4) reduces the coefficient slightly to 2.902 per 1,000 inhabitants and the relative standard errors; as in column (3), the coefficient is significant at the 5% level. Comparing this coefficient to column (1), we can see that the effect is quite substantial, since its size represents 29.11% of the yearly average of the car theft category per 1,000 inhabitants.

In Appendix D for each crime category I re-estimate model (1) using different polynomial specifications, in order to check if the results presented in Table 4 are sensitive to the

particular functional form adopted. Murders (Table D.2) and rapes (Table D.3) per 1,000 inhabitants do not seem to be affected by the election of an African-American mayor when non-linear polynomial terms in the margin of victory are used. The same conclusions apply to the number of aggravated assaults per 1,000 inhabitants: the only exception is that, in column (3), the inclusion of controls, year and city fixed effects makes the coefficient significant at the 1% level. Unfortunately the statistical significance fades away when higher order polynomials in the margin of victory are adopted. The sum of violent crimes in Table D.1, and the number of robberies per 1,000 inhabitants, present a positive and statistically significant effect in six out of eight different functional forms adopted when no controls are included (column (1)). In columns (2) and (3), we can see that this effect disappears when I add controls, year and state (column (2)), or city fixed effects (column (3)).

As regards the property crime category, using different polynomial specifications does not change the results relative to the property crime index and the number of burglaries per 1,000 inhabitants, as we can see from Tables D.6 and D.7 respectively. The impact of the election of an African-American mayor on the number of larcenies per 1,000 inhabitants, as discussed in Table 4, disappears when I include higher order polynomial terms in the margin of victory (Table D.8, column (3)). Passing to the number of motor vehicles stolen per 1,000 inhabitants, in Table D.9 we can see that the particular choice of the functional form does not belie the evidence in favour of an increase of this crime the year after the election of a black mayor. The inclusion of controls, year and state fixed effects in column (2) reduces the magnitude of the coefficients and the relative standard errors if compared to column (1); also in this case, the election of an African-American remains statistically significant regardless of the polynomial specifications used. Finally, with the exception of two cases only, in column (3) the adoption of a more rigorous model with the inclusion of city fixed effects does not wash away the statistical significance of the relationship linking the election of a black mayor to the number of motor vehicles stolen per 1,000 inhabitants.

6 Discussion

In order to shed light on the channels through which the election of a black local officer can affect this particular crime, I analyse whether the election of an African-American mayor can have an impact on police employment. Following Becker (1968), a decrease in

the employment of police officers might reduce the opportunity cost of crime, lowering the probability of detection and, eventually, imprisonment. In order to study this relationship, the Historical Data Base on Individual Local Government Employment, released on request by the US Census, was used. The database contains over 220 employment variables for State and local government, collected yearly for the period 1972-2010[14]. For the purpose of this analysis, the following model is estimated:

$$police_{c,t+1} = \alpha + \beta BlackMayor_{c,t} + f(MV_{c,t}) + \gamma BlackMayor_{c,t} * f(MV_{c,t}) + u_{c,t+1} \quad (2)$$

where the dependent variable is police employment per 1,000 inhabitants in the year following the election.

Table 5: Impact of a black mayor police employment per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	Tot police employment	**Police officers employed**
	(1)	**(2)**
Black Mayor	-1.044^{**}	-0.582^{*}
	(0.51)	(0.33)
N	105	105

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor on police total employment and police officers employed, using a flexible linear polynomial term in the margin of victory. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state fixed effects. Std. errors are clustered at city level.

In Table 5, the first column shows the impact of the election on an African-American mayor in non-Southern cities on the number of total police employees per 1,000 inhabitants. The coefficient in column (1) is negative and statistically significant, denoting a decrease in the number of police employees of 1.044 policemen employed per 1,000 inhabitants. Unfortunately the data provided by the Historical Data Base on Individual Local Government Employment relative to the police occupation does not distinguish the police officers according to their ranks; in this respect, it might be difficult to pinpoint the specific mechanism through which motor vehicle theft is affected[15]. However, the data do provide information on the number of police sworn officers. For this reason, in order to gather further evidence in favour of my results, I restrict the analysis on this category as they are, in fact, *"the only police employees who carry a gun and have the power to arrest"* (Levitt, 1997, p. 272). The coefficient

[14]Data were not collected in 1996.

