

Policing Norms: Punishment and the Politics of Respectability Among Black Americans

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Political Science)
in the University of Michigan
2019

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To my mother,
For more than I could ever detail here

Acknowledgements

Wow. This has been an incredible journey, and I am so grateful for the love, support, and care that so many people have provided me over the years. This dissertation is mine, but it is also theirs. Like so many who look like me and who come from the places from which I have come, my success is not at all my own, but is shared among a community of other folks who, through struggle and sacrifice, made it possible for me to enjoy the blessings and privileges of this life.

As I write these acknowledgements from my desk at Stanford, it is not at all lost on me that I stand on the shoulders of my ancestors who could only dream that a Black kid from rural South Carolina would go on to be a professor at one of the best universities in the world. It is not at all lost on me that this is an unlikely outcome for a kid who grew up for a time in what some of my colleagues in the academy might call a broken home. Nor is it lost on me that so many, who are just as smart and capable as I, continue to toil in places of great brokenness, hoping to one day realize their own version of the American dream. It is on their behalf that I will work each day to pay forward what so many have provided me. It is, after all, the least I can do, for I am blessed beyond measure. My cup runs over. The saucer on which it sits overflows.

To be sure, it would prove a fool's errand to try and name every person who has affected my life in some meaningful way. How could anyone be expected to remember the name of every person who gave an encouraging word or who provided wise counsel at just the right moment? From grade school teachers to janitors to Uber drivers and groundskeepers, I am indebted to countless folk who poured into me along the way, who believed in me and my work, who saw in

me something I sometimes failed to see in myself. I have accepted that many of their names will not make it onto the pages of these acknowledgements, but I hope that wherever they are, they know that I am grateful to them, and will spend whatever time I have on this earth giving to others what they so freely gave to me—the courage to speak truth to power, the belief that I am good enough and that I belong in whatever room I find myself in, the responsibility to do the right thing even when it is not the popular thing to do, the duty to be a scholar in the tradition of those who used the tools of their training to make life better and more bearable for those who live at the margins of this society and who find themselves, as King said, “on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity.”

This is, as any set of acknowledgments is, an incomplete naming of those who have gotten me to this point in my life, but given how few opportunities we have to name those who have invested in us, I feel a special obligation to name as many in these pages as I can.

I want to begin by thanking my parents, Miranda and Morris Sparks, to whom I owe my everything. My mom has been my rock and my refuge. She and my dad have made sacrifices I am not even aware of to give me the life I have today, and for that I am eternally grateful. They, along with my sisters, Shailah Haynes and Quanetta Jefferson, keep me grounded and remind me that family matters more than any professional success I will ever have. They love me, even when I am difficult to love, and have given me more than they know.

I am blessed to have had a long time with my maternal grandparents and am so grateful for the love they both showed me over the years. My granddad left us a couple years ago, but I know that he is so proud of what I have accomplished. I owe my love of politics to him. I am lucky that my grandmother is still with us, and I am so proud to be her boy. Each time I see her, I know that she is proud of me, and that gives me just the energy I need to keep on keeping on.

And though I have spent little time in close proximity to my extended family and those from my community over the past decade or so, their phone calls, prayers, and support have helped me maintain my perspective. I am especially grateful to my Aunts Glendora Benjamin and Alberta Benjamin, my former pastor, Rev. Dr. Ella Busby, my cousin and friend, Annette Wheeler, and my childhood best friend, Corey Dixon.

I decided to become a political scientist during my time at the University of South Carolina and owe a special debt of gratitude to two individuals who had such a profound effect on me during this period of my life. Todd Shaw was my undergraduate advisor and a proud member of the Michigan Mafia. I learned a great deal from him about what it meant to do political science and am grateful that he introduced me both to the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute and to the idea of pursuing the PhD at the University of Michigan. Bobby Donaldson was not my formal mentor at South Carolina, but I had the great privilege of taking a course on African-American religion with him and was inspired daily by his lectures and his passion for teaching history. I am certain that I am a professor today because I got to witness what being a Black man in the academy looked like while hanging on to every word Todd Shaw and Bobby Donaldson spoke in their classrooms. Representation matters.

And speaking of representation, I am grateful for the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute, a pipeline program for underrepresented students interested in pursuing the PhD in political science. Special thanks to Paula McClain, Scott de Marchi, Candis Smith, Jessica Carew, Eugene Walton, Chris DeSante, Pat Horn, David Sparks, Doris Cross, and members of the 2010 RBSI cohort. I am lucky to be part of this amazing community.

I cannot imagine having pursued the PhD anywhere other than the University of Michigan and am grateful for the opportunities that were provided me in Ann Arbor to learn and

grow as a scholar and as an individual. In addition to members of my committee, several others taught me a great deal about how to exist (and thrive) in this business. In particular, I am grateful to have interacted with scholars like Pamela Brandwein, Nancy Burns, Sonya Dal Cin, Lisa Disch, Christian Davenport, Mai Hassan, John Jackson, Pauline Jones, Ken Kollman, Mika LaVaque-Manty, Skip Lupia, Greg Markus, Noah Nathan, Mara Ostfeld, Scott Page, Josh Pasek, Stuart Soroka, Nick Valentino, and Brian Weeks.

I am also very grateful for the administrative support I received, both in the Department of Political Science and in the Center for Political Studies where I hung out for several years. Special thanks to current and former staff members and administrators: Catherine Allen-West, Kathryn Cardenas, David Howell, Lori Maddix, Jeremy Mitchell, Barbara Opal, Patricia Preston, Nicole Rutherford, Kimberly Smith, Samantha Truchan, and Cornelius Wright.

I must also thank Garth Taylor for funding the Garth Taylor Fellowship at the Center for Political Studies. I used the money from this award to fund much of the research that is part of this dissertation. I am also grateful for the feedback I got on this work as I presented it at various conferences and job talks. Many aspects of the theory and the analyses were improved thanks to the feedback I received.

As one who is rarely short for words, I can hardly think of the appropriate words to describe how grateful I am to my dissertation committee. I am not a particularly easy student to advise, but these folks all handled this process like the champions they are.

Vince Hutchings is the best advisor a student could have. Though he had worked to recruit me to Michigan, I arrived with plans to study judicial decision making—something Vince does not study. I was so reluctant to study Black politics because I worried I would be pigeonholed as a scholar. Folks would never know how much I knew about political science if I studied

Black people, I lamented in one of our first serious conversations early in my time at Michigan. Vince, as he always does, listened to me. He heard me out. And without missing a beat, told me something that transformed my experience in graduate school. He told me that if I wanted to study Black people, that's what I should do. That's all I needed to hear, and I haven't stopped studying Black people since that day. Over the years, Vince has had the "joy" of reading through and listening to a lot of my bad, underdeveloped ideas. He's never lowered his standards, but has always made me feel like I belonged in the academy and that the work I do has value. Vince is the best person I know in this business and I will spend my career trying to be as hard working, as rigorous, as kind, and as generous a scholar and mentor as he. Like so many other political scientists, I owe my career to him.

Ted Brader got me excited about political psychology and his public opinion and political psychology classes quite literally changed the way I think about politics. Learning from Ted gave me the confidence to be a political psychologist, and I am grateful for all the time he's spent reading my work and talking to me about emotions. I am particularly grateful to Ted for acting like a co-chair of my dissertation without the privileges of being a co-chair (whatever those are). I owe Ted many glasses of wine and look forward to buying them.

I first met Rob Mickey at the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute's graduate school recruitment event where he was joined by Portia Hemphill, a Michigan grad student at the time. Rob not only played a key role in convincing me to go to Michigan, he remained a tireless advocate and friend throughout my time in the program. Rob typically undersells his contribution, so let me state it plainly here: To the extent that this work engages ideas beyond those typical of a Michigan behaviorist, you have Rob to thank.

When I arrived at Michigan, I couldn't believe that I could walk past Don Kinder's office on a daily basis. He was a legend, and I didn't know that they let grad students share the same space with legends. As a second-year in the program, my office happened to be right across the hall from Don's, and I would often sheepishly speak to him when I saw him. I was always impressed by Don's sense of humor and his ability to pick up on critical pieces of any project. At some point, I got the courage to schedule a meeting to chat with Don about some underdeveloped ideas I had about Black ideology. Don was kind enough to meet with me and took me seriously as a scholar. His willingness to engage with me meant more to me than he can appreciate. I am grateful for the robust conversations we have had over the years, the most robust of which took place at my defense. This project will be greatly improved thanks to his feedback.

Ali Earl is the outside member of my committee, but has been an integral part of my time at Michigan. I first met Ali when I took a course with her on attitudes in the psychology department. Some of my best friends are social psychologists, so I was eager to take a class with them and thought a class on attitudes would be useful for a guy studying public opinion and political behavior. Ali not only taught me a lot about attitudes, she supported my moonlighting as a social psychologist and has taught me more than anyone else has about the role stigma plays in the lives of the stigmatized. I am grateful for Ali's excellent scholarship, her feedback, and her amazing Health Attitudes and Influence Lab (and its brilliant students).

Speaking of labs, I am also thankful for the feedback I received over the years at the Interdisciplinary Workshop in American Politics, the Political Communications Working Group, the Center for Political Studies' weekly workshop, and the University of Michigan Decision Consortium. Thanks to the conveners and organizers who provided space for me to present my

work and engage the scholarship of others. These were some of my favorite spaces, and I miss them dearly.

At Michigan, I was lucky to be part of a badass group of political scientists of color and am so grateful for the community that PSOC provided over the years. Thank you to folks like Carolyn Barnes, LaShonda Brenson, Ashley Reid Brown, Chinbo Chong, Jenn Chudy, Kiela Crabtree, Marty Davidson, LaGina Gause, Portia Hemphill, Bai Linh Hoang, Steven Moore, Vanessa Cruz Nichols, Davin Phoenix, Alex Pineda, LaFleur Stephens-Dougan, Princess Williams, Nicole Yadon, and others for being part of that community for me.

In that same spirit, thanks to several others who helped me enjoy my time in the department, both intellectually and socially.

Here, I want to first thank some folks from my cohort: Chris Skovron, Dustin Gamza, Geoff Lorenz, Meredith Blank, and Brad Kent. Thanks for helping me survive the methods sequence and for being among my first intellectual sparring partners in graduate school. I am so proud of the success each of you have had and look forward to celebrating more milestones with you in the future. In particular, thanks to Chris for never leaving my side, even when we didn't realize how much we needed each other in this life.

In addition to these awesome people, I want to thank my brilliant and fun colleagues in political science who made my time in the department extra special. Special thanks to my collaborator and close friend, Fabian Neuner, and to my former housemates, Julia Kamin and Ben Lempert who are among the smartest people I have ever met. Several others warrant mention here, too. Richard Anderson, Adrian Arellano, Zev Berger, Nick Carney, Logan Casey, Erin Cikanek, Diana Greenwald, Andrew Feher, Ashley Jardina, Isaac Jenkins, Justin Jones, Kristyn Karl, Christina Kinane, Jac Lerner, James Newburg, Eitan Paul, Spencer Piston, Amy

Pond, Nico Ravinilla, Chris Sullivan, Timothy Ryan, Laura Seago, Josh Thorp, Jacob Walden, Carly Wayne, Alton Worthington, and Patrick Wu each made my time in the department intellectually and socially satisfying.

