Insurgency or Mainstream Politics: How Emotions Influence the Strategies Blacks Pursue to Reduce Racial Inequality

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Abstract
Although blacks are homogeneous in their support for racial equality, research shows that they are conflicted about the political strategies their group should adopt to advance its interest. At times, blacks rely on insurgency tactics to alleviate racial inequality while at other instances they depend on mainstream tactics. What is unclear from the literature are the conditions under which these differing strategies will matter in American politics. We contend that emotions play an important role in causing blacks to engage in one strategy over another. We expect that experiencing anger about race should cause black nationalists to be more supportive of insurgency tactics while feeling hopeful about race should enhance black Democrats’ support for mainstream tactics. To test our theory, we utilize a lab experiment and a national survey experiment. The findings show that feeling angry about race increases support for insurgency politics among black nationalists. We also find that feeling hopeful about race increases support for mainstream tactics among blacks that have a strong partisan identity.

Blacks have overwhelmingly supported Democratic candidates and liberal policies intending to reduce racial inequality (Dawson 1994; Hutchings and Valentino 2004). This homogeneity, however, doesn't necessarily mean blacks readily agree on the political strategies their group should adopt to advance its interest. Large ideological cleavages within the black
community exist, particularly relating to how blacks should approach redressing racial inequality (Dawson 2001; Gurin, Hatchett, and Jackson 1989; Harris-Lacewell 2004). Although the goal is racial equality, blacks have competing visions about the means with which to achieve this end. A quintessential example is the competing philosophies of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. – where one has advocated a "by any means necessary" approach while the other has insisted, "at the center of non-violence stands the principle of love." Throughout American history, blacks have considered protesting versus voting, separation versus integration, socialism versus capitalism, as alternative approaches to securing black rights. At times, one of these tactics (e.g. protesting) dominate the political landscape in the black community while at other moments the method is fairly quiescent. What is unclear in the literature are the conditions that lead blacks to pursue one strategy over the other. In our paper, we focus on the political circumstances causing blacks to choose either insurgency or mainstream tactics to solve the problems in the black community.

In the post-civil rights era, radical forms of black political action have taken a backseat to more conventional political activity such as electoral politics. Dawson (2011) states “that over roughly the last half century we have moved from an era of black insurgency in this country … to a period of black nihilism” (pg. viii). Tate (2010) concurs stating “[b]lacks have moved away from radical challenges to the political status quo toward inclusion, bipartisan electoral politics” (pg. 2). The dissipation of black radicalism is fairly well accepted among black politics scholars. For example, empirical evidence shows, from the 1970s-2000s, blacks are less supportive of policies (Tate 2010; Bobo et al. Year) and actions (Smith 2005; Dawson 2011) challenging the racial hierarchy. Scholars have offered various explanations for the decline in insurgency politics. Dawson (2001) attributes the decline in black radicalism to the breakdown in the black public sphere (e.g. black information networks). Meanwhile, Tate (2010) contends that political incorporation of blacks into the political process explains the deterioration of insurgency politics. While compelling, these explanations fail to account for the insurgency resurfacing in the black community as of late. The killing of Travon Martin and a number of recent high profile police shootings of unarmed black men has ignited a new wave of radical black activism across the country. Are these protests a sign of growing radicalism within the black community? If so, what explains its emergence after years of passive political activism?

We argue that how blacks feel about race plays an important role in which strategy they pursue to solve the problems in the their community. We contend that when blacks are made to feel angry about race, they will gravitate toward insurgency politics. Meanwhile, when they are made to feel hopeful about race, they are more likely to participate in mainstream politics. However, we do not suspect that these emotions affect all blacks equally. We know that blacks are a heterogeneous group with competing visions on how to resolve racial inequality. Our contention is that experiencing anger about race should be most effective among black nationalists because this ideology is used as a means to combat racial oppression in American society via non-conventional tactics (Dawson 2001; Ture and Hamilton 1967; Harris-Lacewell 2004). On the other hand, we suspect that experiencing hope about race should have the
strongest effect among black Democrats because they believe the political process is the best means at solving the problems in the black community.

Our findings have important implications for understanding how blacks’ support for each strategy waxes and wanes depending on circumstance. For instance, in 2008, a hopeful black electorate voted in unprecedented numbers for the Democratic presidential candidate, Barack Obama (Kinder and Dale-Riddle 2012). But several years later, we have witnessed on TV screens and social media thousands of angry blacks – via organizations such as black lives matter - protest the police killings of unarmed black men in places such as Ferguson, Missouri.¹

As these examples illustrate blacks’ feeling of hope changed to one of anger. This transformation isn’t new to the black community; in fact, Gurin and her colleagues (1989) make a similar observation stating “hope and betrayal [anger] provide the persisting context in which black politics take place” (pg. 7). We believe this constant emotional seesaw blacks’ experience helps us understand how the political strategies they pursue are ever changing.

**Anger and Black Nationalism**

When an oppressed group faces inequality, injustice, and unfairness, group members often react with anger towards their oppressor. Blacks’ feelings of anger about racial injustice have long been part of their experience in America (Grier and Cobbs 1968). For example, during the civil rights movement, Ture and Hamilton (1967) document that “each time black people in those cities saw Dr. Martin Luther King get slapped they became angry. When they saw little black girls bombed to death in a church and civil rights workers ambushed and murdered, they were angrier; and when nothing happened, they were steaming mad” (pg. 61). According to appraisal theories of emotion, people experience anger towards others when they feel threatened and are certain who is responsible or blameworthy for the offensive action. That is, they place blame outside of themselves (Lazarus 1991; Smith and Ellsworth 1985). Moreover, when people believe they are treated unfairly or unjust, they experience anger and take action against the offender (van Zomeren et al. 2004; Tausch et al. 2011; McAdams 1982). We argue that anger is an important emotion in how blacks respond to racial discrimination and unfair racial treatment. But black political thinking is diverse and not all African Americans will respond with the same level of anger to racial bias in American society. To some blacks the struggle against racial oppression is central to their racial identity, thus for these individuals, anger underlies their thinking about race. We contend that anger is strongly linked to a specific ideology among blacks – one that grew as a response to racial oppression and social and economic injustice – black nationalism.