[15]For example, I am not able to establish if the increase in motor vehicle theft might be explained by a reduction in the number of police investigators.

presented in column (2) suggests that, on average, the election of a black mayor in a close contest causes a decline of 5.82 police officers per 10,000 inhabitants; this effect is significant at the 10% level.

These results are in line with Hopkins and McCabe (2012); the authors, studying how the first election of a black mayor can produce a significant impact on fiscal and employment policies between 1986 and 2006, find that out of 28 indicators analysed, the only ones significantly affected are the share of revenues devoted to policing (negative), the share of city employees at the police department (negative), and the share of black policemen employed (positive)[16].

The reduction of the number of police employees offers one of the possible channels through which motor vehicle theft increases in the year following the election of a black mayor. Past research studies into how a change in police employment affects the incidence of crime gives strength to this result: Kelly (2000) finds a significant negative correlation between police and property crime, while it remains negative but not significant for violent crimes; Di Tella and Schargrodsky (2004) find that an increase in the number of policemen in Argentina causes a reduction in the number of motor vehicle theft. Levitt (1997) shows that an increase in the number of police in the US leads to a decrease in violent crimes but not property crimes. Levitt (2002), after re-estimating the model used in Levitt (1997) due to the presence of programming and classification errors[17], shows that the increase in police numbers is negatively correlated to three particular types of crime only, i.e. murder, robbery and motor vehicle theft.

7 Robustness

The results presented in Section 5 confirm that the number of motor vehicle thefts per 1,000 inhabitants is the only crime category affected by the election of an African-American mayor, regardless of the particular functional term adopted. In order to check if this result is obtained by random chance, I run a series of tests aimed at establishing the robustness of my findings.

[16] Differently from Vogl (2014), this study does not distinguish between the elections that occurred in the Southern and the non-Southern States. The authors, however, report to tackle this issue including possible omitted variables relative to the Southern cities (p. 689).

[17] See McCrary (2002).

7.1 Crime Rates - Increasing the Number of Data Points

As a first robustness check, I increase the data points by adding the number of motor vehicles stolen per 1,000 inhabitants in the first two years after an interracial mayoral election took place[18]. In Table 6, Column (1) shows that the number of motor vehicles stolen in the two years subsequent to the election increases by 4.855 per 1,000 inhabitants when a black mayor wins a multi-racial contest. The inclusion of controls, year and state fixed effects in column (2) reduces the coefficient to 3.151 per 1,000 inhabitants; the coefficient, as in column (1), remains significant at the 1% level. Finally, replacing state fixed effects with city fixed effects, we observe a decrease of the coefficient from 3.151 to 2.001 per 1,000 inhabitants. Compared to the effect estimated in columns (1) and (2), the coefficient is now significant at the 5% level.

Table 6: Impact of black mayor on motor vehicle theft - two years

	m.v. theft (1)	**m.v. theft (2)**	**m.v. theft (3)**
black mayor	4.855***	3.151***	2.001**
	(1.76)	(1.02)	(0.87)
N	260	254	254
Controls	No	Yes	Yes
Year f.e.	No	Yes	Yes
State f.e.	No	Yes	No
City f.e.	No	No	Yes

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor on m.v. theft in the two years after the election, using a flexible linear polynomial term in the margin of victory. Controls include city and mayoral characteristics. Std. errors are clustered at city level.

7.2 Non-Parametric Estimator

The results presented in Section 5 are based on a parametric estimator, which is implemented retaining all the elections in the sample where a black candidate competes against a non-black candidate, and absorbing the variation coming from the observations far away from the

[18] In order to avoid possible strategic behaviours of mayors seeking re-election, I do not include the number of motor vehicle thefts that occurred three or four years after the election.

threshold imposing an appropriate polynomial specification of the running variable.

$$\begin{cases} crime_{c,t+1} = \alpha + \beta BlackMayor_{c,t} + \gamma MV_{c,t} + \delta BlackMayor_{c,t} * MV_{c,t} + u_{c,t+1} \\ \\ \theta - h \leq MV_{c,t} \leq \theta + h \\ \\ \textit{Where } \theta \textit{ is the cut-off point and } h \textit{ represents the bandwidth adopted.} \end{cases} \tag{3}$$

In what follows, I exploit two non-parametric procedures in order to determine whether my results are sensitive to the use of different estimators.