Regardless of where I am, I have one simple rule: find the good people and keep the good people close. I met a lot of good folks in Ann Arbor, and there are far too many of them to name here, but some people made such an impression on me I must write their names here: Trevor Bailey, Michael Berman, Kennan Budnik, Matt Ericson, Chris Frost, Briana Green, Sara Higgins, Sarah Huff, Michelle May-Curry, Danny Meyerend, Kate Naranjo, Ariana Orvell, Austen Park, Jeff Polidor, Jonah Rosenbaum, Ken Selander, Patrick Shirreff, Landon Slangerup, Seth Soderborg (and his awesome parents, Nathan and Sondra), Eric Schwartz, Josh Stern, Koji Takahashi, Steve Thompson, Ryan van Slyck, Andrew Walker, Jeff Zeman, and the good folks at Literati Coffee, Arcade Barbers, Sparrow Market, Ojen's, Spencer, and the Grotto. And to those whose names are not here, know that whether you grabbed a beer with me, workshopped ideas with me, came to parties I hosted at 316, or just hung out and gave me good energy, you kept me happy in Ann Arbor. Thanks for doing that.

And still there are people who were so crucial to my thriving in graduate school that I feel compelled to note their contribution here. They are indispensable parts of my life, and I love them more than they know.

Ian Jusell and Doug Remington have been in my corner for more than a decade now. We met when we were all students at the University of South Carolina, and regardless of what the stresses of life or work are, these guys always cheer me on. I am grateful for them and our brotherhood.

Jenn Chudy is one of the most thoughtful people I have ever met. She is kind and brilliant, and a model of what being a good scholar and teacher looks like. I have learned so much from her about how to be a better person and a better political scientist. She is one special Connecticut woman and I am so lucky to have her in my life.

Marc Levesque and Elizabeth Mann Levesque have been loyal friends to me over the years. They have celebrated my successes and have provided spaces of joy for me wherever they've been. I can't thank them enough for being there for me and making me so happy.

Daniel Drucker is an awesome friend and confidant. I have had some of my best conversations with him, and I look forward to a lifetime of continued dialogue about all things—the professional and the personal.

This project would simply not exist without Neil Lewis and the many conversations we had in the kitchen of 316. Neil's brilliance is unparalleled and his work ethic inspires me daily. I am proud to call him friend.

Few people have heard me talk about this project or any other aspect of my life more than Joe Bayer. I am so grateful to have spent so much time moving from coffee shop to coffee shop with him during our shared time in Ann Arbor. My life has been vastly improved by our friendship, and I would have thrown in the towel much sooner had it not been for Joe's constant support and belief in me.

Ben Mansfeld and I met far too late during my time in Ann Arbor, but we've spent the last several years making up for it. We share a love of good tunes and the finer things life has to offer. More than that, we share a set of values and beliefs that orient our perspectives and guide our movements in the world. He and Carly have become like family to me, and I am so happy they let me crash their Valentine's Day meals.

And what can I possibly say about Mike Hall and Izzy Gainsburg? Let me simply say this: I cannot imagine having done grad school without these two guys. Mike's amazing partner and my sister, Kate, likes to joke that Mike and I are soulmates. I don't think either of us disagrees. Izzy remains the coolest of the trifecta, though, and only he could pull off the crazy hair and outfits he dons so well. The three of us have had the best times together. We have danced ferociously in my living room, drunk more beer at the Grottz than we should admit, have talked endlessly about all manner of topics, and will one day own some pretty sweet property in Thompsonville, Michigan. We were—and remain—inseparable. They are my brothers and I love them without condition. Their partners are pretty badass, too, and I am grateful to Kate and Briana for sharing these dudes with me, and for being such great friends to me over the years. In particular, I am so grateful to Kate for always hyping me up, for teaching me such great life lessons, and for feeding me such incredible food.

This chapter of my life is now complete, but I am so grateful that regardless of where the road takes me, I have had the opportunity to spend this life with the best people. Completing this dissertation would not have been possible without their support and my Spotify premium account.

May the universe be kind to each of the folks mentioned here and to you, the reader, to whom I also owe many thanks.

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ABSTRACT

Parting company with much of the existing literature that examines White attitudes toward punitive social policies perceived to target Black Americans, this dissertation explores the conditions under which Blacks are willing to support these same policies. Bringing to bear insights from multiple disciplines, the dissertation examines the role that respectability—or a concern about in-group behavior and comportment—plays in affecting Black Americans’ willingness to support policies that have adverse consequences for members of their racial group. Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the dissertation and sets up the motivating puzzle that guides the remainder of the project. In Chapter 2, I more carefully define the politics of respectability and situate this work alongside existing scholarship in history, psychology, and political science. In this chapter, I also outline the theoretical framework that links the politics of respectability to punitiveness. In Chapter 3, I introduce a measure of respectability, the Respectability Politics Scale, and examine the distribution of the measure and its demographic, social, and psychological correlates. In Chapter 4, I examine the degree to which the Respectability Politics Scale provides explanatory leverage above and beyond existing constructs. Results indicate that respectability, as captured by the RPS, is strongly associated with Black attitudes toward a range of punitive outcomes, though results also suggest a need to further refine the measure developed in Chapter 3. Chapter 5 leverages a study conducted on Amazon’s Mechanical Turk that varies the racial identity of teenagers who create a disturbance in a movie theater. Analyses from this study help further inform our thinking about the role that emotional and instrumental consideration play in affecting individuals’ support for punishment that implicates members of the group. I find, for example, that Black respondents’ perceptions of costs for people like the teenagers corresponds with punishment when the teenagers are Black, but not when the teenagers are described as White. In the final chapter, I conclude by highlighting the findings of the dissertation and remarking on the importance of this work for advancing our understanding of the role of identity in our thinking about American politics and the politics of punishment, in particular.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In a 5-1 vote of its town council on July 5, 2016, Timmonsville, South Carolina—a majority Black town with a majority Black town council and a Black mayor—became the latest among several local municipalities across the country to pass an ordinance regulating the public presentation and dress of its residents. Alongside provisions prohibiting public nudity and the public sharing of pornographic material, provision D of Ordinance No. 543 made it illegal to “wear pants, trousers, or shorts such that the known undergarments are intentionally displayed/exposed to the public.” Although perhaps humorous on its face, this provision was backed by the full force of the law and the threat of financial and legal sanctions. Per the guidelines set forth in the ordinance, those violating any of its provisions would first receive an official warning. Repeat offenders would face a fine between \$100 and \$600.¹

The American Civil Liberties Union and other groups have derided so-called “sagging pants bans” as unnecessary and discriminatory, alleging that they target “a clothing style typically associated with young African-American males.”² Despite these criticisms, however, ordinances like the one passed in this small South Carolina town remain in municipal codes in towns and cities across the United States. And though they raise the ire of those worried about the disparate impact such regulations will have on the lives of Black Americans, they are implemented and maintained by a diverse array of supporters, including many from the community that stands to be most affected by their enforcement.

¹ <https://www.nbc26.com/news/national/timmonsville-south-carolina-outlaws-sagging-pants>

² <https://www.aclu.org/news/aclu-reminds-iberville-parish-clothing-protected-expression>

In fact, Black Americans have often adopted policy positions seemingly at odds with the interests of those who belong to their racial group. When President Bill Clinton signed into law the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, he did so with widespread Black support, even as the law promised to expand the federal death penalty and impose harsher penalties for a range of crimes that would disproportionately affect Black offenders.³ And when he ushered in restrictive welfare reform policies, promising to “end welfare as we know it,” he did so with Black people at his side—both literally and metaphorically—despite the clear message that “reform” largely meant curtailing benefits for the Black poor who were perceived as taking advantage of welfare policies (Gilens 1999). And in recent texts by Michael Fortner (2015) and James Forman, Jr. (2017), we are reminded that Black support for racialized punitive social policies, including support for harsh drug sentencing and tough-on-crime policies, predates and persists beyond the period of the 1990s and the tenure of a popular Democratic president. Without overstating the case, one cannot (or at least should not) consider America’s “system of racial and social control” without acknowledging the complexities of the Black attitudes that are both the product of, and help to maintain, such a system.⁴

Students of American politics do not need convincing that social identities matter in the structuring of attitudes toward various social policies. In particular, the canon is quite impressive in delineating the various factors that influence White public opinion regarding racialized punitive social policies. We know, for example, that many White Americans come to support harsh crime policies because of their negative attitudes toward Black people—the group they

³ According to data from the 1994 American National Election Study, 70 percent of Black respondents (n=202) reported that they favored the Clinton crime bill passed into law by the Congress.

⁴ For a more in-depth analysis of America’s “system of racial and social control,” see Michelle Alexander’s (2010) *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.

perceive will be appropriately and deservedly targeted by these policies' implementation (e.g. Alexander 2012; Hurwitz and Peffley 2005; Unnever, Cullen, and Jonson 2008; Weaver 2007). In the domain of redistributive policies, we know, too, that White support for restricting welfare benefits is predicated, at least in part, on a belief that the chief beneficiaries of a robust welfare system are the undeserving Black poor who sit around waiting on government checks that they will ultimately spend irresponsibly (e.g. H. E. Brown 2013; Gilens 1995, 1999; Hancock 2004).

But when it comes to making sense of Black support for the same punitive policies that bear disproportionately on members of their community, much of the scholarship on race and politics has seemingly adopted one of two positions. Scholars have decided, either that there is not much worth examining with respect to Black attitudes in this domain or that the theoretical and analytical frameworks used to examine White public opinion are sufficient to examine the opinions of those whose identities are most intimately connected to the policies we examine. Regarding the first point, let me assure the reader that the near uniformity of Black people's partisan and electoral choices belies the undeniable diversity within Black public opinion. The second point – that theoretical models designed for White Americans necessarily apply equally well to African Americans – is a more challenging point to engage and one I will return to in the next chapter where I lay out the theoretical argument of the dissertation in full. Nevertheless, let me indicate here that identities are complicated, messy things. It seems odd, both from a practical and theoretical standpoint, to expect that the immigrant's attitudes about immigration have the same structure as one whose identity is not at all implicated in our thinking about the issue.⁵ And

⁵ To be clear, I do not mean to suggest that Whiteness and White identity are not bound up in considerations of immigration (Jardina 2014). I intend, instead, to point out that the perceived targets of social policies likely have a different mix of factors that contribute to their public opinion, relative to those who are not in the target population.

so it likely is with respect to the racialized punitive policies that motivate this dissertation. It seems at least plausible that Black people come to think about punishment that implicates members of their social group with slightly different considerations than Whites, who see these policies as ones that largely target “those people over there.” The goal of this dissertation is to investigate this possibility.

That there is a penchant for punishment among some Black Americans ought not surprise us. Black elites have, for some time, endorsed the notion that members of the Black community should police their own and hold them to exacting standards of behavior. Before his fall from grace, comedian and actor Bill Cosby was invited to provide the keynote address at an event commemorating the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*. The tenor and tone of the speech was instructive. “It’s not what they’re doing to us. It’s what we’re not doing.” Cosby told the mostly Black audience.⁶ Citing high school dropout rates, incidences of teen pregnancy, missing Black fathers, and high levels of crime in predominantly Black cities – at levels that were likely exaggerated - Cosby argued that individual-level failings, rather than systemic or structural inequality, were primarily responsible for the status of life in contemporary Black America.⁷

⁶ A complete transcript of the speech can be found at https://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~schochet/101/Cosby_Speech.htm.

⁷ In what would become the most famous part of Cosby’s address, he scolded black people for being too sympathetic toward some within the community who were undeserving of their sympathy and deserving of reprimand instead. The speech would become known as the “Pound Cake Speech for this bit: “Looking at the incarcerated, these are not political criminals. These are people going around stealing Coca-Cola. People getting shot in the back of the head over a piece of pound cake! And then we all run out and are outraged. ‘The cops shouldn’t have shot him.’ What the hell was he doing with the pound cake in his hand?”