Black nationalism is an ideology that originates from a fundamental belief that the political system is racially unfair (Ture and Hamilton 1967). In fact, Block (2011) finds that black nationalists have a strong sense of distrust and disillusionment about American society. They blame racism and racial exploitation for the problems in the black community. Dawson (2001) agrees stating black nationalists see “race … as the fundamental category for analyzing

¹ According to a 2015 NBC/SurveyMonkey/Esquire poll, a majority of blacks feel angry about the police violence directed at their group.
society, and America is seen as fundamentally racist” (pg. 21). Empirical evidence supports this claim. For example, Davis and Brown (2002) find that black nationalists are more likely to believe racism and racial unfairness exist to a greater extent in the United States than blacks that are not nationalists. As a consequence, to combat racism, black nationalism emphasizes racial solidarity, black autonomy, and black self-determination (Ture and Hamilton 1967; Dawson 2001; Harris-Lacewell 2004; Brown and Shaw 2002; Davis and Brown 2002). Black nationalists believe that blacks must unite to fight against the stain of racism that plagues their group. They also feel that blacks must have full control over the political, economical, and social decision-making of their communities. Moreover, they think that political coalitions with whites are only viable after both groups are on equal footing (Ture and Hamilton 1967). All in All, black nationalists’ primary goals are to combat racism, remove its psychological grip on blacks, and develop a strong sense of empowerment in the black community.

Given that black nationalists blame the marginalization of their group on a system of racial oppression and exploitation, we suspect that these appraisals are likely to spur anger. We argue that anger about the country’s racially unfair political system is strongly linked to black nationalism. But how might anger trigger nationalistic thinking among blacks? We rely on emotional state dependent theory to understand how this process might work (Bower 1981; Bower and Forgas 2001). Under this theory, Bower proposes a learning model in that information learned in one emotional state is more likely retrieved from memory when an individual is returned to that same emotional state. To test his theory, Bower (1981) had subjects record emotional events daily in a diary for a week. After a week, participants were randomly assigned to a pleasant or unpleasant mood induction and then asked to recall events from their diary. People assigned to the pleasant condition recalled more of their pleasant experiences while participants in the unpleasant condition recalled more of their unpleasant experiences. This finding demonstrates a mood dependent retrieval effect; subjects recall a greater amount of information that was emotionally congruent with the mood they were in during recall. We suspect a similar process occurs for how anger brings black nationalism to mind.

Our contention is that the angry experiences involving race play an important role in the development of black nationalism. That is, we suspect that this ideology is learned during angry inducing racial experiences and incidents, such as the beating of Rodney King (a black man) by several white police officers, and this learning process starts at a fairly young age. Over time, we suspect that the linkage between this type of anger and black nationalism becomes firmly established. As a result, later in life, we expect that experiencing anger in the context of race should activate this belief system from memory. With this activation, we predict that subsequent and relevant political actions should be more strongly predicted by the primed ideological dimension. In fact, scholars find that evoking anger activates white racial attitudes – thereby increasing their effect on racial (Banks and Valentino 2012) and immigration policy opinions (Banks 2016). Given that black nationalists believe radical means are more effective at

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2 Although the meaning of black nationalism varies over time and among scholars (Dawson 2001: Brown and Shaw 2002: Davis and Brown 2002; Carey 2013), they all agree that the unfair treatment blacks have experienced due to racism and discrimination is an important aspect of this belief system.
achieving racial equality (Ture and Hamilton 1967), we expect that experiencing anger about race will persuade them to be more supportive of these types of actions.

**Hope and Black Inclusion**

When people face despair, often times the only way to cope is with hope. How did 4 million enslaved blacks deal with the barbaric and brutal nature of slavery, they remained hopeful that the prospects of freedom would apply to them one day (Gates and Yacovone 2013). Although the United States Constitution was never intended to give freedom to blacks, it made some of them hopeful. Frederick Douglas, an abolitionist and escaped slave, was optimistic that working alongside whites and via the political system blacks could achieve freedom (Gurin et al. 1989). In fact, he states “I recognize the Republican Party as the sheet anchor of the colored man's political hopes and the ark of his safety.” Throughout American history, hope has guided blacks through despair in search of freedom, equality, and political inclusion. According to appraisal theories of emotion, hope is experienced when a person’s current circumstance is unsatisfactory, and he/she believes a positive outcome is possible (Lazarus 1991: Lazarus 1999). The future is also uncertain with hope; people don’t know if their goals or expectations will be met (Averill, Catlin, Chon 1990).

We argue that hope’s appraisals map onto blacks’ beliefs about being fully incorporated into American society. In other words, when blacks are hopeful about race, we contend that they are largely thinking about ideas of inclusion into the political system. In fact, Gurin and her colleagues (1989) agree – stating that blacks “hope for eventual inclusion as full citizens and influential members of the [political] parties” (pg. viii). We argue that these feelings of hope are strongly tied to their identification with the Democratic Party. For black Democrats, the political party represents inclusion into American society. For example, during the civil rights movement, Democratic Party elites, such as Lyndon B. Johnson, played an important role in the passage of the 1964 Civil Right Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act, which gave blacks a strong feeling of optimism about the future of race relations in the United States (Carmines and Stimson 1989). Several decades later, black Democrats had a strong feeling of hope attached to their partisan identity with the 2008 election of Barack Obama. According to a Pew Research Poll, black optimism grew substantially after his election. The survey finds that 53-percent of blacks in 2009, in comparison to 44-percent in 2007, think that the future of their group will be better. His election symbolized hope to many blacks, which was a central theme of his campaign (Ifill 2009). In fact, Finn and Glaser (2010) find that people who felt hopeful about Obama strongly supported him for president.

Our argument is that blacks acquire their partisan (Democratic) identity while feeling hopeful about race. In other words, we argue that blacks’ partisan identity is learned during hopeful racial experiences, such as the passage of civil rights legislation in the 1960s or a black

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3. Lee (2002) demonstrates that the pressure by black counter-public elites influenced partisan elites to take on the issue of civil rights.

4. In the time between civil rights legislation and Obama’s election to the white house, blacks have also felt optimistic about race because of the growing number of black Democrats elected to public office (Tate 1994).
Democrat getting elected to public office. We suspect that this link should be especially strong among blacks that strongly identify with the Democratic Party. However, we recognize that at times blacks have felt frustration and disappointment towards the Democratic Party because they believe their vote has been taken for granted by the party (Tate 1994; Frymer 1999). Perhaps feelings of hope have not been consistently linked to blacks’ attachment to the Democratic Party. Even so, we expect that Barack Obama securing the Democratic nomination for president has reinforced this link. As a result, we predict that experiencing hope in the context of race should activate blacks’ partisan (Democrat) identity. As a consequence, relevant political actions should be more strongly predicted by the primed predisposition. Since partisanship is a strong predictor of conventional means of participation, such as voting (Campbell et al. 1960), we expect that feeling hopeful about race should increase black Democrats’ willingness to take part in these type of actions.

Hypotheses

Our first hypothesis is that the experience of anger about race will increase black nationalists’ participation in insurgency politics (e.g. protesting or joining an organization to improve the status of blacks). That is, we expect that feeling angry about race should push black nationalists to participate in non-conventional political activities that challenge the racial hierarchy. However, empirical evidence demonstrates that anger mobilizes people to participate in such acts as voting or donating to a political campaign (Valentino et al. 2011). If so, why wouldn’t anger cause black nationalists to participate in conventional forms of participation? We predict that when blacks are angry about race, participating in the political system isn’t seen as the best option in achieving their goals. They believe the system treats their group unfairly; therefore, they seek other forms of participation that put pressure on American institutions to change. In fact, Gillion (2012) demonstrates that minority protest can shape congressional voting behavior.

