We are approximately 62 million of the electorate, blacks (pretos) and browns (pardos); therefore blacks (negros) in an electoral college of 125 million [people] are eligible to vote in the elections this Sunday. Since half the population self-declares [as black], the elections should represent for us an opportunity to make profound changes to revert the historical situation of disadvantage (my translation).

—Dojival Vieira, Afropress, January 10, 2006

Alckmin attacks Lula and looks for black (negro) votes.
—Maurício Savarese, Notícias UOL. August 20, 2006

Both Dojival Vieira and Maurício Savarese refer to the 2006 Brazilian presidential election and imply that an ethnic vote among Afro-Brazilians is taking place. Dojival Vieira urges the Afro-Brazilian electorate to realize their voting potential as a powerful voting bloc. In Notícias UOL, Maurício Savarese assumes that such a voting bloc exists. More intriguing are the racial and color categories that refer to Afro-Brazilians. Savarese, using the racial category negro, treats them as a group; yet Vieira uses the separate categories brown and black, which indicate that Afro-Brazilians are not a unified racial group. This begs the following questions. Do Afro-Brazilians vote as a racial bloc? Is there a raça negra (black race), and, if so, do they see themselves as a distinct racial group or as different groups separated by color? What are the political implications of self-identifying in different color groups?

My hypothesis is that Brazilians who self-identify as black will vote for black politicians more than those who claim lighter color categories. Although this seems intuitive, much of the earlier research has not shown differences in political behavior among Afro-Brazilians (Mainwaring et al. in Middlebrook 2000; Mainwaring and Scully 1995). It is likely that racially conscious Afro-Brazilians
will vote for black politicians because they believe these politicians will support policies that benefit Afro-Brazilians as a racial group. Because color can be manipulated in Brazil, Afro-Brazilians of all colors can choose the negro identity; however, I propose that only racially conscious Brazilians who embrace blackness will choose this identity. This consciousness will be manifested in their candidate preference.

In 2006, an original survey on racial identification, racial attitudes, and political opinion was conducted in Salvador and São Paulo, Brazil. Included in the survey was a question on voting. Respondents were asked if they voted for a black politician. In Salvador, 62 percent of respondents voted for a black politician in the past and 38 percent had not. In São Paulo, only 31 percent said they voted for a black politician and 69 percent had not. It is likely that the percentage of Afro-Brazilians who voted for a black politician in Salvador is almost double, compared to São Paulo because there is a higher percentage of Afro-Brazilians in Salvador. This means they have more opportunity to vote for Afro-Brazilian politicians. This is confirmed in my explanation of my findings.

**Historical Context**

Traditionally, Brazil was known as a racial democracy where color was not a salient political identity because of racial miscegenation. The Brazilian state did not impose an official policy of legal segregation against Afro-Brazilians, therefore mobilization efforts around racial issues were less likely. Despite no official segregation, Afro-Brazilians have mobilized around black identities because of social exclusion since the 1930s (Hanchard 1994). Many times Afro-Brazilian activists sought to create a more unified black identity, rather than identify in a range of color categories. Afro-Brazilian activists forged black identities that were inclusive of Afro-Brazilians of different colors. Despite these efforts, not all Afro-Brazilians were ready to claim such identities. In the late 1980s, black-movement activism gained saliency and discussions of racism became more public and were discussed at the national level. Moreover, beginning in 2001, affirmative action policies were enacted in Brazilian universities, and the policy was specifically aimed at Afro-Brazilians and economically disadvantaged students.

As the Brazilian state now recognizes Afro-Brazilians as a racial group, the question remains whether Afro-Brazilians identify as such. Can group identity be manifested in individual Afro-Brazilian’s color identification? Are there political implications when Afro-Brazilians identify as the color black (preto) or the racial category (negro)? Despite that Afro-Brazilians make up nearly half of the Brazilian population, they continue to be underrepresented in electoral politics. Is this simply the result of the common adage that blacks
do not vote for blacks (*negros não votam em negros*)? This chapter examines
the role that identifying as black—an identity strongly promoted by black ac-
tivists—plays in electing black politicians. Findings show that Afro-Brazilians
that identify as black (*preto* or *negro*) are more likely to vote for black politi-
cians than Afro-Brazilians that identify in other color categories. Below I give
a literature review of Brazilian politics and Brazilian racial politics. Most of
this literature is based on research conducted before the implementation of af-
firmative action in universities. It is arguable that Brazil’s changing racial dy-
namics, where claiming black identities are more beneficial than in the past,
has resulted in more Afro-Brazilians identifying as such. Considering these
changing racial dynamics is especially important when examining the possible
role that racial identities play on voting patterns in contemporary Brazil.