Table 7: Impact of a black mayor on motor vehicle theft - RD non-parametric estimates.

	m.v. theft **(1)**	**m.v. theft** **(2)**	**m.v. theft** **(3)**
Panel A: I-K			
Black Mayor	4.736**	5.981*	5.615***
	(2.06)	(2.98)	(2.01)
N	98	64	126
opt. band. I-K	0.472	0.236	0.944
Panel B: C-C-T			
Black Mayor	6.924***	7.067*	5.462***
	(2.64)	(3.75)	(2.02)
N	78	46	114
opt. band. C-C-T	0.325	0.163	0.650

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients, the std. errors and the number of observations relative to the election of a black mayor on m.v. theft. Optimal bandwidths are computed using the I-K method (panel A) and the C-C-T procedure (panel B). Std. errors are clustered at city level.

Firstly, following Imbens and Lemieux (2008), I choose a rectangular kernel and estimate a local linear regression within a reasonable small bandwidth h, since this amounts to estimating a common regression over a window of width h on both sides of the cut-off point, as presented in model (3). The optimal bandwidth is computed using the method developed by Imbens and Kalyanaraman (2011), referred to from now on as I-K. Secondly, I adopt the non-parametric estimator based on Calonico *et al.*, (2014), referred to from now on as C-C-T, which proposes a solution to the asymptotic bias associated with the construction of the optimal bandwidth developing robust confidence intervals for the regression discontinuity design.

In Table 7 I report the estimates of the coefficients and standard errors relative to the election of an African-American mayor in a multi-racial race decided by a narrow margin of victory, using the two methods discussed above. As can be seen, the I-K procedure computes a considerably large optimal bandwidth, i.e. 47.2%; this in turn might bias my estimates as we are considering observations that are too far away from the threshold without imposing the correct functional form. On the other hand, the C-C-T method attenuates this concern, since it determines a relatively smaller bandwidth (0.325).

In panel A, in the first column we can see that the election of a black mayor increases the number of motor vehicle thefts by 4.736 per 1,000, using the I-K method; this effect is statistically significant at the 5% level. In Columns (2) and (3), I re-estimate model (2) halving and doubling the window of observations around the threshold in order to check to what extent the results obtained are sensitive to the selection of different bandwidths. In column (2), the lower number of observations used to estimate the causal effect of the election of a black mayor on motor vehicle thefts inflates the standard errors and decreases the statistical significance of the coefficient; this is despite an increase in its size (5.981). On the other hand, when we double the bandwidth the coefficient decreases slightly (coeff. 5.615) if compared to column (2) while, due to the higher number of observations, we obtain a more precise estimate that is now statistically significant at the 1% level.

Passing to panel B, the impact of the election of a black mayor on the number of motor vehicle thefts is greater than the effect estimated using the I-K method, with the only exception being column (3). Regardless of the bandwidth adopted, the coefficient is statistically significant at the 1% level in columns (1) and (3), and at the 10% when the optimal bandwidth is halved. The C-C-T method estimates a coefficient equal to 6.924 when the optimal bandwidth is 0.325. When the election is decided by a margin of victory within an interval of 0.163, as in column (2), the C-C-T computes a coefficient equal to 7.067 and relatively high standard errors (3.75). Finally, in column (3) we observe a reduction in the coefficient's size (5.462) and relative standard errors (2.02) when the bandwidth is doubled.

7.3 Mayor's Ethnicity vs Mayor's Race

The results obtained so far showed that the election of a black mayor against a non-black candidate determines a positive and significant effect on the number of motor vehicles stolen per 1,000 inhabitants in the year following the electoral race. In this respect, however,

it might be difficult to disentangle the ethnic minority status effect from the racial effect related to the election of an African-American mayor. In order to shed light on this aspect, I estimate a model similar to equation (1), where I exclude all the elections involving an African-American candidate; in this way, I focus my analysis on the close elections where an Asian-American or Hispanic/Latino candidate runs against a white candidate[19]. Therefore, the treatment indicator now takes value 1 if the mayor elected belongs to one of the two ethnic minority groups and 0 otherwise.

Table 8: RD-estimates of the impact of an ethnic minority mayor on motor vehicle thefts per 1,000 inhabitants.

	m.v. theft (1)	**m.v. theft (2)**
ethnic minority mayor	−0.349	2.521
	(3.55)	(4.00)
Controls	No	Yes
N	31	29

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of an Asian-American or Hispanic/Latino candidate competing against a white candidate on m.v. thefts per 1,000 inhabitants, using a flexible linear polynomial term in the margin of victory. Controls include city and mayoral characteristics. Std. errors are clustered at city level.