Don Lemon, a prominent Black host on CNN, sounded the same alarm following the shooting death of Trayvon Martin and the subsequent acquittal of George Zimmerman, the man responsible for his death. In a segment of his show called “No Talking Points,” Lemon encouraged Black people to “clean up your act,” arguing that Black people’s lives would be made better if they did five things: pulled up their pants, stopped using the n-word, respected where they lived, finished school, and took family planning seriously. Pleading with his audience, he closed the segment with the following statement:

Pay attention to and think about what has been presented in recent history as acceptable behavior. Pay close attention to the hip-hop and rap culture that many of you embrace. A culture that glorifies everything I just mentioned, thug and reprehensible behavior, a culture that is making a lot of people rich, just not you. And it’s not going to.⁸

Lemon and Cosby are not alone in turning their attention to the perceived behavioral shortcomings of Blacks as the principal explanation for racial inequality. In a commencement address to the graduating class of Morehouse College, a historically Black institution in Atlanta, Georgia, President Barack Obama adopted a similar tone with his audience, remarking, “We know that too many young men in our community continue to make bad choices.”⁹

The focus on Black behavior as a key component in understanding the condition of Black people in the U.S. was a consistent theme in speeches by Obama before Black audiences during his campaign for the presidency and throughout his tenure in the White House (Harris 2012). If Black people wanted better lives, Obama often argued, they needed to work harder, eat and

⁸ It is unclear whether Lemon would make these statements today. He has become, as the kids say, more woke in recent years.

⁹ A complete transcript of the speech can be found at <https://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2013/05/20/transcript-obamas-commencement-speech-at-morehouse-college/>.

parent better, invest more time and energy in education, and behave in ways that would lead to greater success for themselves and their communities.¹⁰ And despite criticisms from some members of the Black intelligentsia that these admonishments were irresponsible and out of touch with the history of racial inequality in the United States, those attending these addresses signaled their agreement throughout, often interrupting the president with applause and laughter.

Why, one might wonder, would Black Americans so consistently support policies that threaten to criminalize and punish members of their own community? For example, why do nearly 40 percent of Black Americans support the death penalty, despite the disproportionate effects it has on Black lives? How do we understand Black support for restrictive welfare policies, despite the clarity with which Black women, in particular, are cast as targets? And in contexts big and small, how do we understand motivations to hold in-group members to account? I argue that at least one of the answers to these questions lies in the general receptivity to the kinds of messages espoused publicly by Black elites and privately by many others—messages that highlight, critique, and attempt to correct the behavior of in-group members. Referred to as *the politics of respectability*, this collection of in-group directed concerns about behavior and comportment is familiar to many within and outside the academy, but to date has not been subjected to a rigorous, systematic treatment by social scientists, leaving open the question of whether, and to what extent, respectability matters in structuring Black public opinion. And before we can even begin to answer this important question, we must think critically about a set of first-order questions that examine both the roots and reach of respectability within the Black

¹⁰ It can be argued that a similar investment in the individual-level behavior as a determinant of outcomes motivated Obama to establish his My Brother's Keeper initiative, which has as a key feature a mentorship program that pairs minority youth with mentors to help them “stay on track.”

community. These are not, as I see them, questions that can be left solely to our friends in history and sociology, but are ones that must be considered by those of us interested in both the social and psychological components and manifestations of identity.

Respectability, as I will argue throughout, provides an opportunity to think about dynamics within stigmatized social groups that are too often sidelined or ignored in our examination of group members' attitudes and behaviors. In thinking carefully about why individuals may come to embrace the politics of respectability or feel motivated to punish in-group members, we are forced to consider a range of self-directed and group-based emotions like shame and embarrassment that may manifest as a function of one's fellow group member's behavior. To date, few political scientists have considered the role these emotions play in affecting political outcomes. And though there is a robust dialogue in comparative politics about in-group policing as a response to instrumental concerns pertaining to group status (see Fearon and Laitin 1996, for example), much less attention has been paid to these dynamics in the American politics canon, though members of stigmatized groups in the U.S. face similar concerns that group members' behaviors may pose a threat to the status or goals of the group. Here, I will focus my attention on Black people and the politics of respectability, but in doing so, hope to lay the foundation for thinking about how these concerns about behavior and comportment take hold in other stigmatized groups. Moreover, the theoretical work of the dissertation that investigates the roots of respectability and respectability's connection to punitive social policies provides a framework for thinking anew about identity and the varied, and sometimes nuanced, ways that identity matters in American politics and beyond.

The dissertation proceeds as follows: In Chapter 2 of *Policing Norms*, I discuss the existing literature as it pertains to respectability politics and in-group policing. Building on the

work of historians and social scientists, this chapter serves a critical role in helping clarify precisely what is meant by the politics of respectability and how we might consider it more broadly as a form of in-group policing that may extend beyond Black Americans. More than providing definitional clarity, Chapter 2 lays out the theoretical case for connecting the politics of respectability to punitive attitudes. Though this chapter is not intended to provide a full read of the historical record as it relates to the respectability, I engage with some of the pioneering work on the topic and build a theory of respectability that considers the psychological and instrumental considerations that may give rise to in-group policing among Blacks and those who belong to other stigmatized social groups.

Following this theoretical setup, Chapter 3 introduces the first measure of respectability, the Respectability Politics Scale (RPS), which affords us a level of empirical rigor currently absent in discussions of respectability's role in structuring the politics of Black Americans. Here, I discuss the measurement strategy used and walk the reader through my operationalization of the concept. The introduction of this novel measure provides us the first opportunity to examine the prevalence of respectability among Black Americans and to assess its demographic, social, and psychological correlates. Regarding the distribution of the measure, I find that a significant portion of Black Americans embrace the politics of respectability and that the measure corresponds with, but is distinct from, concepts like authoritarianism.

Chapter 4 examines the degree to which respectability corresponds with Black attitudes toward punitive social policies. Using a diverse national sample of Black Americans recruited by YouGov, the analyses presented here provide us the first evidence of a strong connection between respectability and Black attitudes toward a range of social policies—from support for sagging pants bans to support for restrictive policies that police the behavior of welfare

recipients. As further evidence of the unique role respectability plays in affecting Black public opinion toward these issues, the RPS maintains its predictive power, even alongside measures of authoritarianism, linked fate, identity centrality, and other more familiar constructs. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of additional findings that test the scope conditions of respectability, as measured by the RPS.

Chapter 5 of the dissertation presents the results of a recent study conducted that examines more carefully the considerations associated with in-group punishment versus out-group punishment among Black Americans. Using a novel survey experiment, I explore the influence of psychological and instrumental considerations on individuals' willingness to punish in-group members versus out-group members. Findings presented here and in the previous chapter help to further clarify the roots of in-group policing and the contextual factors that condition individuals' propensity to punish members of their social group.

I conclude the dissertation by discussing the implications of this work for our thinking about identity and politics more broadly. That is, what do we learn about the role of identity in American politics by focusing so squarely on Black people's willingness to act punitively toward in-group members? More than finalizing the discussion about respectability as a useful theoretical concept with interesting theoretical foundations, I spend some time discussing what this work means for our thinking about America's system of racial and social control. And by centering Black people in the study of punitive social policies in the U.S., this dissertation makes a significant contribution to scholarship across disciplines and subfields interested in better understanding the challenges and opportunities for reform in the criminal justice system and in other policy areas discussed herein. At base, the argument to which I will return throughout can be summarized in the following way: to understand the politics of punishment in the United

States, we must understand the politics of those who, in some ways, are most like, not just farthest away from, the punished. The aim of this dissertation is to do just that.

Chapter 2: On Respectability

I am not sure when it was that I first heard the word *respectability* or the phrase *the politics of respectability*, but having spent much of my upbringing in majority Black spaces, the elements of respectability were all around me. There were, my friends and I were told, appropriate and inappropriate ways to behave, better and worse ways to carry oneself, well-defined lines that we should not cross, under any circumstances. The insistence on proper behavior and comportment was not simply a matter of instruction—the result of some prudishness that was especially localized in my neighborhood, at my church, or in my home. This seemingly ever-present concern about behavior appeared connected to where Black folks found themselves on the social hierarchy, related to a history of subjugation and stigmatization and a sense among many members of the group that consequences for “bad” behavior were not simply meted out to individual Black people, but had implications for the whole. In listening to Black people around me talk about politics at the dinner table, in my neighborhood, and in family gatherings, I developed the distinct impression that the tenets of respectability were ever-present in individuals’ thinking about punishment, particularly when that punishment was perceived to implicate other Black people. In this chapter, I want to begin by situating the current project in the existing literature before laying out more formally a theoretical framework that connects the politics of respectability to attitudes about punishment among Black Americans. To start, I discuss some of the foundational work on respectability that inspires this dissertation and forms the foundation for much of the theoretical and empirical work detailed herein.

The *politics of respectability* was first introduced into our scholarly lexicon by historian Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham in her seminal work, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920*. Describing the role Black women played in the struggle for racial equality, Higginbotham characterizes the politics of respectability as a strategy employed to challenge the subordinate position Blacks occupied throughout much of the United States. As it related to the Black Baptist women's movement, Higginbotham notes that "the politics of respectability emphasized reform of individual behavior and attitudes both as a goal in itself and as strategy for reform of the entire structural system of American race relations" (1993, 187).

Those who adhered to the politics of respectability thought it important for group members "to counter racist images and structures" by adhering to "dominant society's norms of manners and morals" (Higginbotham 1993, 187), believing that if group members behaved better, they would be treated better by society. The politics of respectability, Higginbotham argues, did not eschew or ignore political aims, nor did it give in to a system of racial inequality and White supremacy. To the contrary, the politics of respectability was inherently political, providing adherents with what they believed to be a reliable opportunity to upend the racial order of the day.

Functioning in this way, the politics of respectability guided the thinking of women in the Black Baptist Church who insisted that other African-Americans behave in ways that would show them to be morally superior to Whites. Instead of responding angrily to insults from White Americans, for example, adherents of respectability insisted that other Blacks engage civilly. Such civil responses, they argued, would go a long way in countering negative portrayals of

Blacks often used to justify their subordination. Respectability, therefore, served as a kind of ideological positioning among some members of the Black community, centering the problem of racial inequality not simply in the hearts, minds, and systems of White America, but in the behaviors and predilections of Blacks. As such, the politics of respectability encouraged a view of the social world that saw the fate of Black people as being determined as much by their own behavior and comportment as by implicit or explicit discrimination from Whites. Moreover, we see in this description of respectability a sort of *quid pro quo* understanding of racial inequality—a sense that Blacks could persuade Whites to treat Black people better if Blacks behaved better, thus showing themselves worthy of equal treatment.

Working alongside this insistence on “respectable” behavior that valued “temperance, cleanliness of person and property, thrift, polite manners, and sexual purity” was a profound belief in self-help and the idea that Black workers, even and perhaps especially domestic workers, needed to be professionalized. Given the frequency with which these workers engaged White Americans, it was thought that they had as much an opportunity as any to influence the group’s image, and thus, needed to take extra care to carry themselves in a manner that was in keeping with the tenets of respectability. To train these workers in the ways of respectability, Nannie Helen Burroughs, working with the staff of the National Baptist Convention, founded The National Training School for Women and Girls. Describing the experience at the school, Higginbotham notes the following:

At six o’clock each morning students were inspected for personal cleanliness and neatness. They were ranked as critically on appearance and deportment as on course work, with attention being paid to body odor, hair, and clothing (1993, 216).