But perhaps experiencing anger about race also causes blacks that have a strong racial identity to participate in insurgency politics. Beliefs about racial discrimination and exploitation are an important component of other group attitudes, such as linked fate (Dawson 1994). Black nationalists are not the only ones to think that the American political system treats them unfairly. As a result, we also examine whether the experience of anger about race will cause blacks that have a strong sense of linked fate to participate in insurgency politics.

Lastly, we hypothesize that feeling hopeful about race will increase black Democrats’ participation in mainstream politics (e.g. voting and donating to the Democratic National Committee). In other words, black Democrats feeling hopeful about race should be more likely to participate in the political process than similar Democrats that don’t feel the same way about race. They view this type of action as the best means of achieving racial equality. We utilize an experiment to test our hypotheses. Experiments allow us to determine the causal mechanism by which blacks’ racial and political attitudes shape their political behavior.

Study 1
Methods and Procedures

To test our hypotheses, we conducted an experiment at the Government and Politics Research Lab at the University of Maryland, College Park from April 13, 2013 to May 17, 2013. Our recruitment process included sending out an email to all of the black students, staff, and faculty members at the university asking them to participate in a current events study. We recruited 364 black participants to take wave 1, and 315 of these initial respondents returned to complete wave 2 (87% response rate). Thus, our sample size is 315 African Americans. We paid subjects $5 for participating in wave 1 and $10 for completing the second wave of the study. The sample is predominantly Democrat (85% Democratic, 12% Independent, 3% Republican), female (63%) and young adults (73% of the sample is 21 and under).

The study consists of a two-wave experimental design. This design choice is costly but has important advantages. Similar priming studies measure the primed dimension in the post-test because researchers fear the pretest measure may itself activate thoughts about the group, thus eliminating any experimental effects. However, measuring group attitudes in the post-test carries a different risk: that the emotional stimulus itself will lead to changes in the primed attitude dimension. The preferred design is to measure racial attitudes in a pre-test far enough in advance that they are unlikely to remain salient by the time the person is exposed to the stimulus in the second wave (Mendelberg 2008). We employ this distal pre-test measurement technique for measuring racial attitudes. Wave 1 measures the primed attitude dimensions (black nationalism, linked fate, and partisanship) along with socio-demographic variables. Several days later, respondents were re-contacted via e-mail to participate in wave 2. In the second wave, subjects were randomly assigned to several conditions (i.e. anger condition, hope condition, fear condition, and control condition).

Experimental Manipulation

For as long as blacks have sought racial equality in the United States, countless African American leaders have emerged as key public figures in the struggle for social and economic justice. Black leaders, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Jessie Jackson, have had a powerful effect on blacks’ political activity (Smith 1996). As a result, our experimental manipulation uses an elite-driven approach to understanding black political behavior. We focus on Barack Obama since he is considered a key opinion leader among blacks (Harris 2012). For example, blacks overwhelming supported him for president in 2008 and 2012 – giving him over 90% of their votes. His status provides us an opportunity to examine how black leaders can shape blacks’ political activity. Specifically, we investigate whether Obama’s emotional response to the problems in the black community affects the type of actions they pursue. Specifically, we focus on his response to the economic recession. In 2008, the United States faced the worst economic crisis since the 1930s Great Depression. Based on several economic indicators (e.g.

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5 The random assignment of subjects to conditions was successful: there were no significant differences across cells of the design in the proportion of socio-demographic or partisan variables.
unemployment, poverty, and rates of home foreclosures), blacks were more negatively impacted by the economic downturn than any other racial and ethnic group (McKenzie 2014).

But how did Obama emotionally respond to the economic crisis in the black community? To get a sense of his emotional reactions, we collected all of Obama’s speeches and interviews on the economic recession in which he mentioned African Americans. The American Presidency Project, at the University of California, Santa Barbara provided this information. It is an on-line database of speeches, interviews, party platforms, candidate remarks, statements of administration policy, and documents released by Office of the Press Secretary for every President of the United States. Our graduate student research assistant coded for whether Obama expressed several emotions - anger, fear, hope, and sadness when discussing the economic crisis. Figure 1 presents these results. The figure shows that anger (mentioned in 7% of speeches and interviews) is the least common emotion Obama expresses when discussing the economic crisis while mentioning blacks. On the other hand, his most frequent emotional response is hope (mentioned in 66% of speeches and interviews). Despite blacks being disproportionately affected by the economic recession, Obama’s emotional response was not one of anger but of hope.

Taking these results into consideration, our experimental manipulation is a Washington Post news story that varies Obama’s emotional response (anger, hope, fear and no emotion) to how the economic recession has impacted blacks. The news stories are in the appendix. The critical feature of our stimulus is keeping race constant and only manipulating information that triggers anger, fear, and hope. Table 1 shows the differences in emotional text between the experimental conditions. In the control condition, respondents read a news story that discusses how unemployment and home foreclosures have negatively impacted blacks. The news story also includes Obama saying he will work with Congress to fix the economic crisis. The goal of the control condition is to depict Obama as expressing no particular emotion about the economic crisis facing the black community. Meanwhile, Obama expressing anger is the intention of the anger condition. To depict Obama as angry, we include information (i.e. blame appraisals) in the text that has been shown to reflect someone being in an angry state (Lazarus 1991). For example, the text in the story states “[w]hen asked about the high unemployment rate in the black community, Obama expressed anger – stating he ‘blames Republicans in Congress for obstructing his policy to increase job opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable Americans.’” In the fear condition, we insert information (i.e. uncertainty appraisals) that triggers fear (Tiedens and Linton 2001). For instance, the article states “[w]hen asked about the high unemployment rate in the black community, Obama expressed fear – stating he ‘is uncertain if Republicans in Congress will support his policy to increase job opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable Americans.’” For the hope condition, we have Obama remaining positive about the future of his job bill; appraisals shown to generate a feeling of

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6 Obama gave 41 speeches and interviews on the economic recession in which he mentions blacks. The dates range from October 26, 2009 to December 4, 2013.