In the field of political science, there are three areas related to my research,
yet they do not speak to one another. I hope to contribute to understanding in
this area and to show how they are all connected. First, most research on Brazil
is on the transition from authoritarianism to democracy and democratization
(Ames 2002; Hagopian 1996), and political institutions (Mainwaring et al. in
Middlebrook 2000; Mainwaring and Scully 1995). This research does not focus
on the role Afro-Brazilians play as black-movement activists and as voting
 blocs. Furthermore, Mainwaring et al. (2000) do not find significant differences
in political opinion between white and Afro-Brazilians.

Second, key works that do examine race in Brazilian politics focus on
Afro-Brazilian mobilization, Afro-Brazilian politicians, or Afro-Brazilian racial
attitudes. Michael Hanchard (1994) successfully highlights the efforts of black-
movement activists from the 1930s to the late 1980s. He also examines the
role racial hegemony plays in preventing large-scale black mobilization. Ollie
Johnson’s (1998, 2006) research examines Afro-Brazilian representation in con-
gress and the impact of Afro-Brazilian politicians at the national level. Michael
Mitchell’s (1977) scholarly work examines racial attitudes of black-movement
activists and Afro-Brazilians affiliated with black-movement organizations.
While these scholars have made important contributions to the study of racial
politics in Brazil, they tend to focus on black-movement activists and Afro-
Brazilian politicians rather than the Afro-Brazilian electorate.

Third, Brazilian scholars have studied Brazilian voters and the role race
plays in politics. They all demonstrate the impact of race in Brazilian politics.
Amaury de Souza (1971) uses data from the 1960 presidential election to ex-
amine ethnic voting. He finds that Afro-Brazilians regardless of their class
level overwhelmingly supported the Brazilian Workers Party (PTB) compared
to white Brazilians. He attribute this to the fact that during Getulio Vargas’s
years in power, some Afro-Brazilians ascended socially and economically, thus
middle-class Afro-Brazilians continued to support the opposition party, to which
Vargas belonged. Poor Afro-Brazilians supported the PTB because it presented
itself as the party of the poor. Nonetheless, Souza finds no significant differences between white and Afro-Brazilian voters in terms of electoral participation and political interest.

Focusing only on Afro-Brazilian candidates and voters, Ana Valente (1986) examines the 1982 elections in São Paulo. Political parties such as the Democratic Labor Party (PDT), the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB), and the Workers Party (PT), all leftist parties, supported Afro-Brazilian candidates and were dedicated to minority issues. Black-movement activists encouraged Afro-Brazilians to vote for black candidates. Despite their desire for an ethnic vote, of the fifty-four Afro-Brazilian candidates running for office, only two were elected, and these two were not tied to the black movement and did not explicitly discuss racial issues. Valente recognizes that black-movement activists prematurely expected an ethnic vote. Similarly, Sales Augusto dos Santos (2000) examines Afro-Brazilian federal deputies’ platforms when running for office. Most of them did not focus on racial issues because they thought this would isolate voters. This indicates that they did not think an ethnic vote could elect them to office.

In contrast to the 1982 São Paulo elections, where only two Afro-Brazilians were elected, Cloves Oliveira (1997) finds that a substantial number of Afro-Brazilian candidates were elected in Salvador (Bahia). For example, he finds an increase in the number of Afro-Brazilians elected to the city council from 1988 to 1992. Much of the increase was due to the number of council members from working-class backgrounds. Oliveira believes that a change in political recruitment by political parties also aided in this increase.

Afro-Brazilians elected to the city council tend to come from working-class backgrounds compared to white Brazilians who tend to come from upper- and middle-income backgrounds.