If a worker excelled in coursework at the school but did not live up to the standards set forth by the politics of respectability, she failed, for she was not simply being trained to be a better

domestic worker; she was being trained to be a model representative of the racial group. Her job was not simply to carry out domestic duties well. She was tasked with advancing the interests of the group by showing herself and, by proxy, other Blacks to be worthy of such advancement. When she failed on this score, she was punished, not only by the Whites for whom she worked, but by members of the group who insisted that she be a respectable Negro whose behavior would reflect positively on her, and perhaps equally important, reflect positively on the group as a whole.

This insistence on proper behavior and comportment evident in the politics of Black America throughout the 19th and 20th centuries featured prominently in the speeches and writings of many Black elites, including Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois who, despite disagreeing often, were united in their belief in the power of respectability to transform the lives of Black Americans (Gaines 2012; Harris 2012). Beyond these examples, we see the apparent influence of respectability across other periods of American history. Describing iconic photographs of Rosa Parks disseminated during the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Fackler (2016) reminds readers of civil rights leaders' reliance on the politics of respectability to advance their claims of equal treatment under the law. Parks was not, after all, the first woman to refuse to give up her seat to a White passenger. Other young women, including Claudette Colvin and Mary Louis Smith, had also refused requests to give up their seats in protest of the city's discriminatory practice. Colvin and Smith, however, "did not fulfill the strict requirements of bourgeois respectability: Colvin was unmarried and allegedly pregnant and Smith's home supposedly was not neat and her father not sober enough" (Fackler 2016, 273). This centering of respectability in the Civil Rights Movement, though perhaps advantageous to the Movement's overall goals, Fackler argues, further sidelined more stigmatized members of the group,

projecting an image of the community that failed to accurately reflect the complexity and humanity of the whole.

This concern about the power of respectability to forestall progress for certain members of the group is also central to arguments put forth in Cohen's (1999) *Boundaries of Blackness*, which considers the question of why, despite its disproportionate effect on Blacks, the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 1990s failed to mobilize the whole of the Black community. Though Cohen's theoretical work centers primarily on power relations among different members of the racial group, the framework she adopts is keenly aware of the potential for the politics of respectability to affect individuals' willingness to engage on behalf of more stigmatized group members. Discussing coverage of the AIDS crisis in Black newspapers and magazines, Cohen outlines three guiding principles underlying coverage of the crisis in these outlets, two of which are pertinent to the discussion here. First, there was "an extreme effort to portray the positive or mainstream characteristics of Black communities" and secondly, there existed "a social and conservative moralism with regard to behaviors seen as bringing shame or negating legitimate claims for equality and respect by most African Americans" (1999, 197–98). In other work, Cohen (1997) and other feminist and queer theorists (White 2001) remain critical of this insistence on good behavior, worrying that it undermines progress for the most vulnerable members of the group, thereby contributing to intragroup inequality.¹¹¹²

¹¹ White is particularly concerned with the ways that respectability restricts our considerations of the intersecting nature of various identities. For example, she, like Cohen, worries that respectability forecloses an engagement with the unique set of barriers faced by Black queer people. Because these Black people are perceived to have transgressed sets of norms, they are not included in the stories Black people tell about the racial group and the complexities of their experiences go underappreciated by other members of the group.

¹² Taking a slightly different analytic approach, Strolovitch finds that more marginalized members of social groups are sidelined in the provision of resources from various advocacy groups.

Consistent with this argument, Harris (2012, 2014), too, takes a critical view of Barack Obama’s reliance on the rhetoric of respectability and what it portends for the future of Black politics in an era of increased economic stagnation for Black Americans. The politics of respectability, Harris argues, adopts a neo-liberal perspective that shifts the blame from what Brown and Young (2016) call “ratchet institutions” to “ratchet” behavior. These institutions, as these scholars describe them, oppress and burden Black lives, but are absolved from responsibility as Black elites and other members of the Black community attend to and attempt to correct what they perceive to be behavioral deficiencies among other group members.¹³

As evidenced by the preceding discussion, respectability represents “a dominant framework” for understanding how Black Americans evaluate the behavior of other group members (C. J. Cohen 2004). As Cohen rightly notes, any careful reading of scholarship focused on the politics of Black Americans uncovers discussions of respectability’s role in “policing, sanitizing, and hiding the nonconformist and some would argue deviant behavior of certain members of African-American communities” (2004, 31). But despite, or perhaps because of, the perceived centrality of respectability in discussions of Black political and social life, scholars have yet to subject the concept to the kind of scientific scrutiny and scientific debate it deserves. To date, the politics of respectability has largely been treated as some underlying feature of Black politics—as so deeply engrained in the fabric of Black society, its effects so obvious, that systematic investigation is unnecessary.

¹³ Though not a central focus of this dissertation project, it is important to consider that the politics of respectability may intersect with and exacerbate a reliance on neo-liberal principles focused on self-reliance and individual self-help that often run counter to the collective goals of marginalized groups (Spence 2015).

To be sure, we learn a great deal from the work discussed so far in this chapter. In fact, I view the current project as building on the existing scholarship on respectability in such diverse fields as history, sociology, Black politics, and feminist studies. This project, however, adopts a somewhat different approach to the study of respectability and in-group policing. As I laid out in the previous chapter, I am concerned here not simply with the history of respectability, but with the way respectability works in the minds of individual Blacks. More specifically, this dissertation will investigate the psychological and social concerns that make some individuals more likely than others to engage in the kind of in-group policing respectability inspires. And importantly, this project seeks to understand and measure the implications of respectability for the maintenance of social policies that directly bear on the lives of marginalized communities.

By rigorously engaging the foundations of respectability, this dissertation provides us a unique opportunity to think about the sanctioning and policing of behavior within social groups more broadly. In this sense, the politics of respectability serves as both the appetizer and the main course. For those reading this to understand more fully the influence of respectability on the distribution of punitive attitudes within Black America, this dissertation has much to offer. If, however, one is less interested in the politics of Black Americans but is interested in the social and psychological foundations and likely consequences of in-group policing among those who belong to other stigmatized groups, there is much in the pages that follow that will resonate as well. Building more complete theoretical and analytical models of the social and political world means taking seriously the various features of individuals' lives that might give rise to the choices they make. And given the group-centric nature of our politics (see Brader, Valentino, and Suhay 2008; Huddy 2003; Nelson and Kinder 1996), it is only fitting that our discussion of

respectability and in-group policing among Blacks begin where it naturally should: the group and group identity itself.

Social Identity Theory and the Emotional Substrates of Respectability

As Tajfel and Turner note in their seminal work on social identity theory, social identities “provide their members with an identification of themselves in social terms [and] are to a very large extent relational and comparative: they define the individual as similar to or different from, as “better” or “worse” than, members of other groups” (Tajfel and Turner 1979, 40). Social identities, therefore, give us a sense of who we are and what our value is in the social world. To build an understanding of the politics of respectability consistent with this framework, let us first acknowledge that the category Black represents a salient social identity from which individuals derive some sense of who they are. That is, Blacks’ sense of self-worth and self-esteem are inextricably linked to their sense of belonging to this social group. As such, individuals are motivated to maintain a positive image of the group. The idea here is a simple one: when the group’s identity is devalued, the individual’s own sense of self may also be called into question.

In thinking about stigmatized social groups, such as African Americans, it is even more important to consider how individuals navigate these threats to their social identities, given the frequency with which members of such groups are forced to encounter negative beliefs, images, and thoughts about their social identities. In fact, psychologists Brenda Major and Laurie O’Brien (2005), in a review piece on “the psychology of stigma,” note the importance of thinking about “identity threat processes” as one of four key ways that “stigma affects the stigmatized” (pg. 396). In thinking about the way that stigmatized people interact within the social world, the authors write that we must consider “the extent to which stigma’s effects are mediated through [individuals’] understanding of how others view them, their interpretations of

social contexts, and their motives and goals [in that particular context]” (pg. 397). Relatedly, and consistent with the pillars of social identity theory that emphasize self-protective goals, Major and Obrien note that these concerns mostly manifest as “self-relevant motives (e.g. self-esteem protection)” and that these motives “shape [individuals’] emotions, beliefs and behavior” (pg. 397). To study stigmatized people, these authors argue, is to concern oneself with how individuals respond to instances in which the relevant identity is put under threat.

The concept of threat is not a novel concept for political scientists. Much of our thinking about threat to date, however, focuses on individuals’ responses to perceived status or material threats brought about by those who fall outside one’s social group. In this body of work, threat is virtually synonymous with competition, as in Bobo and Hutchings’ (1996) examination of the effect of perceived group competition for material resources on the racial attitudes of individuals in Los Angeles. Consistent with this conceptualization of threat, other work in the social sciences has considered the threatening nature of changing demographics on White racial attitudes, mostly through the lens of thinking about White concerns about losing their status to racial and ethnic minorities (Key and Heard 1949; Blalock 1967; Jardina 2014). Though this work provides important insights into the workings of race in American politics, in building a portable theory of in-group policing and respectability, I am less interested here in individuals’ concerns about competition over resources or power, than in their response to threats that call into question the value or worth of their social identity. And though these threats may be external to the group (e.g. Pérez 2015), brought about by negative portrayals or depictions of the group by outsiders, for example, threats to the image of the group may also be perceived as emerging from within—the consequence of individual group members’ behaviors or ways of being.

As Cohen and Garcia note, “individual psychology is affected by collective outcomes” (2005, 566). These “collective threats,” as the authors regard them, “issue from the awareness that the poor performance of a single individual in one’s group may be viewed through the lens of a stereotype and may be generalized into a negative judgment of one’s group” (2005, 566). Consistent with much of the work on stereotype threat in psychology and elsewhere (Spencer, Steele, and Quinn 1999; Steele and Aronson 1995; Steele, Spencer, and Aronson 2002; Lewis Jr and Sekaquaptewa 2016), Cohen and Garcia examine this phenomenon by focusing on individuals’ responses to the threat of group members performing poorly on intellectual tasks. The authors find that African American students reported lower levels of self-esteem, had depressed GPAs, and lower feelings of self-efficacy when they perceived (or were experimentally manipulated to perceive) that judgments would be made about their racial group based on the performance of other Black students. And though these authors restrict their analyses to the academic realm, there is no reason to believe that these collective threats emerge only in this domain (Lewis Jr and Sekaquaptewa 2016).

In this section, I want to consider first the emotional responses to collective threat that may give rise to the in-group policing that represents a critical manifestation of the politics of respectability. In the next section, I want to consider the more material nature of collective threats that move us beyond a simple emotional underpinning of respectability to account for other considerations that are brought to bear in the face of these collective threats. But first, let us consider the kind of emotional responses that are likely to emerge as a consequence of collective threats to the group’s image and why these emotional responses may cause individuals to monitor or attempt to alter the behavior that evokes these negative emotional reactions.

Because collective threats implicate individuals' sense of who they are, individuals may experience shame in the face of perceived threats to the group's image. Shame, like pride, guilt, and embarrassment, is a complex social emotion that requires that individuals have some sense of the social world they occupy.

First individuals have to have absorbed a set of standards, rules and goals. Second, they have to have a sense of self. And finally, they have to be able to evaluate the self with regard to those standards, rules and goals and make a determination of success or failure. (Lewis 1995, 68)

Though we often think about the experience of shame and other emotions at the individual level, we regularly experience emotions as members of larger collectives (Lickel, Schmader, and Barquissau 2004; Lickel et al. 2005; Johns, Schmader, and Lickel 2005). Just as it manifests at the individual level, group-based shame goes beyond recognizing that what some member of the groups has done is bad; it is an emotion that is evoked when one feels that, as a consequence of that transgression, the group is bad, and importantly, that others will make a judgment of the group's character based on the violation (Orey et al. 2013). Moreover, as a discrete emotion, shame is often associated with withdrawal or distancing, such that when experienced at the group level, we should expect individuals to create greater distance between themselves and the offending member of the group (Johns, Schmader, and Lickel 2005; Lickel et al. 2005). Johns and colleagues, for example, find that when American undergrads are asked to recall instances in which their fellow citizens behaved in a prejudiced fashion toward Middle Easterners, those who identified as American reported higher feelings of shame and a greater desire to distance themselves from the perpetrator, their American identity, and from the situation in general.