7 Not only did we alter the text of the news stories to generate different emotions, but we also vary the title of the articles.
hope (Smith and Ellsworth 1985). Specifically, the article states “\(\text{when asked about the high unemployment rate in the black community, Obama remained hopeful – stating he ‘believes it is possible to gain Republicans in Congress support for his policy to increase job opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable Americans.’}\)"

[Insert Table 1 About Here]

**Measures**

To measure black nationalism, we use the community nationalism scale – a four-item battery (Dawson 2001; Carey 2013; Brown and Shaw 2002). The items are the following: 1) Black people should shop in black-owned stores whenever possible; 2) Blacks should support the creation of all male public schools for black youth; 3) Blacks should have control over the government in mostly black communities; 4) Blacks should have control over the economy in mostly black communities (Mean=.52 S.D.=.22). The higher values correspond to stronger support for nationalism. We also measure blacks’ perceptions of linked fate with other blacks. The linked fate measure is based on a two-item skip pattern. The item is: “\(\text{do you think what happens generally to black people in this country will have something to do with what happens in your life?}\)” If respondent enters yes, then they answer “\(\text{will it affect you a lot, some or not very much?}\)” (Mean=.65 S.D.=.34) The higher value equals a strong sense of linked fate. Party identification is measured with the standard 7-point party identification scale (Mean=.77 S.D.=.19). This measure is captured with a three-item, skip pattern design: (1) “\(\text{generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, and Independent, or what?}\)” (2) [If R answers Rep or Dem] “\(\text{could you call yourself a strong Republican/Democrat or a not very strong Republican/Democrat?}\)” [3] [If R answers Independent] “\(\text{you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party? The highest value equals strong Democrat. All variables are recoded onto a 0-1 scale.}\)

Our insurgency dependent variables are strategies blacks have historically used to combat racism and discrimination in American society. Our measures are willingness to protest (Mean=.21 S.D. =.41) and join an organization that improves the status of blacks (Mean=.43 S.D.=.50). The protest item is “\(\text{In the next 12 months do you expect to attend a protest, march, or demonstration?}\)” The join an organization item is “\(\text{In the next 12 months do you expect to be a member of any organization working to improve the status of Black Americans.}\)” To capture mainstream forms of participation, our measures are likelihood of voting in the next presidential election (Mean =.87 S.D.=.25) and donating to the DNC (Mean=.08 S.D.=.28). The voting item is “\(\text{thinking about the next presidential election, If ‘1’ represents someone who will definitely not vote and ‘10’ represents someone who definitely will vote, where on this scale would you place yourself?}\)” The donation item is “\(\text{In the next 12 months do you expect to give money to the Democratic National Committee?}\)”

**Results**

8 These attitudinal measures are not strongly correlated. The correlation between black nationalism and linked fate is .28. Meanwhile, the correlation between black nationalism and partisanship is .05, and the correlation between linked fate and partisanship is .17.
First, we conducted a manipulation check to ensure that our news stories generated the emotion we intended. After reading the news story, we asked subjects to describe how the news story made them feel. The open-ended responses were coded based on whether an emotion was expressed (0=no emotion and 1=emotion). The results are presented in Figure 2. As you can see, subjects in the anger condition express significantly more anger (Mean = .42) than respondents in the control condition (Mean = .21). We also find that subjects in the anger condition express more anger than those in the fear condition (Mean = .22) and hope condition (Mean = .21). On the other hand, respondents in the hope condition do not express significantly more hope (Mean = .10) than those in the control condition (Mean = .09), anger condition (Mean = .11), or fear condition (Mean = .06). We find that respondents in the fear condition express significantly more fear (Mean = .20) than subjects in the other three conditions (Anger Mean = .06; Hope Mean = .06; Control Mean = .05). However, subjects in the fear condition express slightly more anger (Mean = .22) than fear (Mean = .20). The figure also indicates that some level of anger is expressed in the fear, hope, and control conditions. Thus, a news story on the economic crisis in the black community induces some level of anger among our respondents. These results present a conservative test of our anger hypothesis.

All in all, the findings from the manipulation check show that subjects in the anger condition feel significantly more anger than those in the other three conditions. They also expressed significantly more anger than any other emotion. We fail to generate more hope among respondents in the hope condition than subjects in the other three conditions. Moreover, we induce similar levels of anger and fear among subjects in the fear condition. Since we fail to independently induce hope and fear, we drop these conditions from our analysis. Thus, our sample size reduces to 155 blacks.

Although we can’t test our hope hypothesis, we can still examine the effect anger has on our three-attitudinal variables. Our first expectation is that the anger condition should increase black nationalists’ willingness to protest – relative to similar individuals in the control condition. We also examine whether anger has a similar effect on partisanship and linked fate. Since our protest measure is a dummy variable, our analysis is run using a probit regression model. We regressed Protest on the Anger Condition, and the interaction between the treatment condition and our three explanatory variables (Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate). The probit coefficient results are presented in column 1 of Table A1 in the appendix section.

Due to the complexity involved in interpreting interaction effects in non-linear models, we

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9 We ran a simple t-test to see if these differences are statistically significant. Relative to the control condition, the test shows that subjects in the anger condition (t=3.37, p ≤ .001) mention anger at a significantly higher rate.

10 The differences between the anger condition and the fear (t=3.00, p ≤ .01) and hope (t=2.97, p ≤ .01) conditions are statistically significant.

11 The differences between the fear condition and the control (t=3.30, p ≤ .001), anger (t=2.18, p ≤ .05), and hope (t=3.01, p ≤ .01) conditions are statistically significant.

12 The results are essentially the same when all four conditions are included in the analysis.
present the marginal effects of our treatment condition and the predicted probabilities (Kam and Franzese 2007; Ai and Norton 2003).

[Insert Figure 3A and 3B About Here]

Figure 3A displays the marginal effect of anger on protest across levels of black nationalism, partisanship, and linked fate. The figure shows a 95% confidence interval, in the dotted lines, around the marginal effect of anger in the solid black line. Looking at the figure, we see support for our first hypothesis. That is, as blacks are more nationalistic, anger increases their willingness to protest. The figure also shows that the effect of anger is statistically significant among blacks scoring at .56 on the black nationalism scale and higher. As we move to partisanship and linked fate, the figure shows that the marginal effect of anger is insignificant across the two scales. In other words, the anger condition does not cause partisanship or linked fate to be a stronger predictor of willingness to protest—relative to the control condition.

To see the substantive magnitude of these effects, we present the predicted probabilities in Figure 3B. The graph shows the probability of protesting— at varying levels of nationalism, partisanship, and linked fate— conditional on one’s emotional experience. The solid black line represents the control condition while the dotted line represents the anger condition. Looking at the control condition, we find about 7-percent of blacks scoring at the high end of the nationalism scale are willing to protest. On the other hand, in the anger condition, the figure shows that about 55-percent of blacks scoring high in nationalism are likely to protest. As a result, the anger condition has a substantial effect on black nationalists. It increases their willingness to protest by as much as 48-percentage points —relative to similar nationalists in the control condition. As we turn to partisanship and linked fate, we don’t see as much of a difference between the anger and control conditions. The figure also indicates that the individuals most willing to protest are angry black nationalists.

