

Tasha S. Philpot. *Conservative but Not Republican: The Paradox of Party Identification and Ideology among African Americans.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2017. vii, 281 pp. (\$99.99 cloth).

An interesting political question arises from the fact that a large percentage of African-Americans are ideologically conservative, yet are less likely to self-identify as Republican. Tasha Philpot's book delves into this question utilizing a mixed-method approach incorporating qualitative, quantitative, and historical data. The animating question is "why doesn't ideology predict party identification and candidate support the same way among Blacks as it does for Whites?" (p. 5). Utilizing the liberal-conservative continuum, which offers "a comprehensive understanding of the structure and function of ideology in the American polity," she examines how citizens make sense of and apply ideological labels (p. 5). The thesis is that scholars must take into account African-Americans' historical experience in the United States to understand the connection between Blacks' ideology and partisan attachment. Since ideology has become wedded to policy domains, Philpot examines attitudes across six domains — social welfare, laissez-faire, race, military, religion, and morality — all of which may supersede ideology when choosing a party with which to identify. According to Philpot, Blacks' self-identification reflects their experience across the six policy domains.

In Part I, Philpot identifies and explain Blacks unique conceptualization of the terms *liberal* and *conservative*, and offers a theoretical discussion of the multidimensionality of the liberal-conservative continuum. She notes that not every domain is relevant to ideological identification, and the most salient policy domains are those in which African-Americans have had the most exposure and experience. Chapter 1 provides evidence that Blacks conceptualization of ideology and ideological identification is not due to low political information or a lack of political sophistication. It also provides evidence for the "multidimensional use of the terms liberal and conservative across the six policy areas" (p. 11). It then traces the use and evolution of these terms employing content analysis of coverage by *The New York Times* (1857-2007) and *The New York Amsterdam News* (1927-2007). She supplements these data with 81 (50.6% Black, 43.2% White) semi-structured qualitative interviews conducted in 2006 and 2010, and survey data, to demonstrate that the labels present in newspaper coverage correspond to those in public opinion data. Chapter 2 proposes a set of theoretical expectations regarding the relationship between the six policy areas and African-Americans ideological self-identification. In this chapter, Philpot challenges conventional wisdom indicating that attitudes about the role and size of government (social welfare) are the dividing line between Black liberals and conservatives. She also challenges literature suggesting that racial considerations are the crucial element in Blacks policy attitudes. Philpot, however, does state that race is important for its interaction with the other domains. Chapter 3 offers empirical tests of the predictors of ideological self-identification. The Post Midterm Election Study (2010, 2012) (N=325 Blacks, N=398 Whites), which contains an 18-item battery of ideology related questions, and the Religious Worldview Study (2012), were used to compare attitudes across years. Philpot demonstrates that social welfare is the key predictor of the six policy domains. It influences and is influenced by religion, race and military. Religion was

positively correlated with the moral dimension, but was negatively correlated with the social welfare dimension, demonstrating that religious conservatives should also be liberal on social welfare issues (p. 88). However, the use of a dataset with a larger Black sample size would add reliability to the results presented here. Also, the data used to outline partisanship and ideology is somewhat dated.

Part II examines the history and nature of Black group consciousness and explores its role in moderating Black ideological self-identification. Chapter 4 explores why racial group consciousness mediates ideological and party identification. In this discussion, Philpot argues that intragroup attitudinal differences concerning group identity, polar affect, polar power, individual vs. system blame, and in-group/out-group attitudes have implications for the development and strength of group consciousness. Philpot establishes that a strong group identity is correlated with strong group consciousness. Further, African-Americans who believe that structural inequality affects the group's ability to progress are more likely to favor social welfare policies designed to ameliorate structural inequities. Consequently, whether liberal or conservative, they are also more likely to identify as either Democrats or Independents. The results show that ideological self-identification "varies systematically by race. ...[and] the underlying determinants of Blacks placement on the liberal-conservative continuum are significantly different from that of Whites" (p. 125). The results highlight that when considering whether they are liberal or conservative, Blacks rely on beliefs about religion and social welfare, whereas Whites use beliefs about social welfare, morality, religion, and the proper role of government; additionally "the strength and direction of these relationships differ by race" (p. 125).

Chapter 5 illustrates that Black liberals and conservatives with low group consciousness are more likely to move from Democrat to Independent, and were more likely to support the Republican Party. Philpot indicates that Black people use ideological labels to compare themselves to each other, whereas Whites use them relative to the "extremes of the liberal-conservative spectrum" (p. 180). The author concludes that once "we take into account the moderating effect of group consciousness on ideological self-identification, we can see why there is not more variance in Black partisanship. [It is because] group consciousness supplants the expression of Black's ideological self-identification, thereby homogenizing party identification" (p. 182).

Lastly, Chapter 7 considers the implications of Blacks' ideological self-identification for the future of both Black politics and as future members of the GOP. Philpot highlights the main reason why more conservative Blacks are more likely to become Independents rather than Republicans — the GOP's continuing negative stance on race and racial policies. However, she also points out that the number of conservative Blacks open to recruitment by the GOP is limited.

Overall, this scholarly text is theoretically and empirically sound, thorough, and well organized. It includes a list of figures, tables, and an appendix organized by chapter containing questions, coding, demographic descriptive statistics, and the interview protocol. Political scientists, graduate students, and others interested in Black politics, history, political ideology, and partisanship will find the insights here useful. The coverage of the Black social, political and

economic experience in America would be useful to individuals uninformed about the Black experience. The author's use of mixed-methods is effective and the presentation of the data and results clearly tell the story in the data.

Leniece Titani-Smith
Jackson State University