The estimates presented in Table 8 show that the number of motor vehicles stolen caused by the election of an ethnic minority mayor against a white candidate is close to 0 and not statistically significant; the inclusion of controls in column (2)[20] increases the magnitude of the coefficients, passing from -0.349 to 2.521 per 1,000 inhabitants, while it remains statistically not significant at any conventional level.

This exercise corroborates the evidence in favour of the original findings since it proves that it is the election of an African-American mayor in a close contest against a non-black candidate rather than their ethnic minority status that exercises a positive impact on the number of motor vehicles stolen.

[19] In order to establish if the candidate is Hispanic/Latino, Asian-American or white, I consulted several newspaper archives and elections bureaux.

[20] Due to the reduced number of observations, I do not include year and state fixed effects.

8 Conclusions

This study analyses how crime responds to the election of an African-American mayor against a non-black candidate. Exploiting a parametric regression discontinuity design, I am able to isolate the endogeneity of the election of a black mayor at city level, by focusing on closely contested electoral races only. My main results show that the election of a black mayor in a close multi-racial contest determines a strong and positive impact on the number of motor vehicles stolen per 1,000 inhabitants the year after the interracial mayoral contest; this result is robust to a series of tests as well as to the adoption of different polynomial specifications. In relation to the other crime categories, I find a mild effect on the number of robberies and on the sum of all the violent crime categories, which, however, tend to disappear when different polynomial specifications are adopted. Passing to the property crimes, no evidence of an influence of the race of the mayor is found on burglaries and larcenies, or on the sum of all the property crimes categories.

The second part of this work provides an assessment of one of the possible channels that might explain why motor vehicle theft is positively affected by the election of a black mayor. Seminal research conducted in criminology and sociology in the late 1970s testified African-American mayors' preferences for social welfare policies with respect to protective services and physical facilities. In contrast, more recent works have shown that a city where a black mayor is elected is not different from a city where a non-black mayor is elected in terms of the fiscal and employment policies adopted; the only exception here is police employment, as pointed out by Hopkins and McCabe (2012).

In my study I find that the election of an African-American mayor has a negative and statistically significant impact on the number of police employees. The economics of crime literature provides a satisfactory rationalisation of this phenomenon: a reduction in police employment, by lowering the opportunity cost of committing crime, helps explain why the number of motor vehicles stolen increases considerably after the election of a black mayor.

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A Appendix

A.1 UCR offense definitions

Criminal homicide: a) Murder and non-negligent manslaughter: the willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another. Deaths caused by negligence, attempts to kill, assaults to kill, suicides, and accidental deaths are excluded. The program classifies justifiable homicides separately and limits the definition to: (1) the killing of a felon by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty; or (2) the killing of a felon, during the commission of a felony, by a private citizen. b) Manslaughter by negligence: the killing of another person through gross negligence. Deaths of persons due to their own negligence, accidental deaths not resulting from gross negligence, and traffic fatalities are not included in the category Manslaughter by Negligence.

Forcible rape: The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Rapes by force and attempts or assaults to rape, regardless of the age of the victim, are included. Statutory offenses are excluded.

Robbery: The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

Aggravated assault: An unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault usually is accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm. Simple assaults are excluded.

Burglary (breaking or entering): The unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft. Attempted forcible entry is included.

Larceny-theft (except motor vehicle theft): The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another. Examples are thefts of bicycles, motor vehicle parts and accessories, shoplifting, pocketpicking, or

the stealing of any property or article that is not taken by force and violence or by fraud. Attempted larcenies are included. Embezzlement, confidence games, forgery, check fraud, etc., are excluded.

Motor vehicle theft: The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. A motor vehicle is self-propelled and runs on land surface and not on rails. Motorboats, construction equipment, airplanes, and farming equipment are specifically excluded from this category.