[Insert Figures 4A and 4B about Here]

Next we turn to blacks’ likelihood of joining an organization that helps to improve the status of African Americans. Figure 4A shows the marginal effect of anger on joining an organization across the three attitude dimensions. A similar pattern appears. That is, anger has a statistically significant effect on joining an organization among black nationalists (those scoring at about .6 of the scale and higher). Looking at the figure, however, we also find that anger has a significant effect among blacks least likely to support a nationalist ideology (those scoring at about .2 of the scale and lower). In fact, anger causes them to be less willing to join an organization. Perhaps these individuals feel organizations that uniquely help blacks do more harm than good. They may believe organizations helping everyone are best at solving the problems in the black community. Turning to partisanship, we find that anger increases black Republicans’ likelihood of joining an organization intending to improve the status of blacks.

Why might this be so? Black Republicans may be thinking of a conservative organization, such as the Black Conservative Leadership Network. Thus, anger might be pushing them to join this type of organization.

Figure 4B presents the converted predicted probabilities. For black nationalism, the figure shows that the anger slope is much steeper than the control slope. As we look more

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13 The probit regression coefficients are in column 2 of Table A1 in the appendix section.
closely, we see that 89-percent of blacks that score at the highest end of the nationalism scale, in the anger condition, are willing to join an organization that helps blacks. On the other hand, only 40-percent of similar individuals, in the control condition, are likely to join an organization. A large difference also occurs between the anger and control conditions among blacks at the low end of the nationalism scale. For example, anger reduces their willingness to join an organization by about 43-percentage points. The figure also shows that black Republicans, in the anger condition, are about 45-percentage points more likely to join an organization than similar individuals in the control condition. In terms of linked fate, not much of a difference appears between the anger and control conditions. Similar to protest, we find that angry black nationalists are the most likely group to join an organization intending to improve the status of blacks.

Now we turn to mainstream forms of participation – voting and donating to a political party. Figure 5 shows the results for voting.\textsuperscript{14} As you can see, anger doesn’t have a statistically significant effect on any of the attitudinal variables. We find no effect for donating to the DNC, in Figures 6A and 6B.\textsuperscript{15} That is, the effect of anger is fairly flat across the nationalism, partisanship, and linked fate scales. These results demonstrate that feeling angry about race doesn’t mobilize black nationalists to participate in conventional forms of politics. Instead, it propels them to participate in non-conventional forms that have historically challenged their status in American society.

The results from the experimental study largely support our anger hypothesis. We find that anger increases black nationalists’ willingness to protest and join an organization intended to improve the status of blacks. However, anger doesn’t mobilize black nationalists to participate in mainstream forms of politics. However, it is still unclear whether hope pushes black Democrats to participate in mainstream politics. As a result, in the next study, we use an emotion induction task. This technique has been shown to independently induce an emotion in respondents. From Study 1, it is also not completely clear whether anger causes blacks to participate in black radicalism. Based on our insurgency measures, we don’t know whether respondents are thinking about a radical group. For example, when deciding to join an organization, they could have been envisioning the National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP) and not the Nation of Islam (NOI). As a consequence, in the second study, we examine several types of organizations from radical to mainstream. We also investigate the effects emotions have on blacks’ policy positions. That is, does feeling angry about race cause black nationalists to be more supportive of a black policy agenda? Moreover, does feeling hopeful about race increase black Democrats’ support for an inclusive policy agenda? Because of these unanswered questions, we conduct another experiment. In this study, we test the following hypotheses: 1) whether the experience of anger about race will increase support for a black policy agenda among black nationalists; 2) whether the experience of hope about race will

\textsuperscript{14} The OLS regression coefficients are in column 3 of Table A1 in the appendix section.

\textsuperscript{15} The probit regression coefficients are in column 4 of Table A1 in the appendix section.
increase support for an inclusive policy agenda among black Democrats; 3) if the experience of anger about race will increase black nationalists’ participation in a black radical organization; 4) if the experience of hope about race will increase black Democrats’ participation in a mainstream political organization.

Study 2

Our second experiment was run through Qualtrics, an Internet survey company, from January 6 to January 29, 2015. The company uses a matching technique to draw its adult sample. Our respondents are matched to the national population on gender, age, income, and education. There is substantial variation on age (25-percent were 18-34; 46-percent 35-54; 29-percent were 55 and over), gender (58-percent female), partisanship (70-percent Democrat, 22-percent Independent, and 8-percent Republican), and education (22-percent high school degree or less; 37-percent some college; 40-percent college graduate). However, the sample is more likely to have a college degree than the national population. Our sample size is 444 blacks. Similar to the previous study, the experiment was conducted in two waves. We measured group and political attitudes (black nationalism, linked fate, and partisanship) a week prior to exposure to the emotion induction task. Several days later, Qualtrics re-contacted respondents to participate in wave 2. In the second wave, subjects were randomly assigned to three conditions (anger, hope, or control) and asked participation and policy opinion measures afterwards.

Our policy opinion measure is one item – “Would the problems of the black community be more effectively solved by programs that seek to help poor Americans (such as welfare) or by programs that seek to directly help African Americans (such as Affirmative Action).” If respondents answer “programs that seek to directly help blacks” (coded 1), then they are considered to support a black policy agenda. But if they respond with “programs that seek to help poor Americans” (coded 0), then they are considered to favor an inclusive policy agenda. Our participation measure is the following item – “Now we would like to provide you with $10 that you can use to make a small contribution to one of the organizations listed below. You can split the money between the organizations or you can give it all to one organization as long as your contribution totals $10. Upon completion of the study the researchers will make a donation in your name to each of the organizations you select.” The organizations available to choose from are: National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO); Nation of Islam (NOI); American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU); Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF); Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC). Respondents also had the option of not donating at all.

Experimental Manipulation

We had 671 respondents participate in wave 1. Our response rate for wave 2 was 66-percent. We use the same measures from Study 1 to capture the three-attitudinal variables. Again, the variables are not strongly correlated. The correlation between black nationalism and linked fate is .24 while the correlation between black nationalism and partisanship is .14. The correlation between linked fate and partisanship is a meager .09.

Mean=.33 S.D.=.47.

70 percent of respondents decided to donate while 30 percent of participants choose not to donate.
The experimental manipulation utilizes an induction technique common in psychological studies of emotion (Banks and Valentino 2012; Bower 1981; Lerner and Keltner 2001). Subjects are asked to recall and focus on things about race that lead them to experience a given emotion. For the treatment conditions, subjects are asked via the computer to respond to the following query.

Now we would like you to describe things about Race-Relations in the United States that make you feel ANGRY/HOPEFUL. It is okay if you don't remember all the details, just be specific about what exactly it is that makes you ANGRY/HOPEFUL and what it feels like to be ANGRY/HOPEFUL. Please describe the events that make you feel the MOST ANGRY/MOST HOPEFUL, these experiences could have occurred in the past or will happen in the future. If you can, write your description so that someone reading it might even feel ANGRY/HOPEFUL.”