Soares and Silva (1987) examine Rio de Janeiro’s 1982 election of Leonel Brizola. Although their focus is on the effects of urbanization, social class, and party organization on the Brizola vote in various municipalities, they are also interested in the role of race. They find that the higher the proportion of non-whites, the more votes Brizola received. Those claiming a brown (*moreno*) identity tended to vote for Brizola more than whites and blacks. Afro-Brazilians who claim a brown identity may be light or dark-skinned. Telles (2004) believes that dark-skinned Afro-Brazilians who claim a *moreno* identity are expressing a form of whitening and that an ambiguous identity allows people who may not be able to call themselves white to avoid stigmatized nonwhite categories (Telles 2004: 98). Soares and Silva propose three possible reasons that blacks did not support Brizola as much as browns. One is that Brizola made an explicit appeal for *socialismo moreno* to attract Afro-Brazilian voters; however it is possible that he isolated black voters as the appeal was for *moreno* socialism and not for black socialism. Second, most blacks live outside the Rio metropolitan area, where the party’s organization was not very strong. Third, illiteracy
could have played a role in voter access, and blacks have the highest illiteracy rate of all color groups.

Cloves Oliveira (2007) has conducted the most comprehensive and outstanding scholarly work that examines the role of the media on the election campaigns of Benedita da Silva of Rio de Janeiro and Celso Pitta from São Paulo. Silva ran for mayor in 1992 and lost. Pitta ran for mayor in 1996 and won. They are both Afro-Brazilian, however Silva is known for addressing race, gender, and class issues and is affiliated with the PT, a progressive political party. Pitta, in general, avoided addressing racial issues and was from a conservative political party; the Brazilian Progressive Party (PPB). It is clear that race played an important role in how the media depicted the two. This study also examines how implicit and explicit racial cues were used by a variety of candidates to galvanize support from Afro-Brazilians. This work is important in establishing the role of race in Brazilian electoral politics.

In sum, my research will add to three areas of research, which include democratization, Afro-Brazilian mobilization and underrepresentation in politics, and the role of race in electoral politics. Race plays a role in electoral politics, yet it is unclear what role it plays in political preferences of Afro-Brazilian voters. The general theme in previous literature is that there are no differences in political opinion between white Brazilians and Afro-Brazilians. Some scholars give evidence of Afro-Brazilian ethnic voting, while others do not. Nevertheless, electing Afro-Brazilian candidates to office continues to be a challenge. In addition, considering Santos’s (2000) interviews, it appears that some Afro-Brazilian politicians do not believe they can be elected with an ethnic vote.

**Afro-Brazilian Voting**

There is little current available academic literature on voting patterns of Afro-Brazilians. Considering the last ten years, it is possible that Afro-Brazilian voting may be more solidified than in previous decades. Afro-Brazilians overwhelmingly voted for President Luis Inácio “Lula” da Silva. Silva was first elected in 2002 and reelected in 2006. He is Brazil’s first president elected from the PT, the leftist political party. Many journalistic accounts of Lula’s candidacy referred to a “black” vote indicating that, in fact, ethnic voting does exist in Brazil. This is so, despite that thirty years before no one would have thought this possible and even scholarly research found little evidence of a black vote. Some Afro-Brazilian politicians today rely on a black vote, although most do not (Mitchell 2009). An example is Janete Pietá, a current Afro-Brazilian federal deputy, who claims that most of her voter support came from Afro-Brazilians.

With the recent election of US President Barack Obama, the first African-American president, it has been interesting to note how many Afro-Brazilians
in informal conversations, quickly claim that Brazil experienced a similar phenomenon with Lula’s election. Some compared Lula and Obama as two people who experienced economic hardships. Lula is from Brazil’s poor northeastern region and Obama is an African American whose family sometimes struggled financially. Others simply made the claim that Lula is not white, is racially mixed, or in some cases claimed he is black. The point is that Afro-Brazilians identified with Lula because of his class, or, in some cases, his perceived racial background. Some politicians have gained support from Afro-Brazilian voters based on their class or ambiguous racial identity. What is the profile of Afro-Brazilians who vote based upon race? Considering that mainstream media believes that ethnic voting among Afro-Brazilians occurs, it is necessary to examine the saliency of identity in voting.

This study focuses on the cities of Salvador and São Paulo. Salvador is located in the northeast of Brazil, which a poorer region, while São Paulo is located in the south, which is wealthier. Salvador is nearly 70 percent people of African descent, while São Paulo is nearly 30 percent Afro-Brazilian. The two cities are interesting sites of comparison as Salvador is often referred to as the cradle of Afro-Brazilian culture, while much black-movement activity has taken place in São Paulo.