B Appendix

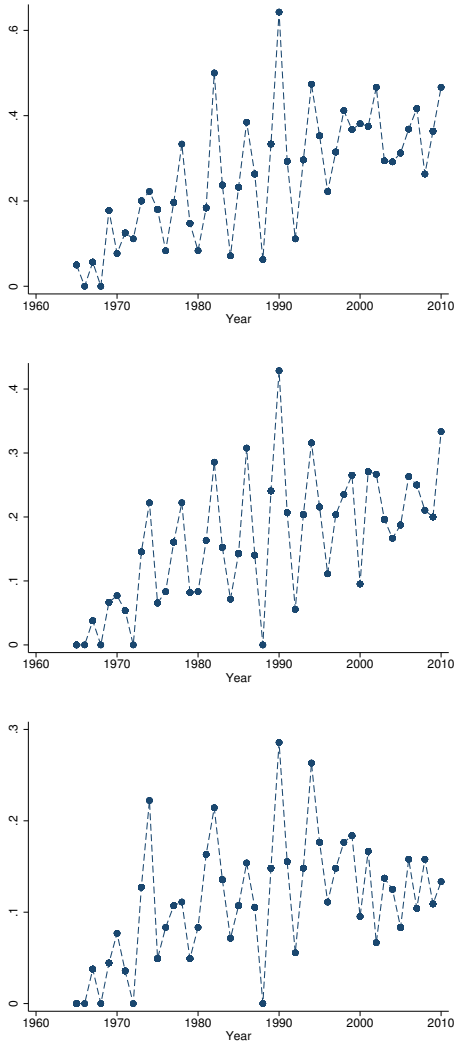

Figure B.1: Proportion of multi-racial mayoral elections (1965-2010)

C Appendix

Table C.1: Violent Crimes per 1,000 inhabitants

	US	**Midwest**	**Northeast**	**South**	**West**
Violent Crime Index	4.79	3.80	3.59	6.35	4.50
	(3.04)	(1.92)	(2.27)	(3.88)	(2.15)
Murder	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.10	0.05
	(0.07)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.11)	(0.03)
Rape	0.35	0.35	0.26	0.37	0.41
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.06)	(0.12)	(0.15)
Robbery	1.39	1.05	1.27	1.93	1.08
	(1.37)	(0.78)	(1.17)	(1.88)	(0.83)
Assault	2.99	2.36	2.03	3.96	2.96
	(1.76)	(1.17)	(1.21)	(2.07)	(1.43)
N	1428	336	252	476	364
# States	(50+1)	12	9	17	13
Violent Crime Index	11.60	11.51	12.50	11.45	10.68
	(6.98)	(7.78)	(7.43)	(6.70)	(5.58)
Murder	0.16	0.18	0.15	0.17	0.14
	(0.14)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.14)
Rape	0.60	0.73	0.56	0.60	0.49
	(0.33)	(0.41)	(0.34)	(0.29)	(0.26)
Robbery	4.67	4.43	5.95	4.22	4.29
	(3.25)	(2.96)	(3.95)	(2.98)	(2.62)
Assault	6.28	6.67	5.84	6.46	5.76
	(4.44)	(5.98)	(3.49)	(4.17)	(3.08)
N	3125	760	707	1220	438
# Cities	120	32	26	46	16

Note: Each entry represents the mean and, in parentheses, standard deviation of the relevant variables at the state level (top panel) and city level relative to the election sample (bottom panel) per 1,000 inhabitants. Violent crime index is computed as the sum of murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault.

Table C.2: Property Crimes per 1,000 inhabitants

	US	**Midwest**	**Northeast**	**South**	**West**
Property Crime Index	39.10	34.84	31.02	42.50	44.17
	(12.07)	(8.12)	(8.73)	(12.71)	(12.02)
Burglary	8.73	7.24	6.80	10.50	9.14
	(3.56)	(2.41)	(2.64)	(3.57)	(3.78)
Larceny	26.50	24.53	20.70	27.75	30.69
	(7.51)	(4.94)	(4.32)	(7.61)	(7.98)
Motor vehicle theft	3.87	3.07	3.52	4.26	4.34
	(2.45)	(1.53)	(2.52)	(2.81)	(2.36)
N	1428	336	252	476	364
# States	(50+1)	12	9	17	13
Property Crime Index	68.28	67.17	63.31	73.85	62.73
	(29.42)	(20.43)	(42.99)	(24.48)	(25.40)
Burglary	16.42	17.20	14.39	17.96	14.04
	(7.78)	(7.15)	(8.02)	(7.74)	(7.28)
Larceny	42.57	40.91	38.72	47.68	37.42
	(21.67)	(12.50)	(35.12)	(15.53)	(17.12)
Motor vehicle theft	9.30	9.06	10.21	8.22	11.28
	(6.66)	(6.70)	(8.55)	(5.54)	(5.19)
N	3125	760	707	1220	438
# Cities	120	32	26	46	16

Note: Each entry represents the mean and, in parentheses, standard deviation of the relevant variable at state level (top panel) and city level relative to the election sample (bottom panel) per 1,000 inhabitants. Property crime index is computed as the sum of burglary, larceny and motor vehicle theft.