The control condition asks subjects to write their thoughts about race-relations in the United States. As you can see, the control condition is intended to keep race constant while not arousing any particular emotion. Our test allows us to determine whether the emotion attached to race, and not race itself, is responsible for the changes we observe in blacks’ political activity. Response length to the emotional prompt was unrestricted, but subjects were told to take a few minutes to write down anything about race that made them feel the intended emotion.

We conducted a manipulation check to determine if the induction procedure operated as expected. Open-ended responses to the induction task were double-coded by two trained graduate students unaware of the hypotheses. They identified the emotions expressed in the responses. The results are presented in Figure 7. As expected, participants in the anger condition expressed significantly more anger (Mean=.70) than subjects in the control condition (Mean=.10) and hope condition (Mean=.06) but did not express more hope (Mean=.01) than those in the control condition (Mean=.06). They also expressed more anger than fear. Correspondingly, respondents in the hope condition expressed significantly more hope (Mean=.54) but not more anger (Mean=.06) or fear than subjects in the control condition. They also expressed more hope than those in the anger condition. These results indicate that the emotion induction task performs as intended. Altogether, participants discussed racial events in society that reflected the intended emotion.

**Results**

---

20 The prompt for the control condition states “Now we would like to know your thoughts about Race-Relations in the United States. These thoughts could be about experiences that have occurred in the past or will happen in the future.”

21 The scale is 0 = no emotion 1 = emotion.

22 We ran a t-test to see if these differences are statistically significant. Relative to the control condition, the test shows that subjects in the anger condition (t=12.91, p ≤ .001) mention anger at a significantly higher rate. They also mention anger at significant higher rate than subjects in the hope condition (t=13.25, p ≤ .001).

23 The differences between the hope condition and the control (t=10.59, p ≤ .001) and anger (t=10.59, p ≤ .001) conditions are statistically significant.
Our first expectation is that the anger condition should increase support for a black policy agenda among black nationalists – relative to comparable individuals in the control condition. We also expect that the hope condition should increase support for an inclusive policy agenda among black Democrats – relative to similar partisans in the control condition. To test these predictions, we regressed Racial Policy Agenda on emotion dummies (Anger Condition and Hope Condition), Black Nationalism, Linked Fate, and Partisanship, and the interactions between the treatment conditions and these attitudinal variables. Figure 8A visually shows the marginal effects of anger and hope and their corresponding 95% confidence intervals. Looking at black nationalists, we find that anger increases their support for a racial policy agenda. This anger effect is statistically significant among blacks scoring at the highest end of the nationalism scale. Turning to partisanship, the figure shows that the hope condition significantly pushes black Republicans, and not black Democrats, to be more supportive of an inclusive policy agenda than similar partisans in the control condition. Meanwhile, neither anger nor hope has a significant effect on linked fate. Figure 8B presents the predicted probabilities. The figure shows that blacks at the high end of the nationalism scale in the anger condition are about 25-percentage points more likely to support a black policy agenda than similar nationalists in the control condition. We also see that hope condition pushes black Republicans to be about 30-percentage points less willing to support a racial policy agenda than comparable partisans in the control condition. In other words, black Republicans are more likely to think an inclusive policy agenda is better than a racial policy agenda at solving the problems in the black community. Moreover, the figure shows that angry blacks nationalists are the strongest supporters of a black policy agenda.

Next we move to our participation measures. We created six participation measures based on how much subjects donated to the NOI, NAACP, CBCF, AFL-CIO, ACLU, and DCCC. Each variable ranges from 0-$10. We predict that black nationalists in the anger condition should donate more to the NOI than similar nationalists in the control condition. The findings for the NOI are in Figure 9A. The figure supports our expectation. We find that black nationalists in the anger condition give three times (90 cents) more to the NOI than similar nationalists in the control condition. This difference is statistically significant. Meanwhile, we don’t find that hope has a significant effect on black nationalism. The figure also shows that neither anger nor hope has a significant effect on partisanship or linked fate. Now we turn to the NAACP in Figure 9B. The figure shows that none of the emotional conditions have a significant effect on any of our attitudinal variables. In terms of the CBCF in Figure 9C, we see that the anger condition causes black nationalists to donate three times more ($1.30) to this organization than similar individuals in the control condition. Thus, these results demonstrate

24 The probit regression coefficients are in column 1 of Table A2 in the appendix.
25 The OLS regression coefficients from these models are in Table A2 in the appendix. Our analysis only includes those who decided to donate. We are interested in the choices respondents make under particular emotional states. When we include the full sample, our results are essentially the same. Furthermore, we don’t find that the anger condition or the hope condition significantly increases blacks’ willingness to donate than similar individuals in the control condition.
that anger not only causes black nationalists to give more to the black radical organization but also those that are racially exclusive.

"Insert Figures 9A, 9B, and 9C about Here"

Our next prediction is that black Democrats in the hope condition should donate more to mainstream organizations than similar partisans in the control condition. We expect the largest effect to occur for the DCCC. Looking at the AFL-CIO in Figure 10A, we don’t find that hope or anger has a significant effect on any of the attitudinal variables. A similar pattern of results appear in Figure 10B for the ACLU. As we turn to the DCCC in Figure 10C, we find support for our partisanship prediction. That is, we find that strongly identifying black Democrats in the hope condition give significantly more to the DCCC than similar partisans in the control condition. Specifically, they give about twice as much ($1 more) to the DCCC. The figure also indicates that blacks that score low in nationalism in the hope condition donate significantly more (3 times) to the DCCC than similar individuals in the control condition. Perhaps these individuals also value political inclusion. As a result, hope persuades them to participate more in mainstream political organizations.

"Insert Figures 10A, 10B, and 10C about Here"

In summary, Study 2’s findings largely corroborate the results from Study 1. We find that the anger condition pushes blacks that score high in nationalism to more strongly believe that a black policy agenda is best at solving the problems in the black community than similar nationalists in the control condition. The experimental findings also demonstrate that the anger condition causes black nationalists to donate more to the NOI and CBCF than similar individuals in the control condition. On the other hand, we find that hope affects more individuals than predicted. For example, we find that the hope condition causes black Republicans to more strongly think that an inclusive policy agenda is best at solving the problems in the black community than similar partisans in the control condition. Moreover, the results show that the hope condition pushes strongly identifying black Democrats to donate more to the DCCC than similar partisans in the control condition. We find a similar hope effect among blacks that score low in nationalism. Perhaps ideas of inclusion are not only central to black Democrats but also black Republicans and those that reject black nationalism.