Survey Data

I use original survey data collected in 2006. Upon recommendation of professors at the Federal University of Bahia and the University of São Paulo, who are experienced in survey research, I chose the neighborhoods Federação, Peri Peri, and Itapoãn in Salvador, Bahia. These neighborhoods are socio-economically heterogeneous and have a substantial percentage of Afro-Brazilians. Some of the campus of the Federal University of Bahia is located in Federação, which is a prestigious public university and has middle-class households in the neighborhood, but also there are low-income households. Itapoãn is also socio-economically diverse, but has a large proportion of low-income households. Peri Peri is located in the periphery and is considered a suburb because it is located farther away from the center of the city. It is a low-income neighborhood. In addition, these neighborhoods were selected because it is relatively easy to find people of African descent.

In São Paulo, the neighborhoods chosen were Cidade Tiradentes, Casa Verde, Brasilândia, Campo Limpo, and Capão Redondo. Cidade Tiradentes is a low-income neighborhood that is located in the far east of São Paulo. Cidade Tiradentes has a number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) including hip hop organizations that attract youth in the community. Casa Verde is in the northeast of São Paulo and is mostly middle class. Campo Limpo is located in the southwest and is known for its large social divisions with favelas (shantytowns) located beside condominiums of middle- and upper-class households.
Capão Redondo is located in the south and is located on the periphery of the city. It is a low-income neighborhood. Maps of these neighborhoods were available at the Institute of Brazilian Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in São Paulo. After obtaining these maps, streets were randomly selected where university students conducted face-to-face interviews.

Interviewers used a skip number method, choosing every fifth house. If the street did not contain enough houses; they went to every third house. I asked interviewers to conduct interviews only with people of African descent. If they knocked on a door and believed the person was not of African descent, they asked if anyone of African descent lived in the household. An interviewer might have classified a potential respondent as white, but if the respondent identified herself as a person of African descent, the interview was conducted. This ensures that the respondent, rather than the interviewer, determined their color identification. Respondents were selected who were of voting age.

**Descriptive Results of Survey Sample**

Respondents were asked to identify their color in both open-ended and close-ended questions. In the open-ended question, they could identify themselves in a color category with no choices given. In the close-ended question, they were asked to choose a census color category. The 2000 census categories were white (*branco*), brown (*pardo*), black (*preto*), yellow (*amarelo*), and indigenous (*indígena*). Yellow denotes people of Asian descent.

In Salvador, 52 percent of the respondents were male and 48 percent female. In São Paulo, 57 percent were women and 43 percent men. In both cities, the average age was thirty-three years old. In Salvador, respondent ages ranged from seventeen to sixty-seven years old, and in São Paulo, ages ranged from sixteen to eighty-three.

In my surveys, in both cities, more Afro-Brazilians chose a brown color or racial category in the open-ended question than they were classified as such by the interviewers. In Salvador, interviewers classified 102 respondents as brown (*pardo*), whereas 121 respondents identified themselves as brown (*mulato, moreno, pardo, moreno claro, marrom*). In São Paulo, interviewers classified 119 respondents as brown, whereas 143 respondents identified themselves as brown (*mulato, moreno, pardo, moreno claro, moreno escuro, moreno jambo, marrom*). I consider *marrom, moreno,* and *pardo,* brown color categories. *Moreno claro* is light brown. *Moreno escuro* is dark brown. *Mulato* is mixed-race.

Table 3.1 shows the results in absolute numbers of respondents identifying in the open-ended and close-ended questions and how they were classified by the interviewer. In my analysis, I focus on respondents’ self-classification in the open-ended question.

Overall, the color and racial category most often claimed is black. Considering the open-ended color categories, the Afro-Brazilian sample in Salvador is
made up of 2 percent Afro-Brazilians who identified as white, 62 percent who identified as black (*preto*, *negro*, *negão*), and 36 percent who claim a brown (*mulato*, *moreno*, *pardo*, *moreno claro*, *marrom*) identity. Considering the open-ended color categories in São Paulo, 6 percent Afro-Brazilians identify as white (*branco*), 47 percent identify as black (*preto*, *negro*, *negão*), 45 percent identify as brown (*mulato*, *moreno*, *pardo*, *moreno claro*, *moreno escuro*, *moreno jambo*, and *marrom*) and 2 percent identify as other. In both cities, the number of blacks (*pretos*) that interviewers classified exceeds the number of self-identified blacks (*pretos* and *negros*). In contrast, the number of self-identified browns exceeds the number of browns classified by interviewers. In Brazil, there is a tendency to identify as brown because it acknowledges racial mixture, which is part of its national identity. Findings in this study indicate that Afro-Brazilians who identify as brown have fundamentally different political behavior than those who identify as black. As stated earlier, in my analysis, I consider the respondents color identification in the open-ended color category because that is the category people freely choose as opposed to a census category. I note that these are the categories respondents chose for the survey, but in everyday life, color categories can literally change by the minute depending on a person’s social situation.