Though this tendency associated with experiences of shame (the desire to distance oneself from the group) is important as we consider the politics of respectability and the

tendency among members of a group to police the behavior of others within the group, we might also consider that shame serves a social function—that it warns us that we are “socially unacceptable” in a given moment (Gilbert 1998), thus encouraging us to alter our future behavior as a means to avoid experiencing this behavior in future contexts. In one of the few political science texts that concerns itself with the engagement of identity threats among stigmatized groups, García Bedolla (2003), through the use of 100 in-depth interviews, finds that Latinos concerned with the negative stereotypes associated with Spanish language in the United States are more likely to want to dissociate themselves from those within the group who speak Spanish, and some are also more likely to insist that members of the community speak English. Though she does not use the phrase in this work, what she describes is a kind of in-group policing. And just as these feelings of shame and embarrassment, captured in Bedolla’s interviews, may motivate Latinos to support anti-immigrant policies, such as English-only policies, we should expect that shame and embarrassment are similarly related to the politics of respectability as it emerges among Black Americans. Though the stereotypes and negative associations of Blackness are somewhat different from those associated with Latinos, the threatening nature of negative stereotypes may similarly evoke this aversive emotion and its subsequent corrective responses. Consequently, it is important to understand these processes, insofar as these corrective responses lead to support for punitive policies thought to deter this potentially threatening behavior.

And though the connection between shame and the politics of respectability has yet to be established in the extant literature, legal scholar Randall Kennedy makes the case for this linkage by describing his own family background.

In our household we felt tremendous pride in the attainment of blacks, and we took personally their disgrace. My father and mother loved to regale us with stories about the

accomplishments of Jackie Robinson and Wilma Rudolph, Thurgood Marshall and Charles Drew, Paul Robeson and Mary McLeod Bethune. At the same time, when scandal ensnared a prominent black person, we all felt ashamed, diminished. We were also embarrassed when Blacks with poor diction and sloppy comportment appeared on television. We were taught to look down on such people as “bad Negroes” whose antics further burdened “good Negroes” like us, and we suspected that whites in the news and entertainment industries preferred to publicize the former and ignore the latter...My parents sternly ordered their children to be dignified in the presence of white people so that there would be no opportunity to put us in racist, stereotypical categories. “Don’t act like a coon,” they told us bluntly. “Don’t act like a nigger.” (2015)

Beyond Emotions: The Instrumental Arm of Collective Threats and the Politics of Respectability

In the foregoing section, I discussed at length the possibility that feelings of shame in the face of collective threats may cause individuals to engage in the kind of in-group policing that is designed to alter the behavior of offending group members. Emotions are quite powerful in shaping individuals’ engagement in politics, and I argue they are also tightly bound up with Black support for punitive social policies. One of the central claims of social identity theory is that it confers upon us a sense of psychological connection to a group, and this connection can cause us to experience a range of vicarious emotions as members of these collectives (H. Tajfel and Turner 1986). Social identities, however, do much more than give us a sense of who we are in the social world. They also orient and affect our place in it. Social identities, after all, are not merely psychologically meaningful. They are politically, socially, and historically situated and are typically arrayed on a hierarchy of privilege and subjugation. That is, membership in politically relevant social group categories affords individuals varying levels of access to the good life and cannot be fully understood when considered absent this context (Huddy 2001) .

With this in mind, thinking about collective threats only from the perspective of the emotional burden they portend for members of stigmatized groups seems incomplete. Individuals, particularly those who belong to stigmatized social categories, are not merely

worried that the bad behavior of in-group members will bring about aversive emotions like shame. Emotions, important though they are, are only a part of the story. In fact, they may not even be the most important part of the story. In a society stratified by salient social categories, identities do much more than bind us to similar others, such that we have emotional responses as a consequence of our group's successes and failures (Cialdini et al. 1976; Snyder, Lassegard, and Ford 1986). More than that, identities structure real and tangible outcomes that make life better or worse for individuals, depending on which side of the stratification they find themselves. And just as emotional considerations may motivate individuals to police the behavior of similar others as a means of avoiding the negative experience of these emotions, we should, consistent with Higginbotham's telling, consider more instrumental motivations.

In Higginbotham's description of respectability in the Black Baptist church, we are provided a rich description of respectability as a conscious political strategy intended to upend a system of *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination in the United States. Higginbotham goes to great lengths to describe the ways in which Black women encouraged the kinds of behavior that would challenge negative stereotypes of Blacks, thus rendering them worthy of equal treatment by Whites. Implicit in this consideration of respectability is an understanding that outcomes for the whole are predicated, at least in part, on the behavior of individual group members. This concern about the possibility of a collective threat to the group is not about emotions, per se, though we should expect that concerns about these more instrumental threats are not wholly separable from the experience of negative emotions previously discussed. In thinking about social identity in political science, concerns about the instrumental nature of collective threats are noticeably absent. The historical record, however, provides ample reasons to take seriously the possibility that individuals, in rendering judgments about in-group members' behavior, consider the

likelihood that these actions will have implications for the group. Again, a consideration of the historical record as it pertains to the experiences of Black people in the United States makes clear why individuals may adopt a view that the actions of one can have consequences for the whole.

Harris-Perry (2011) reminds us, for example, that “Southern lynch mobs and Northern white race riots made no allowance for the innocent [Black] people in the path of their murderous hunts for ‘black criminals’” (pgs. 117-118). Dawson (1994), in presenting the Black Utility Heuristic, notes similarly that it is rational for Black Americans to use the interests of the group as a proxy for their own given the indiscriminate nature with which Jim Crow laws and informal sanctions affected Black people. In detailing the emergence of secondary marginalization among Blacks, Cohen (1999) highlights the belief among some members of the group that an airing of the group’s dirty laundry would make it more difficult for Blacks aspiring to incorporate into the mainstream, more powerful echelons of society. Importantly, the politics of respectability and in-group policing among Black Americans ought not be thought of as some simple internalization of negative stereotypes about the group or be thought of as emerging independent of a continued system of White supremacy in the United States (c.f. Orey et al. 2013). The politics of respectability, as understood in this context, reflects an unequal social hierarchy wherein members of stigmatized groups understandably believe that the circumstances of their own lives are determined not simply by the choices they make, but by the choices and behaviors of similar others.

These concerns, though more instrumental in nature, are not void of psychological underpinnings. We know from the psychological literature that individuals are well aware of others’ beliefs about them and members of their social groups (Klein and Azzi 2001; Owuamalam et al. 2013; Yzerbyt, Judd, and Muller 2009). These so-called meta-perceptions

matter, particularly when coupled with the history of subjugation attached to stigmatized identities. Put plainly, many Black Americans know what White people think about them. They are also likely aware that Whites, as a group, wield a disproportionate amount of societal power and may, as some Whites have in the past, use that power indiscriminately against Blacks and other racial and ethnic minorities. The engagement in negative, stereotype-confirming behavior by an in-group member, therefore, may not only be perceived as threatening one's psychological sense of self; it may also be viewed as making life more difficult for others in the group in real, material, and tangible ways.

And though these instrumental concerns have largely escaped the examination of scholars focused on identity in the American context, they are wholly in keeping with important work in comparative politics that acknowledges the important role in-group policing plays in maintaining comity between opposing social groups (Fearon and Laitin 1996). Fearon and Laitin, in their seminal work on the topic, examine in-group policing as a mechanism that prevents a sort of "spiraling equilibrium" wherein groups are constantly fighting one another, thus undercutting the ability of ethnic groups to engage in mutually beneficial cooperation. To avoid this spiraling equilibrium, individuals monitor, police, and punish bad behavior from within their own group, making it less necessary for those in opposing groups to engage in more indiscriminate forms of punishment. Importantly, Fearon and Laitin's account of in-group policing assumes a level of parity between these opposing groups, an assumption that does not hold in an examination of Black-White relations in the United States. Though the authors do acknowledge that smaller groups may face greater incentives to maintain positive relationships with larger out-groups rather than vice-versa, the narrative they present is largely silent on the role that power plays in conditioning the likelihood that groups are concerned with how their members' behavior will

affect other groups' willingness to afford them access to the good life. Insofar as groups engage in in-group policing, we should expect that the more stigmatized and least powerful groups will be most likely to engage in this costly monitoring behavior.

To be sure, there are important differences in thinking about respectability as it manifests among Black Americans and the kind of in-group policing discussed in the comparative politics literature. One may wonder, for example, whether in-group policing requires some principal who takes the lead in exacting punishment on the transgressive group member. If so, can there exist in-group policing without the presence of such a leader? Moreover, one may wonder whether there is something qualitatively different about the kinds of concerns one might have in thinking about trading relationships with another ethnic group and the concerns Black Americans may have about the reifying of an unequal social hierarchy in the United States. These are valid questions to consider, but the existing literature on in-group policing provides, more than any other work in the field, a useful lens through which to think about the sorts of intragroup dynamics that may inspire individuals to punish group members who threaten the status of the group by engaging in behavior that the out-group may view as transgressive in nature. To the extent that there are important differences in how we should think about in-group policing in this context relative to other contexts in which it has been considered, this project provides a useful framework to extend and broaden the scope of the concept.

Collective Threats and Punishment

In the preceding sections I have attempted to provide a tractable and portable theoretical framework for thinking about why individuals, particularly those who belong to stigmatized groups, may take up the politics of respectability or embrace their own form of in-group policing. I want to spend some time here connecting this framework even more clearly to

individuals' attitudes about punitive social policies perceived to affect members of their social group. Again, we know from the existing literature that individuals come to think about politics in group-based terms. Eschewing more ideological or principled considerations, they ask different, more proximate questions about who benefits or who is affected (Converse 1964; Kinder and Kalmoe 2017; Nelson and Kinder 1996). To wit, all politics is identity politics. As is widely accepted by many in our field, these group-based considerations certainly matter when thinking about the preferences of dominant group members toward members of subjugated classes. At base, one of the most straightforward yet important claims of this dissertation is that group-based concerns matter for the subjugated, too, and not just in the solidarity motivating way. Stated more plainly, we cannot think about the politics of punishment without taking stock of the considerations of those who belong to the very group that is the target of this punishment. To be sure, this work is not the first to think about Black attitudes about punishment. For example, recent works by James Forman Jr. (2017) and Michael Fortner (2015) provide important historical discussion on this subject. Forman, a legal scholar, writes compellingly about his experience as a public defender in a jurisdiction filled with Black judges, Black prosecutors, Black jurors, and Black elites. Those whom Forman represented, therefore, were not typically at the mercy of resentful Whites, but they experienced an overly punitive criminal justice system, nonetheless. In thinking about the emergence and maintenance of a system of mass incarceration and tough sentencing in the U.S., Forman warns against a narrative structure that focuses solely on the predilections of Whites at the expense of understanding what might undergird the attitudes of those whom he encountered most in his day-to-day representation of young, and often poor, Black defendants. Through a rich consideration of his own experience and the goings-on of the day, Forman provides great insight into the real concerns Black

communities had about safety and the proliferation of drugs and violence on the streets of their neighborhoods. These folks, as Forman describes them, were not social scientists thinking about the structural and unequal consequences of tough drug laws and increased police surveillance. They were often the victims of the very crimes perpetrated by those within the group and simply wanted safer, better communities within which they could live and make a life for themselves and their families.