D Appendix

Table D.1: Impact of a black mayor on the violent crime index per 1,000 inhabitants. - RD estimates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Linear	**3.920***	−0.481	**−3.066***
	(**2.09**)	(2.14)	(**1.81**)
Flexible Linear	**4.045***	−0.098	−1.354
	(**2.10**)	(2.17)	(1.54)
Quadratic	**3.958***	−0.541	−1.899
	(**2.13**)	(2.19)	(1.61)
Flexible Quad.	**4.132***	**3.798***	−0.989
	(**2.43**)	(**2.03**)	(1.64)
Cubic	3.208	0.265	−1.967
	(2.32)	(2.25)	(1.63)
Flexible Cubic	**5.690***	1.883	−1.491
	(**3.30**)	(2.59)	(1.90)
Quartic	**4.602***	2.918	−1.113
	(**2.31**)	(2.30)	(1.51)
Flex Quartic	4.698	1.857	−1.106
	(2.83)	(2.41)	(1.47)
N	112	109	109
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.

Table D.2: Impact of a black mayor on the number of murders per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
Linear	0.016	0.019	−0.029
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Flexible Linear	0.024	0.016	−0.025
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Quadratic	0.024	0.014	−0.025
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Flexible Quad.	0.017	0.078	0.043
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)
Cubic	0.007	0.032	0.005
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Flexible Cubic	0.092	**0.109***	0.057
	(0.06)	(**0.06**)	(0.04)
Quartic	0.013	0.047	0.026
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.03)
Flex Quartic	0.069	0.062	0.036
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.03)
N	127	124	124
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.

Table D.3: Impact of a black mayor on the number of rapes per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
Linear	0.174	−0.036	**−0.205***
	(0.12)	(0.16)	(**0.12**)
Flexible Linear	0.166	0.019	−0.077
	(0.13)	(0.15)	(0.10)
Quadratic	0.164	0.002	−0.131
	(0.13)	(0.16)	(0.11)
Flexible Quad.	0.168	−0.012	−0.056
	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.09)
Cubic	0.166	−0.040	−0.185
	(0.14)	(0.16)	(0.12)
Flexible Cubic	0.146	−0.152	−0.050
	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.12)
Quartic	0.182	0.027	−0.100
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.11)
Flex Quartic	0.166	−0.031	−0.105
	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.11)
N	112	109	109
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.

Table D.4: Impact of a black mayor on the number of robberies per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Linear	**1.919***	0.321	−0.172
	(**1.10**)	(0.89)	(0.84)
Flexible Linear	**1.972***	0.224	0.133
	(**1.11**)	(0.87)	(0.69)
Quadratic	**1.918***	0.142	0.055
	(**1.11**)	(0.84)	(0.75)
Flexible Quad.	**2.040***	**1.738***	−0.297
	(**1.16**)	(**1.00**)	(0.71)
Cubic	1.521	0.360	−0.017
	(1.07)	(0.88)	(0.78)
Flexible Cubic	2.486	0.856	−1.700
	(1.59)	(1.25)	(1.11)
Quartic	**2.236****	1.306	0.286
	(**1.08**)	(1.00)	(0.67)
Flex Quartic	**2.226***	0.727	0.166
	(**1.29**)	(1.13)	(0.70)
N	127	124	124
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.

Table D.5: Impact of a black mayor on the number of aggravated assaults per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
Linear	0.937	−1.697	**−2.190*****
	(1.01)	(1.03)	(**0.68**)
Flexible Linear	1.033	−1.599	**−1.743*****
	(1.02)	(1.08)	(**0.71**)
Quadratic	0.991	−1.725	**−1.937*****
	(1.04)	(1.05)	(**0.68**)
Flexible Quad.	1.541	0.669	−0.456
	(1.27)	(1.33)	(0.69)
Cubic	0.915	−1.210	**−1.680****
	(1.25)	(1.17)	(**0.71**)
Flexible Cubic	2.084	0.697	−0.208
	(1.76)	(1.46)	(0.79)
Quartic	1.586	0.087	−0.826
	(1.16)	(1.35)	(0.66)
Flex Quartic	1.584	0.090	−0.730
	(1.49)	(1.40)	(0.68)
N	127	124	124
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.

