

Black Republicans put most faith in US government

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A new study finds black Republicans are the most trusting of U.S. government.
Credit: Adam Fagen, Flickr

Black Republicans trust the United States government more than other political groups, finds a new study from the University of British Columbia, ahead of the mid-term U.S. elections to be held on November 4.

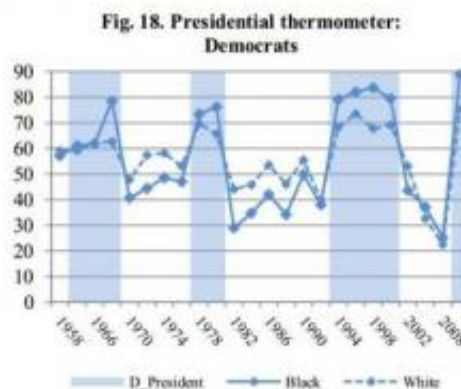
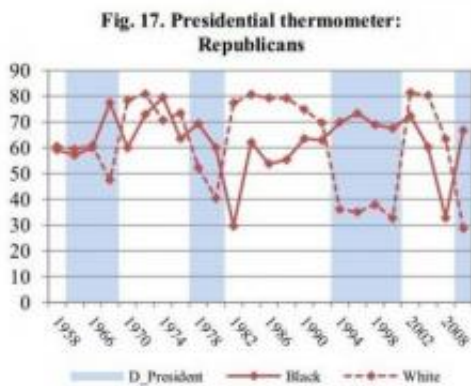
Using election data from 1958 – 2012, [the study](#) measures the role race plays in determining levels of government [trust](#) for black and white Americans. While both groups show similar levels of political trust, when party lines are factored in, black Republicans are revealed to be the most faithful.

"Being both black and Republican is seen by some as going against one's self interest," says study author and sociology professor Rima Wilkes. "It's likely that in order to identify as a black Republican, albeit a very small group, one must have an unusual confidence in the political system and its fairness, irrespective of who is in charge."

Previous studies have found democracies work best when citizens trust their government. According to the UBC study, Americans trusted the government the most in the 1960s when Lyndon Johnson was [president](#). Americans trusted the government the least in 1980, 1994 and 2008 when Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush were president.

"Ideally, people would trust the government no matter who is in power, but this study shows U.S. voters place a lot of faith on individual leaders," says Wilkes.

In addition to political trust, the study measured the likeability of each president from the past half-century based on race and party affiliation.



These graphs show the likeability of each president

The study found that black and white Democrats have liked Barack Obama more than any other president since 1958. Richard Nixon was the most liked president of black Republicans in 1974 and George W. Bush was the most liked president of white Republicans in 2002.

Background

The study, *We Trust in Government, Just not In Yours: Race, Partisanship, and Political Trust, 1958 – 2012*, appears in the journal, *Social Science Research*, and is available online [here](#). The print version will be published in early 2015.

The study did not measure trust or support levels of other races due to a lack of sufficient data.

The likeability of each president was determined by the data's presidential thermometer measure. Respondents were asked to rate presidents on a scale of 0 to 100 with 0 indicating feeling "cold" and 100 indicating feeling "warm."

The study also revealed:

- The number of white Democrats is on the decline, while the number of white Republicans is going up
- Black Democrats trust the [government](#) less than white Democrats when the sitting president is Republican

Provided by University of British Columbia

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