Fortner's work takes a similar approach, focusing more centrally on Black support for the Rockefeller Drug Laws, which he regards as one of the earliest examples of tough-on-crime laws that garnered the support of White and Black Americans. This "black silent majority," Fortner writes, "did not blame 'the cumulative ugliness and deterioration' they experienced on racism or economic restructuring" (2015, 65). They instead saw their problems as being mostly the consequence of other Blacks whom they held in low regard. They thought of Black gangsters, Blacks who were out of work and perceived to be happily dependent on government service. They saw Blacks they regarded as less respectable, and thus deserving of whatever punishment came their way. These perceptions, Fortner contends, motivated middle-class Blacks and other Black elites to support a range of punitive crime policies that would go on to form the basis for the system of mass incarceration we have today.

Forman and Forman's accounts of this history are useful, as they provide an instructive backdrop from which to consider Black attitudes about punishment. Moreover, they suggest that Black support for punitive social policies may not simply be the result of some mainstreaming of Black politics, as Tate argues in work focused on understanding what she views as a conservative turn in Black politics in recent years (Tate 2010). Black support for punishment, as Forman and Fortner contend, has long and deep historical roots, and as the empirical chapters of

this dissertation evince, extend beyond considerations of drug policy and criminal sentencing. And though I see the current project as complementing aspects of Forman and Fortner's work, I also part company with these authors in important ways. Black attitudes about punishment, I contend, are not simply responses to threats of violence or to concerns about the effects drugs and criminal behavior will have on the Black family or on Black communities. It is hard to maintain the argument, for example, that Black support for restrictions on workplace hairstyles or sartorial choices or an endorsement of restrictive welfare policies is rooted in some real perception that, absent these policies, one's own life is endangered. Moving beyond these explanations that center on individuals' concern about their own safety and well-being, we can begin to consider other explanations that structure the way stigmatized individuals think about matters of public policy.

I will lay out more clearly my hypotheses in subsequent chapters, but the main argument of this project is rather simple: Individuals who belong to stigmatized social groups will occasionally be perceived by members of these same groups as behaving in ways that threaten their social identity and their social status. These collective threats can be emotional or instrumental in nature. When these behaviors are perceived as threatening the group's image, individual group members may feel that their own sense of self-esteem or self-worth is diminished. As a result, they may experience a range of negative emotions that motivate them to withdraw from or punish those offending members of the group. Insofar as these collective threats have instrumental components, individuals may worry that the bad behavior of group members will make life more difficult for the whole. This concern provides a more rational rooting of in-group policing and punishment, as group members punish those whose transgressions are perceived as forestalling or undermining progress for the whole.

Before moving forward, I want to acknowledge that there are, of course, other explanations in the literature that may account for variation in Black public opinion toward punitive social policies. I discussed a couple explanations already when discussing the work of Forman (2017a) and Fortner (2015), but any student of American politics must begin with the assumption that partisan identification, the *sine qua non* of American's political beliefs, plays some role in affecting individuals' policy preferences. Partisan identification is central to our understanding of how individuals arrive at a range of political judgments. Among African-Americans, however, there is near-homogeneity in partisan identification (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Dawson 1994). Even accounting for variation in the strength of attachment among Blacks, it is unlikely that wide-spread variation in Black public opinion regarding the death penalty, or other issues around which Black opinion is similarly divided, can be explained by these divides in attachment to the Democratic Party among Black Americans. Moreover, an expectation that partisan attachment plays a meaningful role in structuring attitudes toward these issues presumes both a clarity of elite cues with respect to these issues and high levels of citizen attention to the same. Given the diverse coalition of the Democratic Party that likely gives rise to disparate cues about punitive social policies (Zaller 1992) and the general inattentiveness of the American public to matters related to politics (Carpini and Keeter 1996), it is unlikely that partisan identification, skewed as it is for Black Americans, provides much leverage for understanding Black attitudes in this domain.

There is, admittedly, greater heterogeneity in Black ideological identification than in partisan identification, but there is reason to believe that it too will perform poorly as a meaningful predictor of heterogeneity in Black public opinion. Converse (1964) warns that most Americans do not have an ideological anchor and are motivated instead by more basic and

group-centric concerns, as described earlier. Following up on this work, Kinder and Kalmoe (2017) make a similar argument based on empirical findings that demonstrate the deficient role ideological identification plays in structuring Americans' preferences around a host of issues. More particular to Black Americans, I find in on-going work that ideological identification among Blacks is quite noisy and that it chiefly corresponds with political knowledge, with more politically sophisticated respondents adopting ideological labels more consistent with their expressed policy preferences (Jefferson n.d.). These findings are consistent with other work showing that Blacks and other groups are not ideologically constrained (e.g. Gay 2014).

In the same vein, existing theoretical frameworks such as Dawson's Black Utility Heuristic (1994), likely fall short in helping us make sense of variation in Black public opinion regarding punitive social policies that disproportionately target members of the in-group. Dawson's Black Utility Heuristic and its supplemental measure of linked fate are intended to help us understand black solidarity, and are, therefore, unlikely to give us much purchase in understanding why so many black Americans adopt positions seemingly at odds with their group's interests. For example, the theory of linked fate, centered on individual rationality, cannot likely explain why nearly 40 percent of Black Americans support capital punishment, even as the policy disproportionately affects Black defendants. Further complicating expectations that linked fate will render much influence on our outcomes of interest is recent scholarship that finds scant evidence that linked fate is related to individuals' policy preferences (Gay, Hochschild, and White 2016).

The description of in-group policing laid out here may also be reminiscent for some of authoritarianism. Existing work on authoritarianism highlights differential tendencies toward conformity and the maintenance of social norms within society (Feldman 2003; Stellmacher and

Petzel 2005; Stenner 2005). Recent scholarship by Pérez and Hetherington (2014) demonstrates that the standard child-rearing battery meant to capture authoritarianism among the American public lacks a group invariant quality and falls short in predicting partisanship and other policy preferences among Blacks. With this work in mind, I am doubtful that authoritarianism – at least as traditionally measured – will fully account for variation in attitudes toward the policies I examine, but given my focus on policies that are more closely connected to concerns about behavior and comportment than is partisanship, I do not rule out this possibility. Moreover, I do not rule out, *ex ante*, that concerns about personal safety do not play a role in structuring Blacks' attitudes about punishment, though I remain skeptical that these concerns condition individuals' attitudes about policies that, if enacted, would do little to make individuals safer, but nevertheless serve a corrective or punitive function.

In the next chapter, I present a measure of respectability (the Respectability Politics Scale) that reflects the theoretical foundation presented in the preceding pages of this chapter. As I introduce the measure, I present expectations regarding the profile of those Blacks we should expect to embrace the politics of respectability, with attention paid to the demographic, sociological, and psychological correlates of respectability as it manifests within the Black community.

Chapter 3: Toward a Measure of Respectability

In preceding chapters, I have made the case for taking respectability seriously as a core feature of Black politics. More specifically, I have argued that wrestling with the meaning and influence of respectability is key to understanding how Black Americans come to think about and mete out punishment, particularly when that punishment is directed towards fellow Blacks. Consistent with Higginbotham's (1993) rich historical work and arguments from across the social sciences, including frameworks in social psychology and comparative politics, I have presented a theoretical case that lays out both the emotional and instrumental roots of respectability. These sets of considerations, I argue, inform Black Americans' attitudes toward punitive social policies—both criminal and otherwise.

Respectability, as I note previously, is a familiar concept, both among scholars of Black politics and some members of the lay public. This familiarity, however, ought not preclude us from examining carefully claims regarding its influence on the life, culture, and politics of American society. To date, our understanding of respectability's influence is based almost solely on historical and qualitative accounts. These accounts help ground our thinking about respectability, but leave unanswered a host of important descriptive and theoretical questions that motivate the current project. I lay out some of these questions here and will return to many of them throughout this chapter and those that follow. The purpose of outlining these questions, however, is not simply to set up guideposts one may turn to at other points in the manuscript. More than that, I hope these questions will impress upon the reader the necessity of adopting the

analytic approach I take here—one that attempts to examine quantitatively a set of theoretical expectations informed by more qualitative approaches that are already on offer. Importantly, the empirical strategy I adopt is not merely one of methodological convenience; it is one that affords us a unique opportunity to explore a range of theoretical possibilities not well suited for other analytic approaches. Paired with the arguments and contributions of work cited in the previous chapter, the instrumentation developed in this chapter will help us better understand how respectability shapes and influences Black public opinion.

Before introducing a measure of respectability, a chief innovation of this project, I want to highlight some of the questions that remain on the table, despite the frequency with which respectability enters our academic and popular discourse. Higginbotham, in introducing the politics of respectability to the scholarly community, describes the belief set as one deeply rooted in the Black church. Respectability, Higginbotham tells us, was central to the way that Black religious women sought to advance the goals of the racial group. As you will recall, these women believed strongly that insisting on purity, charity, and proper comportment would help to upend systems of inequality by showing the racial group as worthy of equal treatment under law and by Whites. Higginbotham’s writing about these women raises obvious questions about the “who” of respectability politics. That is, what is the profile of those who are more or less likely to embrace the politics of respectability? What is the role of the Black church and other indigenous institutions? Perhaps even more fundamental than that, what is the demographic makeup of those who adopt and reject a worldview focused on the behavior and comportment of group members? Are they older or younger Black people? Is respectability gendered in such a way that Black men and Black women come to think about the principles of respectability differently? Are there aspects of respectability that are differentially applied in ways that reflect variation in stereotypes

applied to Black men and Black women (McConaughy and White n.d.)? In what ways, and to what extent, is respectability the belief set of the Black bourgeoisie—reflective of middle-class values that have yet to trickle down to lower class Blacks? Or is respectability a worldview that persists across class and status divides, with Blacks on both ends of the distribution finding their own reasons to embrace the politics of respectability?

Returning to questions about the influence of indigenous institutions on Blacks' embrace of respectability, what precisely is the role of individuals' attachment to the Black church, involvement in Black civil society, and exposure to Black media on their belief in the principles of respectability? Consistent with this set of questions that encourage us to consider Blacks' attachment to and embeddedness within a broader Black community, what is the role of racial group identification on these beliefs? Are those who embrace respectability more or less attached to their racial group? Are these individuals who are closer to or farther away from other Blacks? Popular accounts, for example, may leave the impression that Blacks who embrace the politics of respectability have chosen to abandon their racial group or see their racial identity as being less important than those who more clearly reject its tenets.¹⁴ This popular account, however, runs counter to the implications of Higginbotham's claims and others who regard these individuals as "race men" and "race women" whose feelings of connection to and concern for the racial group were precisely what motivated an embrace of respectability in the first place (see also Gaines 2012). Relatedly, is there compelling evidence that respectability's adherents have different or less favorable views of their racial group or that these views lead to the kind of in-group policing respectability foreshadows? Moreover, in line with a more instrumental treatment of

¹⁴ See this Change.org petition, for example, from an African-American calling on CNN to remove Don Lemon from the airwaves, given his approach to discussions of race and his public embrace of respectability. <https://www.change.org/p/cnn-remove-don-lemon-from-cnn-2>

respectability, what is the role of perceived discrimination and individuals' concerns about potential threats to the group's current or future status in giving rise to support for respectability? And, finally, in a complex social world in which considerations of all types have the potential to affect individuals' judgments and decisions, does respectability play a unique role, above and beyond the myriad of other possible influences, in affecting the judgments Black Americans render about punitive social policies?