### Table 3.1 Self-Identification of Color by Afro-Brazilian Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Close-Ended (Census) Category</th>
<th>Open-Ended Color Category</th>
<th>Interviewer-Classified Census Color Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (<em>branco</em>) 12</td>
<td>White (<em>branco</em>) 8</td>
<td>White (<em>branco</em>) 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black (<em>preto</em>) 208</td>
<td>Black (<em>negro</em>, <em>negão</em>, <em>preto</em>) 210</td>
<td>Black (<em>preto</em>) 230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown (<em>pardo</em>) 104</td>
<td>Brown (<em>mulato</em>, <em>moreno</em>, <em>pardo</em>, <em>moreno claro</em>, <em>marrom</em>) 121</td>
<td>Brown (<em>pardo</em>) 102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other 6</td>
<td>Other 0</td>
<td>Other 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| White (*branco*) 21          | White (*branco*) 20       | White (*branco*) 4                          |
| Black (*preto*) 141          | Black (*negro*, *negão*, *preto*) 150 | Black (*preto*) 191                         |
| Brown (*pardo*) 131          | Brown (*mulato*, *moreno*, *pardo*, *moreno claro*, *moreno escuro*, *moreno jambo*, and *marrom*) 143 | Brown (*pardo*) 119                         |
| Other 0                      | Other 3                   | Other 3                                     |

Source: Mitchell 2006: original survey data.
Despite that in both cities 2000 census data show that most Afro-Brazilians identify as brown (pardo), in the survey sample most Afro-Brazilian respondents identify as black (negro or preto). Thus there is sample bias as the sample has a larger percentage of Afro-Brazilians claiming black identities than in the 2000 census. This is the result of the fact that the survey was carried out in neighborhoods where it is relatively easy to find Afro-Brazilian respondents and the fact that the census does not allow Afro-Brazilians to choose the negro racial category. The census only includes the color category preto, which usually refers to darker skinned Afro-Brazilians. Despite sample bias, the survey is a random sample of Afro-Brazilians and is useful for examining trends in Afro-Brazilian voting preferences.

Regression Analysis of Voting for a Black Politician

For each city, I ran a regression analysis of voting for a black candidate as the dependent variable and color identification, age, education, and political party as independent variables. I also ran a logistic regression to get predicted probabilities of voting for a black politician by self-identified color groups. Respondents were asked if they voted for a black (negro) politician and could choose yes or no. The respondents’ color identification is the color they identified as in the open-ended question. I did not include those who self-identified as indigenous, Afro-descendent, or Brazilian. I grouped colors and racial categories as follows: white (branco), mixed-race (mulato), light brown (moreno claro) brown (pardo, moreno, and marrom), dark brown (moreno escuro, moreno jambô), the racial-category black (negro and negão), and the color-category black (preto).

The educational levels are incomplete middle school, completed middle school, completed high school, precollege, and in college or completed college. The age categories are 16 to 25, 26 to 40, 41 to 54, and 55 or older. The political parties named by respondents are: the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB), the Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL), the Workers Party (PT), the Green Party (PV), the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), the Liberal Front Party (PFL), Progressive Party (PP), the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B), Democratic Labor Party (PDT), Brazilian Socialist Party (PSB), and the Liberal Party (PL). The regression model shows that in Salvador, age is statistically significant at the 99 percent confidence interval (see Table 3.2). In São Paulo, color, educational level, age, and political party are all statistically significant variables (see Table 3.3).

The first major finding is that color identification is statistically significant in São Paulo, but not in Salvador. In Salvador, only age is statistically significant. As age increases, the more likely it is that Afro-Brazilian respondents in Salvador voted for black politicians. I expected differences in color identification to play a larger role in Salvador, which has a higher percentage of Afro-Brazilians. In São Paulo, the Afro-Brazilian population only comprises 30 percent of the total population. In Salvador, Afro-Brazilians are nearly 70
percent of the population. Because of such a high percentage of Afro-Brazilians, I expected color differences among them to impact their voting preferences. I also expected the lower percentage of Afro-Brazilians in São Paulo to lead to more group identity so that color differences would not impact voting preferences. This was not the case.