Conclusion

Although blacks are homogeneous in their support for racial equality, they have competing visions about the best political path for their race. What is unclear in the literature are the circumstances that cause blacks to participate in insurgency politics rather than mainstream politics. Why at certain moments blacks take action to challenge the political system while at other instances they participate in the political process? To answer these questions, our paper turned to research on emotion. In this paper, we examined whether blacks’ feelings about race influenced the political strategies they pursued to improve the status of their group.

Across both experimental studies a consistent finding emerged. We find that experiencing anger about race causes black nationalists to participate more in insurgency
politics. Study 1 shows that the anger condition causes black nationalists to be more willing to protest and join an organization intending to improve the status of blacks than similar nationalists in the control condition. But angry black nationalists don’t participate in any type of organization that helps blacks. Study 2 reveals that anger causes them to participate more in radical and racially exclusive organizations. Indeed, they give about 3 times more to these organizations than similar nationalists in the control condition. Study 2 also shows that the anger condition causes black nationalists to more strongly believe that a black policy agenda is best at solving the problems in the black community than similar individuals in the control condition. Given that black nationalists think the political system is racially unfair, we find that feeling angry about race pushes them to be more supportive of policies and organizations that exclusively help blacks. It is also important to mention that black nationalism doesn’t have a significant effect on insurgency politics in the control condition. For example, in the control condition, black nationalists are not more likely to protest or donate to the NOI than blacks that are not nationalists. Thus, for black nationalists to participate in insurgency, anger must be present. We also find that feeling angry about race matters little in causing blacks that have a strong sense of linked fate to participate in insurgency politics. In addition, linked fate isn’t a significant predictor of insurgency in the control condition. Tate (1994) finds a similar effect where linked fate is a weak predictor of black participation.

Our experimental findings for hope are mixed. In Study 1, we failed to generate hope about race. And in Study 2, using the emotion induction task, we found it more difficult to induce hope as opposed to anger. One explanation could be that feeling hopeful about race has dissipated since Obama won the presidency in 2008. Since the election of Obama, blacks have experienced high levels of unemployment and home foreclosures. Moreover, the black-white wealth gap has also increased. A 2009 Pew study finds that the median wealth of white households has increased to twenty times that of black households. Even with the difficulty in generating hope about race, Study 2 shows that it increases blacks’ willingness to participate in mainstream politics. Specifically, we find that the hope condition pushes black Republicans to support an inclusive policy agenda. We also find that the hope condition causes strongly identifying black Democrats to donate 2 times more to the DCCC than similar partisans in the control condition. A similar hope effect emerges among blacks that score low in nationalism. Thus, blacks Democrats are not the only group that responds to hope. Black Republicans and those that reject nationalism may also value political inclusion, which explains why hope pushes them to participate more in conventional forms of politics.

Anger is of particular benefit for disadvantaged groups because it propels them to challenge their social status (van Zomeren et al. 2004). But perhaps some groups are not able to express anger about the economical, political, and social problems facing their community. Black elected officials that voice anger about unfair racial treatment may face a backlash from white voters (Harris 2012). For example, when President Barack Obama expressed anger about the arrest of Henry Louis Gates Jr., a renowned black Harvard professor, for allegedly breaking into his own home, he faced a strong backlash from the media for being anti-police. Even so, Study 2 reveals that anger can also have an effect under a bottom-up approach. Thus, for black insurgency to occur, an elite-driven approach is not necessary. We believe the black lives
matter movement is indicative of this process. They were able to stir up anger about the police killings of unarmed black men and use it as a force to shape the actions and opinions of black Americans.
References


Table 1: Experimental Manipulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control Condition</th>
<th>Anger Condition</th>
<th>Fear Condition</th>
<th>Hope Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Blacks Hit Hard in Recession, Obama Responds</td>
<td>Blacks Hit Hard in Recession, Obama Expresses Anger</td>
<td>Blacks Hit Hard in Recession, Obama Expresses Fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Text</td>
<td>No Text</td>
<td>When asked about the high unemployment rate in the black community, Obama expressed anger – stating he “blames Republicans in Congress for obstructing his policy to increase job opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable Americans.” The President looking upset stated “job creation in the months to come is my top priority.”</td>
<td>When asked about the high unemployment rate in the black community, Obama expressed fear – stating he “is uncertain if Republicans in Congress will support his policy to increase job opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable Americans.” The President looking anxious stated “job creation in the months to come is my top priority.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Text</td>
<td>No Text</td>
<td>“It angers me when people are losing their house, job, and everything they worked for” said Obama.</td>
<td>“It worries me when people are losing their house, job, and everything they worked for” said Obama.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1: Percentage of Speeches and Interviews about the Economic Recession that includes African Americans where Obama Responds with an Emotion.
Figure 2: Study 1 Manipulation Check

![Bar chart showing manipulation check results for Anger, Fear, and Hope conditions.](image-url)
Figure 3A: The Marginal Effect of Anger on Willingness to Protest Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales

Figure 3B: Predicted Probability of Willingness to Protest Across Experimental Conditions and Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales
Figure 4A: The Marginal Effect of Anger on Willingness to Join Org. Improving Blacks Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales

Figure 4B: Predicted Probability of Willingness to Join Org. Improving Blacks Across Experimental Conditions and Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales
Figure 5: The Marginal Effect of Anger on Likelihood of Voting Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales
Figure 6A: The Marginal Effect of Anger on Donating to DNC Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales

Figure 6B: Predicted Probability of Donating to DNC Across Experimental Conditions and Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales
Figure 7: Study 2 Manipulation Check
Figure 8A: The Marginal Effect of Anger and Hope on Support for a Racial Policy Agenda across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales

Figure 8B: Predicted Probability Supporting a Racial Policy Agenda across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales
Figure 9A: Marginal Effect of Anger and Hope on Donating to NOI Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales

Figure 9B: Marginal Effect of Anger and Hope on Donating to NAACP Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales

Figure 9C: Marginal Effect of Anger and Hope on Donating to CBC Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales
Figure 10A: Marginal Effect of Anger and Hope on Donating to AFLCIO Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales

Figure 10B: Marginal Effect of Anger and Hope on Donating to ACLU Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales

Figure 10C: Marginal Effect of Anger and Hope on Donating to DCCC Across the Black Nationalism, Partisanship, and Linked Fate Scales
## Appendix Section

### Table A1: The Effect of the Anger Condition on Political Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Willingness to Protest</th>
<th>Willingness to Join Org. Improves Blacks</th>
<th>Likelihood of Voting</th>
<th>Donate to DNC</th>
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<td>(0.84)</td>
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<td>(1.29)</td>
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<td>(0.15)</td>
<td>(1.29)</td>
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<td>(0.91)</td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
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N = 126

*p < .1; ** p < .05; *** p < .01 (two-tailed test) Note: Columns 1, 2, and 4 entries are probit regression coefficients and standard errors are in parentheses. Column 3 entries are OLS regression coefficients.
Table A2: The Effect of the Experimental Condition on Racial Policy Agenda and Donation to Organizations

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Racial Policy Agenda</th>
<th>NOI</th>
<th>NAACP</th>
<th>CBC</th>
<th>AFLCIO</th>
<th>ACLU</th>
<th>DCCC</th>
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<td>(0.84)</td>
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N = 426, 297, 298, 297, 297, 298, 297

*p < .1; ** p < .05; *** p < .01 (two-tailed test) Note: Column 1 entries are probit regression coefficients and standard errors are in parentheses. Columns 2-7 entries are OLS regression coefficients and standard errors are in parentheses.
Experimental Manipulation

Anger Condition

The latest U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report shows that Black unemployment remains critically elevated and is a serious problem within the black community, according to several top economic analysts.