This may well seem an exhausting set of questions to engage, but it is not at all exhaustive. There are, to be sure, other questions pertaining to the demographic, social, and psychological roots of respectability that are not reflected in this litany. I am, likewise, certain, that there are questions related to the influence of respectability on the politics of Black Americans that are simply beyond the scope of the current project. One might wonder, for example, whether and how respectability affects the kinds of protest strategies one adopts in response to perceived injustice or whether variation in respectability influences the kind of politician an individual chooses to support. I will have little to say about that in this manuscript, but point out these possible questions as a way of drawing the reader's attention to all that we do not know about the politics of respectability, absent an attempt to carefully measure and assess it, both as a concept in its own right and as one that has potential implications for outcomes we care about as social scientists.

In the remainder of this chapter, I begin by situating our thinking about respectability alongside similar constructs already found in the social sciences, namely vigilance and authoritarianism. In discussing these existing constructs, the goal is to help further contextualize the usefulness of this measure by distinguishing it from constructs that are already on offer. I then detail the process used to develop and construct the Respectability Politics Scale (RPS) and

present findings regarding the psychometric properties of the scale. In what is both an empirical and theoretical advance of the manuscript, I discuss the correlates of the RPS, which provides clarity about the nature of the instrument as a measurement device and helps us understand more about the mechanisms that foster support for respectability among certain pockets of the Black community. These discussions will help lay the groundwork for the analyses in the subsequent chapter that focus on exploring the explanatory leverage provided by the Respectability Politics Scale.

Approximating Respectability: A Discussion of Existing Measures that inform the RPS

As I note in the preceding sections, this project stands apart in its attempt to carefully examine the role respectability plays in affecting the political attitudes and behaviors of African Americans. That is not to say, however, that there have been no rigorous attempts to understand how African Americans navigate their stigmatized racial identity and how this experience with stigma affects various aspects of their lives. In fact, some of the work highlighted in the previous chapter does precisely that. Here, however, I want to focus more directly on scholarly attempts to capture these dynamics and concerns adjacent to respectability in the context of survey data. In presenting these examples, the goal is to help orient the reader's thinking regarding the difficulty of capturing the phenomenon of respectability and to underscore the need for new instrumentation, given the questions that form the core of this current project.

Vigilance

I turn first to recent work that examines the health consequences of respectability politics for Black Americans. Noting the apparent relationship between impression management behaviors and the politics of respectability, Lee and Hicken (2016) explore whether and, if so, to what extent the constant monitoring of one's own behavior has implications for one's health.

Theoretically, the authors expect that this kind of *vigilance*, as they term it, has adverse consequences for individuals' mental and physical health. Chronically engaging in these self-regulatory behaviors, Lee and Hicken contend, is stressful and this stress, they argue, is related to a range of negative consequences for the self. Again, the theoretical arguments of this piece are interesting and important to consider in their own right, but I want to focus instead on the way that Lee and Hicken operationalize vigilance, a concept that is a close conceptual cousin of respectability.

As they describe their measure of vigilance, it is an abbreviated and slightly modified version of a vigilance scale first developed for the 1995 Detroit Area Study. The scale was originally intended to capture anticipation of and preparation for racial discrimination (pg. 429). As part of the vigilance scale, respondents are asked the following: In your day-to-day life, how often do you do the following things: (1) try to prepare for possible insults from other people before leaving home; (2) feel that you always have to be very careful about your appearance to get good service or avoid being harassed; (3) try to avoid certain social situations and places; and (4) carefully watch what you say and how you say it. As Lee and Hicken acknowledge, these items make no mention of race, but they do appear to capture the kinds of impression management behaviors one might expect to observe from individuals who hold some belief that how they behave will have implications for how they experience the social world. Consistent with the authors' expectations, Black respondents who report being more vigilant, as defined by higher scores on the vigilance scale, do report more chronic conditions over the life cycle and have more depressive symptoms than those who less frequently engage in these impression management behaviors.

The vigilance scale adopted in Lee and Hicken's work is a useful one. It allows us to examine carefully the degree to which individuals engage in a range of behaviors that manifest as a consequence of their belonging to a stigmatized social group. The measure is particularly useful for engaging questions like the ones central to the authors' analyses—ones focused on the consequences of respectability for the self. Recall, however, that the current project is not principally concerned with whether individuals vary in their own employment of behaviors we might regard as manifestations or demonstrations of respectability. That one, in her own movement in the world, frequently concerns herself with how she dresses or how she speaks may well give us some insight into the person's own way of navigating her stigmatized identity, but it tells us little about her own sense that having to engage in this kind of monitoring is normatively good or even potentially effective. Vigilance, as operationalized by Lee and Hicken, is a self-reflective measure that does allow us to examine, at least on some level, the ways in which the politics of respectability permeates the thinking of Black Americans. This measure of vigilance, however, does not align theoretically with a desire to understand the politics of respectability as a worldview or an ideology that bears on individuals' political and social judgments. To be clear, the contention is not that vigilance and an embrace of respectability as a worldview are orthogonal concepts. One's tendency to self-monitor as a function of stigma likely corresponds with one's tendency to monitor the behavior of similar others. The argument, instead, is that vigilance is conceptually distinct from a politicized embrace of respectability. Stated plainly, one can engage in all sorts of vigilant behaviors on her own and for her own sake, without ever adopting a politicized view that her group's fortunes would be improved, but for the bad behavior of some group members.

Authoritarianism

Separately, because of the central role that concerns about behavior play in our thinking about the politics of respectability, I want to reiterate why it is not sufficient to simply use the standard measure of authoritarianism as a proxy for the politics of respectability. As I describe in Chapter 2, scholarship focused on authoritarianism centers largely on questions regarding individuals' desire for conformity and their commitment to sets of societal norms (e.g. Stenner 2005). The measure of authoritarianism most frequently used in contemporary work on the topic comprises a set of questions that asks respondents about their child rearing preferences. To measure authoritarian disposition, respondents are asked to rate the importance of various qualities for children. In turn, respondents are asked to choose whether independence is more important a quality than respect for elders, whether obedience is more important than self-reliance, whether curiosity is more important than good manners, and whether being considerate is more important than being well-behaved. Respondents who ascribe greater importance to traits that one may describe as more orderly in nature are considered to have more authoritarian tendencies.

For somewhat obvious reasons, it is tempting to expect that respondents' answer choices on this battery of questions is a fine measure of capturing individuals' underlying beliefs about how others, including group members, ought to behave. Setting aside whatever theoretical meaning we ordinarily associate with responses to these questions, it is hard to argue that the items are not capturing some lay beliefs about behavior—one item included in the battery, after all, asks directly about the importance of children being well-behaved. To be sure, this measure of authoritarianism must be accounted for moving forward, but there are two key reasons that I find it an insufficient and imperfect stand-in for individuals' embrace of the politics of respectability.

The first reason pertains to the theoretical employment of the child rearing battery in the existing literature. As the previous chapter of the manuscript makes clear, the politics of respectability is characterized by its relationship to ego-centric and strategic goals. Though the theoretical meaning of authoritarianism for Black Americans remains in dispute, there is no existing theoretical frame that expects authoritarianism to have similar roots. Moreover, as Pérez and Hetherington (2014) note, Blacks' responses to these items likely reflect more literal beliefs about child rearing. If they are right, as I think they are, this measure of authoritarianism is a potential confound with which the Respectability Politics Scale must contend. In the context of the current project, I treat responses to this child rearing battery as an indication of respondents' general beliefs about the importance of conformity and norm following. I acknowledge that this treatment of the measure is somewhat different from the way it is considered by other scholars. That is, I am making no claims here about whether and to what extent the measure captures authoritarianism, per se, though I will use the term "authoritarianism" as a shorthand for what the scale purports to measure. I want to remain fairly agnostic to whether scores on the measure capture authoritarianism as some scholars suggest or whether they are the product of a battery that lacks group-invariant properties. Importantly, analyses in this chapter take seriously the possibility that the RPS is little more than authoritarianism measured in some other way. The results I present suggest that this is not the case. More than evidence demonstrating the distinctiveness of the two measures, all models focused on the predictive power of the RPS will include authoritarianism as a covariate. Insofar as the RPS is simply authoritarianism refashioned, this represents a particularly hard case, as the measure of respectability will be forced to contend with this broader and more familiar measure of individuals' beliefs and preferences about behavior.

In sum, the landscape as it currently exists makes developing a theoretically driven measure of respectability a worthwhile endeavor to engage and one that I spend the remainder of this chapter discussing.

Developing a Respectability Politics Scale

Having established the gaps in our theoretical and empirical understanding of the role respectability plays in structuring the politics of Blacks Americans as it relates to punitive attitudes, this section aims to provide some insight into the work conducted to develop the Respectability Politics Scale.

In setting out to develop a measure of respectability, I adopted a few guiding principles. I wanted the measure to be a simple one, while also reflecting the nuances of respectability as articulated by the existing literature and my own theorizing in this project. In brief, that meant developing a measure that, in plain language, captures the elements associated with respectability—an insistence on good behavior to protect the image of the group (ego-centric arm of respectability) and an insistence on good behavior to advance the strategic goals of the group (instrumental arm of respectability). Instead of relying on vague terminology, I wanted the items of the scale to be easily understood by laypeople and easy to employ in the context of a sample survey. In developing the items for the scale, I paired Higginbotham's discussion of respectability in the historical case of the Black Baptist Church with more contemporary discussions of the topic. Moreover, the items reflect my own experience and embeddedness within the Black community, which provides some initial intuition about how the various theoretical elements of respectability are articulated by the masses.

Pilot Testing a Measure of Respectability

With the goal of developing a valid measure of respectability that captures the theoretical components of the construct and allows for further analyses pertaining to the influence of respectability on Black public opinion, I developed a battery of 17 questions to capture variation in the kinds of attitudes I thought reflected different aspects of respectability as it might manifest in the minds of Black Americans. Again, this initial battery of questions is based on my careful read of material related to the politics of respectability and on my own theoretical and personal understanding of how respectability is discussed and how it emerges among Blacks. This set of questions was refined through several meetings with experts on survey research to ensure that the questions followed good practices in survey design and that responses to these items would provide a strong foundation from which to establish a shorter, more valid measure of the construct. The full set of items is included in the appendix at the end of this chapter, but I will discuss various features of the questions and introduce some sample items as I describe the pilot study on which this set of questions first appeared.

In March 2017, I used Amazon's Turkprime platform to recruit a sample of 265 Black Americans for this study. Two hundred and fifty-four respondents completed the study. This is a convenience sample and among those who participated in this study, 64 percent were female, the mean family income was between \$40,000 and \$49,999, the mean education level was "some college," and the mean age category was 25-34.

At the beginning of the survey, participants were told that "We are interested in understanding how people think about various policies and social groups. Please answer all the questions as completely as you can. Your responses will remain anonymous, so feel free to share with us your honest opinions." Given the sensitivity of some of the items included in the study, it was important to include this language so respondents would feel freer to answer questions in

ways that reflected their sincere beliefs. Before replying to the set of items related to the politics of respectability, respondents answered several policy questions and questions related to their racial identity. The survey also included a number of questions related to group-based emotions, group-based esteem, authoritarianism and other covariates and predictors, including individual-level measures of stereotype endorsement and racial resentment. For the sake of clarity, I did not exploit all the features of this pilot study in this dissertation and used it primarily to get an initial sense of the psychometric properties of the various items, with the goal of establishing a cleaner, more succinct, and more theoretically appropriate measure of the underlying construct.