The second major finding is that a higher percentage of Afro-Brazilians in Salvador voted for black politicians than in São Paulo. I ran a logistic regression to get the predicted probabilities of voting for a black politician by self-identified color groups. In Salvador, the predicted probability of all color groups that voted for a black politician is higher than in São Paulo (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2). I believe this is due to two reasons. First, Salvador is nearly 70 percent Afro-Brazilian and color categories are more flexible than in São Paulo. In Salvador, depending upon a person’s physical characteristics, their color identification can be darkened. Gilmar Santiago, who was director of the Municipal Department of Reparations in Salvador in 2004, identified several

### Table 3.2 Regression Analysis of Voting for a Black Politician in Salvador

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voted for a Black Politician</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.45***</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 205


*Notes:* *p < .10; **p < .05; ***p < .01.

### Table 3.3 Regression Analysis of Voting for a Black Politician in São Paulo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voted for a Black Politician</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.31***</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.55***</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.05***</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 211


*Notes:* ***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .10.
Figure 3.1 Predicted Probability of Voting for a Black Politician by Color and Race in Salvador

Figure 3.2 Predicted Probability of Voting for a Black Politician by Color and Race in São Paulo
politicians as negro because of their progressive views on racial policies. In contrast, because of the overwhelming percentage of whites in São Paulo, there is more of a black-white paradigm resulting in less room for a disjuncture between identifying whites and blacks. This is all to say that in Salvador, respondents could have said they voted for a negro politician, when in fact that politician did not identify as such.

Second, it is likely that a higher percentage of Afro-Brazilians run for political office in Salvador than in São Paulo. Unfortunately, I cannot compare recent data. To give an example of the fact that more Afro-Brazilians politicians run for local office in Salvador than São Paulo, I compare city council elections. The only readily available data I have are from Ana Valente’s study of São Paulo’s city council elections in 1982 and Cloves Oliveira’s 1992 data on city council elections in Salvador. Valente uses the term negro to refer to all Afro-Brazilian politicians. In her study, she administers questionnaires to twenty-five candidates for city council who she identifies (Valente 1986). Oliveira’s data show that 436 negros and 79 pardos ran for city council (Oliveira 1997).

It is clear that Oliveira’s data are more accurate than Valente’s. Nonetheless, I use both Oliveira’s 1992 data and Valente’s 1982 data to roughly access and compare the number of Afro-Brazilians running for city council. A total of 515 Afro-Brazilians ran for city council in Salvador in 1992, and approximately twenty-five ran in the 1982 São Paulo city council elections. This gives credence to the idea that Afro-Brazilians in Salvador have a higher chance of voting for a negro candidate than in São Paulo because more Afro-Brazilians run for office.

The third finding is that in both cities there is an increase in the predicted probabilities of voting for a black politician according to color; from light to dark (white to black). In São Paulo, there is a positive relationship between color identification and voting for a black politician, education and voting for a black politician, and age and voting for a black politician. In both cities, as color become darker, the more likely it is that respondents vote for black politicians. This is a noteworthy finding because it indicates that racial identification plays a role in political choice, such as voting for a black candidate. This substantiates my claim that racial identification has political implications. Despite negative stereotypes in society (Sheriff 2001; Twine 1998), some Afro-Brazilians identify as black. Embracing blackness may be the result of black-movement activism that valorizes blackness or racial policies such as affirmative action that encourage Afro-Brazilians to identify as black. Black-movement rhetoric valorizes blackness, thus counteracting negative associations with blackness. Black-movement organizations are involved in a number of activities from protest marches in São Paulo to promote affirmative action policies for blacks (negros), to carnival groups in Salvador, Bahia, such as Ilê Aiyê. The lyrics and clothing of Ilê Aiyê reflect black pride and encourage Afro-Brazilians to embrace blackness.
The two categories for black are analyzed separately because *preto* is a color category, while *negro* is not. Rather *negro* is a politically charged racial category that denotes black. The predicted probabilities of voting for a black politician by respondents that identify as *negro* is higher than those who claim the color categories white, mixed-race, light brown, brown, and dark brown. In Salvador, Afro-Brazilians who claim a black (*preto*) identity are 77 percent likely to vote for a black politician, those claiming a black (*negro*) identity are 72 percent likely, and the likelihood that an Afro-Brazilian claiming a white identity will vote for a black politician drops to 49 percent. This is a difference of 27 and 23 percentage points. In São Paulo, the likelihood of an Afro-Brazilian voting for a black politician who claims a *preto* identity is 38 percent. The likelihood for voting for a black candidate is 34 percent for those claiming a *negro* identity. This decreases to only 15 percent for Afro-Brazilians who self-identify as white. In São Paulo, Afro-Brazilians claiming black (*preto* or *negro*) identities are more than twice as likely than those claiming a white identity to vote for a black politician.