While overall unemployment fell slightly in February to 7.7 percent from 7.8 percent the month before, black unemployment did not follow the same course. The share of Black job seekers remained stagnant at 15.8 percent.

The economy did manage to create 66,000 jobs in February. This figure is slightly larger than the number of new workers who entered the workforce. Although February’s job market seemed bright, it left large shares of Black job seekers without jobs while also leaving other major groups of workers stranded as well, according to federal data.

President Obama promised civil rights leaders on Wednesday that he would push hard and work with Congress to address the high unemployment rate, particularly among the urban poor.

When asked about the high unemployment rate in the black community, Obama expressed anger – stating he blames Republicans in Congress for obstructing his policy to increase job opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable Americans. The President looking urgent stated “Job creation is the number one of my top priorities.”

Beyond the unemployment rate, there are other indicators of growing economic distress for Black households.

Since the recession, the picture is also grim for blacks on the housing front. Blacks disproportionately held subprime mortgages during the housing boom and many of them are now facing foreclosures.

Black families also saw a significant decline in wealth during the recession. Household wealth, also referred to as net worth, is made up of assets, like a house, a car, savings and stocks, minus debts, like mortgages, car loans and credit cards. A Pew Research study, which used data collected by the Census, found that the median wealth of Black households fell by 52 percent from 2005 to 2009.

“It angers me when people are losing their houses, job, and everything they worked for” said Obama.
Blacks Hit Hard in Recession, Obama Expresses Fear

By John J. Miller | Published: March 2, 2010

The latest U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report shows that Black unemployment remains critically elevated and is a serious problem within the black community, according to several top economic analysts.

While overall unemployment fell slightly in February to 7.7 percent from 7.8 percent the month before, Black unemployment did not follow the same course. The share of blacks seeking jobs but unable to find work remained stagnant at 13.4 percent.

The economy did manage to create 87,000 jobs in February. This figure is slightly larger than the number of new workers who entered the workforce. Although February’s job market seemed bright, it left large share of Black job seekers without jobs while also leaving other major groups of workers stranded as well, according to federal data.

President Obama promised civil rights leaders on Wednesday that he would push hard and work with Congress to address the high unemployment rate, particularly among the urban poor.

When asked about the high unemployment rate in the black community, Obama expressed fear – stating he “is uncertain if Republicans in Congress will support his policy to increase job opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable Americans.” The President looking anxious stated “Job creation in the months to come is my top priority.”

Beyond the unemployment rate, there are other indicators of growing economic distress for black households.

Since the recession, the picture is also grim for blacks on the housing front. Blacks disproportionately held subprime mortgages during the housing boom and many of them are now facing foreclosures.

Black families also saw a significant decline in wealth during the recession. Household wealth, also referred to as net worth, is made up of assets, like a home, a car, savings and stocks, minus debts, like mortgages, car loans and credit cards. A Pew Research study, which used data collected by the Census Bureau, found that the median wealth of Black households fell by 53 percent from 2005 to 2009.

“It worries me when people are losing their houses, job, and everything they worked for” said Obama.
Blacks Hit Hard in Recession, Obama Remains Hopeful

By John Smith | Published March 2, 3:44 PM

The latest U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report shows that Black unemployment remains critically elevated and is a serious problem within the black community, according to several top economic analysts.

While overall unemployment fell slightly in February to 7.7 percent from 7.8 percent the month before, black unemployment did not follow the same course. The share of blacks seeking jobs but unable to find work remained stagnant at 13.6 percent.

The economy did manage to create 68,000 jobs in February. This figure is slightly larger than the number of new workers who entered the workforce. Although February’s job market seemed bright, it left large shares of Black job seekers without jobs while also leaving other major groups of workers stranded as well, according to federal data.

President Obama promised civil rights leaders on Wednesday that he would push hard and work with Congress to address the high unemployment rate, particularly among the urban poor.

When asked about the high unemployment rate in the black community, Obama remained hopeful — stating he “believes it is possible to gain Republicans in Congress support for his policy to increase job opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable Americans.” The President looking hopeful stated “Job creation in the months to come is my top priority.”

Beyond the unemployment rate, there are other indicators of growing economic distress for black households.

Since the recession, the picture is also grim for blacks on the housing front. Blacks disproportionately hold subprime mortgages during the housing boom and many of them are now facing foreclosure.

Black families also saw a significant decline in wealth during the recession. Household wealth, also referred to as net worth, is made up of assets, like a house, a car, savings and stocks, minus debts, like mortgages, car loans and credit cards. A Pew Research study, which used data collected by the Census Bureau, found that the median wealth of Black households fell by 53 percent from 2006 to 2009.

“Although people are losing their house, job, and everything they worked for, I am still hopeful” said Obama.
Blacks Hit Hard in Recession, Obama Responds

By John Smith | Published March 21, 3:44 PM

The latest U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report shows that Black unemployment remains critically elevated and is a serious problem within the black community, according to several top economic analysts.

While overall unemployment fell slightly in February to 7.7 percent from 7.8 percent the month before, black unemployment did not follow the same course. The share of blacks seeking jobs but unable to find work remained stagnant at 13.4 percent.

The economy did manage to create 67,000 jobs in February. This figure is slightly larger than the number of new workers who entered the workforce. Although February’s job market seemed bright, it left large shares of black job seekers without jobs while also leaving other major groups of workers stranded as well, according to federal data.

President Obama promised civil rights leaders on Wednesday that he would push hard and work with Congress to address the high-unemployment rate, particularly among the urban poor.

Beyond the unemployment rates, there are other indicators of growing economic distress for black households.

Since the recession, the picture is also grim for blacks on the housing front. Blacks disproportionately held subprime mortgages during the housing boom and many of them are now facing foreclosures.

Black families also saw a significant decline in wealth during the recession. Household wealth, also referred to as net worth, is made up of assets, like a home, a car, savings and stocks, minus debts, like mortgages, car loans and credit cards. A Pew Research study, which used data collected by the Census Bureau, found that the median wealth of black households fell by 33 percent from 2005 to 2009.