Table D.6: Impact of a black mayor on the property crime index per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
Linear	12.371	−6.791	−13.075
	(8.14)	(11.38)	(8.14)
Flexible Linear	10.894	−9.478	−8.942
	(9.16)	(12.26)	(6.60)
Quadratic	10.178	−9.894	−10.228
	(9.20)	(11.68)	(7.04)
Flexible Quad.	21.753	8.492	−1.182
	(16.28)	(11.71)	(6.41)
Cubic	13.848	−5.391	−6.648
	(11.08)	(9.28)	(6.18)
Flexible Cubic	30.167	−2.763	−7.051
	(25.19)	(14.10)	(7.41)
Quartic	17.641	0.808	−2.268
	(12.05)	(10.12)	(5.90)
Flex Quartic	20.501	−7.404	−3.224
	(19.66)	(9.70)	(5.22)
N	127	124	124
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.

Table D.7: Impact of a black mayor on the number of burglaries per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
Linear	3.204	0.065	−3.338
	(2.69)	(2.58)	(2.73)
Flexible Linear	3.106	0.184	−2.201
	(2.85)	(2.49)	(2.46)
Quadratic	2.991	−0.034	−2.655
	(2.84)	(2.50)	(2.60)
Flexible Quad.	2.739	3.048	−1.780
	(3.53)	(2.50)	(1.98)
Cubic	2.129	0.555	−2.945
	(2.97)	(2.23)	(2.50)
Flexible Cubic	3.691	1.850	**−4.441***
	(4.49)	(3.29)	(**2.41**)
Quartic	2.569	1.614	−1.058
	(3.25)	(2.48)	(2.10)
Flex Quartic	2.037	0.472	−1.394
	(3.98)	(2.62)	(2.10)
N	127	124	124
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.

Table D.8: Impact of a black mayor on the number of larcenies per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
Linear	3.219	−10.128	**−13.636***
	(4.86)	(10.16)	(**6.94**)
Flexible Linear	1.941	−12.739	**−9.643***
	(5.90)	(11.18)	(**5.64**)
Quadratic	1.326	−13.005	**−10.971***
	(6.02)	(10.58)	(**5.89**)
Flexible Quad.	13.556	2.056	−1.275
	(12.77)	(10.90)	(4.90)
Cubic	6.076	−9.424	−7.527
	(7.84)	(8.36)	(4.75)
Flexible Cubic	20.794	−7.804	−3.210
	(20.99)	(12.47)	(6.63)
Quartic	9.208	−4.137	−4.038
	(8.61)	(9.26)	(4.46)
Flex Quartic	12.841	−10.863	−4.360
	(15.52)	(8.32)	(3.84)
N	127	124	124
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.

Table D.9: Impact of a black mayor on the number of motor vehicle thefts per 1,000 inhabitants - RD estimates

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Linear	**5.948*****	**3.272****	**3.899*****
	(**2.03**)	(**1.39**)	(**1.38**)
Flexible Linear	**5.847*****	**3.077****	**2.902****
	(**2.00**)	(**1.37**)	(**1.22**)
Quadratic	**5.860*****	**3.145****	**3.397*****
	(**1.99**)	(**1.37**)	(**1.21**)
Flexible Quad.	**5.458****	**3.388****	1.873
	(**2.31**)	(**1.53**)	(1.80)
Cubic	**5.643****	**3.479****	**3.823*****
	(**2.12**)	(**1.30**)	(**1.08**)
Flexible Cubic	**5.682***	**3.192***	0.600
	(**2.91**)	(**1.81**)	(2.42)
Quartic	**5.864****	**3.331****	**2.828****
	(**2.24**)	(**1.53**)	(**1.38**)
Flex Quartic	**5.624****	**2.987***	**2.530***
	(**2.50**)	(**1.62**)	(**1.41**)
N	127	124	124
Controls	N	Y	Y
Year f.e.	N	Y	Y
State f.e.	N	Y	N
City f.e.	N	N	Y

Note: Significance at the 10% level is represented by *, at the 5% level by **, and at the 1% level by ***. Each entry reports the RD coefficients and std. errors relative to the election of a black mayor using different functional forms. Controls include city, mayoral characteristics, year and state or city fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at city level.