**Color Consciousness and Black Candidate Preference**

Holding educational level and political party constant, I find that an Afro-Brazilian in São Paulo who claims a white identity in the age category sixteen to twenty-five years of age is 7 percent likely to vote for a black politician. Nevertheless, an Afro-Brazilian claiming a black (*preto*) identity with the same characteristics is nearly three times as likely or 20 percent likely to vote for a black candidate. An Afro-Brazilian in Salvador, who claims a white identity in the age category sixteen to twenty-five years old is 32 percent likely to vote for a black politician, holding educational level and political party constant. In contrast, an Afro-Brazilian who identifies as black (*preto*) with the same characteristics is 60 percent likely to vote for a black politician. This shows the stark difference in the probabilities of voting for black politicians depending on the identified color of Afro-Brazilians.

**Political Party and Voting for a Black Politician**

In São Paulo, an Afro-Brazilian affiliated with the PT in the age range sixteen to twenty-five claiming a brown identity is 12 percent likely to vote for a black candidate compared to an Afro-Brazilian claiming a black (*preto*) identity, who is 21 percent likely to vote for a black candidate. Contrarily, in São Paulo, an Afro-Brazilian affiliated with the PFL, a conservative party, in the age range sixteen to twenty-five claiming a brown identity, is 7 percent likely to vote for a black candidate compared to an Afro-Brazilian claiming a black (*preto*) identity, who is 12 percent likely to vote for a black candidate. Although the trend that Afro-Brazilians identifying as darker colors remains, it is interesting to note
the decrease in voting for a black candidate comparing a liberal party, such as the PT, and a conservative party, the PFL. This is likely the result of the PT being a more racially inclusive party because of its support of racial policies. Nevertheless, conservative parties have been open to Afro-Brazilian politicians, and in the past, PFL had widespread support due to Antônio Carlos Magalhães.

**Education and Color**

To highlight the role of education, I hold age and political party constant and examine the role of education on those claiming black (*preto*) identities. In São Paulo, education is very significant, considering that an Afro-Brazilian claiming a black (*preto*) identity with the highest level of education is more than twice as likely to vote for a black politician than an Afro-Brazilian claiming a black identity with the lowest level of education. An Afro-Brazilian claiming a black (*preto*) identity with the highest level of education (in or completed college) is 62 percent likely to have voted for a black politician, compared to an Afro-Brazilian with the lowest level of education (incomplete middle school) who is only 25 percent likely to have voted for a black politician.\(^6\)

**Preto and Negro Voting**

The highest predicted probability of voting for a black politician in both cities is among *pretos*. As I pointed out earlier, *preto* is a color category that denotes the color black, rather than a racial category. Nonetheless, I believe it has political significance especially in a country where blackness is not valorized in the Brazilian media and daily life. In addition, Afro-Brazilians can willingly choose a nonblack category, and they often choose the brown category. I believe that *pretos* tend to be more racially conscious of their blackness than those claiming nonblack identities. For this reason, they are more likely to support black politicians than Afro-Brazilians that identify as other color categories. John Burdick’s (1998) ethnographic research gives evidence that *pretos* more so than *negros assumidos*, recalled personal experiences of racism. Burdick defines *negros assumidos* as those who later accepted a black identity but have not always identified as such. Unlike Burdick, I do not believe that Afro-Brazilians who claim the *preto* category see themselves doomed to choose that category. In their recognition of racism, they are conscious of their race, and rather than buy into the myth of racial democracy—that discrimination is simply because of their class—they genuinely believe it is also due to their color and actively choose a color category accordingly.

Although there are differences between *pretos* and *negros*, they are both black identities and should be understood as such when examining racial consciousness. Claiming a black identity is a powerful example of how race is politicized. These data point to the fact that in both Salvador and São Paulo,