As displayed in Appendix 3A, questions in the battery varied in form and ranged from ones that specifically asked about individuals' beliefs regarding hair and dress ("If Black people want to succeed in America, how important is it that they maintain professional hairstyles in the workplace? For example, how important is it that Black people avoid dreadlocks, braids, or other uncommon natural hairstyles while on the job?") to more general questions about behavior and comportment ("How important is it that Black people act responsibly in public?"). Other items were intended to capture the belief that members of the group should behave in ways that heighten the esteem of the group ("How important is it that Black people carry themselves in ways that others will respect?"). Beyond picking up on these more esteem-based considerations, I also included items that captured variation in individuals' sense of instrumental payoffs that might result from good behavior ("How likely is it that Black people would be treated better by society if members of their racial group behaved better?"). Because I was sure that some

questions would be more upsetting to participants than others, I randomized the order in which the questions were asked to minimize the effect of any one question on responses to others.¹⁵

Looking at the descriptive statistics presented in Table 3.1, we observe that respondents vary significantly in their responses to the questions presented in the battery. Respondents in the sample are least supportive of the notion that Black people should have to avoid certain hairstyles to get ahead in the workplace and are similarly reluctant to agree outright that it is important “for Black people to punish those members of the group who confirm negative stereotypes about the group.” On a 0-1 scale, mean responses for these two items are .19 and .33, respectively. Standing in stark contrast to these responses are respondent’s answers to some more general items included in the set. For example, when asked how important it is that Black people act responsibly in public, only 7 respondents (approximately 3 percent) answer that it not at all important. Similarly, we observe that respondents ascribe fairly high levels of support to the idea that members of the group should take responsibility for the way their lives turn out, that Black leaders should talk more about the problems within the community caused by Black people themselves, and that Black people should carry themselves in a way that contributes to a positive image of the group. Importantly, we observe variations in attitudes regarding what is referred to here as the instrumentality of respectability. When asked directly “how likely it is that Black people would be treated better by society if members of their racial group behaved better,” respondents vary significantly in their responses to this question. Though 21 percent of

¹⁵As it turns out, this was a good idea. Participants responded quite unfavorably to some of the questions in the battery. One respondent, for example, wrote the following in the open-ended text box at the end of the study: “uncommon natural hairstyles’. I was unaware natural hair was uncommon. Ridiculous phrasing and nothing has ever gotten me more frustrated then hearing that my natural hair was unprofessional.” Fortunately for this respondent, this item does not appear in later iterations of the Respectability Politics Scale.

respondents adopt the view that it is “extremely unlikely” that Black people would be treated better by society if behavior improved, nearly 19 percent of respondents think it “moderately” or “extremely likely” that society’s treatment of Blacks would improve if Black people behaved better. Relatedly, respondents divide when asked about the relationship between good behavior from within the group and White attitudes about equality for Blacks. On the question of how important it is that group members behave better if they want to convince White people that they deserve equality, 36 percent of respondents say that it is “not at all important,” though 18 percent answer that it is “extremely important.”

Table 3.1 about here

This descriptive data about these individual items are instructive and provide the first detailed reporting of variation in Black people’s thinking about behavior and comportment within the group. It remains unclear, however, based on these descriptive findings, how the various items fit together and the extent to which some items are more or less necessary in helping us capture the core elements of respectability. To minimize the question set in service of practical and theoretical aims, I used factor analytic tools to help develop the Respectability Politics Scale, which is essentially a set of questions designed to capture the latent concept that is the politics of respectability. I describe in additional detail features of the items as they emerge in the more representative study discussed later in the chapter.

To begin the process of constructing the RPS, I relied on an exploratory factor analysis to examine the factor structure of the battery of questions I developed. The exploratory factor analysis allows one to uncover the shared variance between items to gain some sense of the underlying dimensionality and structure of the latent concept. In line with best practices (e.g. Carpenter 2018), I used principal factor analysis with oblique rotation, which allows for the

possibility that factors of the construct correlate, as they often do in social scientific research, and as I expected they would in this case. Table 3.2 presents the results of the rotated factor analysis. Without constraining the analysis, we observe that the EFA retains 9 factors. Not all of these retained factors are equally meaningful, however. To gauge the meaningfulness of factors, I used two techniques. First, I analyzed a scree plot of the eigenvalues after the factor analysis, with an eye toward retaining the factors that had eigenvalues above the point where the plot begins to level off. In Figure 3.1, we observe that the first and second factors appear to meet this criterion. Additionally, we observe, again in Table 3.2, that the correspondence between the various items and other factors are relatively low, with several items loading strongly onto the first two factors ($>.6$). Interestingly, Figure 3.2 clearly shows that there is little crossloading between the items that correspond with the two primary factors. Furthermore, the two factors correlate only moderately ($r=.55$). This may result from the nature of the questions that comprise each factor, but we will return to this point when analyzing the distributions and other particulars of the two factors.

Table 3.2 about here

Figure 3.1 about here

Figure 3.2 about here

Turning our attention to the first factor, three items that capture general beliefs about how Blacks should behave in public loaded strongly onto this factor. These questions ask how important it is for Blacks to behave responsibly in public, carry themselves in ways that others will respect, and behave in ways that contribute to a positive image of the group. Further evidence is required to test precisely what motivations or considerations align with responses to these items, but each of these questions asks respondents to give their sense of the importance of

Blacks behaving well, with each item highlighting the gaze of some other. The second factor that emerged appears to nicely capture the instrumental nature of respectability, harkening back to Higginbotham's discussion of respectability as a means by which women in the Black Baptist Church believed they could achieve greater equality for the group. Items that gauge respondents' sense that Blacks need to behave better to be treated better by society and to convince White people that they deserve equality correspond highly with this factor. Based on these analyses, the final RPS includes the following items.^{16 17}

1. **RP1_Responsibly:** How important is it that Black people behave responsibly in public? [Not at all important-Extremely important]
2. **RP2_OthersRespect:** How important is it that Black people carry themselves in ways that others will respect? [Not at all important-Extremely important]
3. **RP3_PositiveImage:** How important is it that Black people behave in ways that contribute to a positive image of the group? [Not at all important-Extremely important]
4. **RP4_DeserveEquality:** If Black people want to convince White people that they deserve equality, how important is it that members of the group behave better? [Not at all important-Extremely important]
5. **RP5_TreatedBetter:** How likely is it that Black people would be treated better by society if members of their racial group behaved better? [Extremely unlikely-Extremely likely]

As currently constructed, the RPS has two subscales, consisting of the questions related to the first and second factors. Because I think of these subscales as jointly capturing elements of respectability, I constructed a composite measure, the RPS, which has a Cronbach's alpha of .83, suggesting high levels of internal consistency among the measures. To further unpack and refine the measure of respectability, however, I will attend both to the features and influence of the

¹⁶ In constructing the final scale, I decided to exclude items that were too specific in nature, either in the stereotypes they highlighted or the behavior respondents were asked to judge. Because these behaviors (e.g. being loud in public or dressing poorly) are likely outcome variables in this project and others, I did not want to generate a scale that would invoke them.

¹⁷ Hereafter, these items will be referred to as R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5, for brevity.

composite measure and the subscales that comprise it. For the purposes of the current manuscript, I prioritize analyses of the 5-item composite measure in the inference-making process, but believe it important to carefully interrogate the subscales as I seek to refine and further develop the measure of respectability.

Focusing first on the full RPS, we observe in Figure 3.3 that responses to the full set of items skewed toward the higher end of the scale. If the scale is, as I argue, capturing variations in individual attitudes about the politics of respectability, it appears that many, at least in this convenience sample, readily embrace this worldview. Recoded 0-1, with higher values indicative of a stronger embrace of respectability, the RPS has a mean value of .61 and a median value of .60. Turning next to the two individual factors, we observe quite a high median score for the first factor focused on the general importance of good behavior by group members (.75). As alluded to earlier, we observe much more variation in the second factor, which gauges respondents' sense that behavior from within the group is bound up with its treatment by Whites and society writ large. The median score on this factor is .46, though it should be pointed out that most respondents accept, at varying degrees, the idea that their group's treatment is linked to how members of the group behave. For example, when asked about the likelihood that Blacks would be treated better by society if members of the group behaved better, more than one-third of respondents expressed a belief that better behavior would likely lead to better treatment. Likewise, 35 percent of respondents answer that it is "very" or "extremely" important for Blacks to behave better if they want to convince White people that they deserve equality.¹⁸

¹⁸ In this data, we also observe several interesting relationships between the measure of respectability I introduce here and various outcomes of interest, though for clarity, I will discuss empirical findings from the YouGov data only in this chapter. The MTurk findings are analogous and would, therefore, be repetitive.

Figure 3.3 about here

These initial findings from the MTurk study are interesting and instructive. They provide for us the first opportunity to examine measures related to the politics of respectability and help establish a foundation from which to think about the potential influence of respectability on the politics of Black Americans. Based on the results of the MTurk study and my sense that the RPS was a promising first step in allowing for the rigorous examination of respectability among a more representative sample, I contracted with YouGov, a survey firm with a reputation for providing high-quality samples, particularly for researchers interested in diverse populations.¹⁹ Though not a probability sample, YouGov draws from a stratified sample and uses sample matching to approximate the demographics of the US population.²⁰ For this project, YouGov sampled 500 black Americans using their online panel starting July 6, 2017. Data collection concluded on July 14, 2017. The weighted sample is 54% female, has a mean age of 35-44, a mean education of “some college,” and a mean income of around \$30,000-\$39,000. Forty-seven percent reported having spent the majority of their life in the South and nearly 88% reported that religion was at least slightly important to their life, with a plurality of respondents reporting that religion was extremely important to their life. Using this more representative sample, I first confirm the factor structure of the Respectability Politics Scale, paying careful attention to both the composite measure and its constitutive parts. I then return to the questions at the start of this chapter that probe the demographic, social, and psychological correlates of the measure.

¹⁹ <https://today.yougov.com/news/2016/05/13/pew-research-yougov/>

²⁰ All reports of distributions use weighted data. Regression models, however, are unweighted, as weighted OLS in the data decreases efficiency and increases standard errors. The models also all include the variables on which the weights were developed. Weighting the data does not change the results.

Theoretical Expectations Regarding the Correlates of Respectability

To orient the reader, let me lay out a few testable expectations regarding the profile of those whom I expect will be most likely to embrace the politics of respectability in the sample. First, given that respectability concerns itself with the behavior of others, I expect that older Blacks, relative to their younger counterparts, will score higher on the RPS. And to the extent that the values of respectability reflect class distinctions among Blacks, I expect that higher income African-Americans will be more likely to endorse respectability than those from lower class backgrounds, though recall my initial suggestion that those at either end of the economic distribution may feel the need to embrace the politics of respectability, albeit for different reasons. For many Black Americans, religion also plays a powerful role in structuring beliefs about how one ought to be in the world (Walton 1985). Moreover, as Higginbotham notes, respectability is often a feature of conversations within the Black church. Blacks for whom religion occupies a more central role in their lives should, therefore, be more likely to endorse respectability as well.

Consistent with previous discussions in this chapter and elsewhere, I also expect that those whom we would regard as having more authoritarian predispositions are also more likely to embrace the politics of respectability. Regarding the role of perceived discrimination in structuring Blacks' beliefs about respectability, the expectations are more complicated than some others. On one hand, we might expect that Black Americans who perceive more discrimination toward the group will reject the tenets of respectability, as they can be perceived as taking attention away from the role discrimination plays in affecting the life outcomes of Blacks. On the other hand, and consistent with an instrumental view of respectability, we might expect that those who perceive greater discrimination toward the group will be more inclined to embrace

respectability as a means of challenging the biases of White Americans. Regardless of the direction of the finding, the empirical analyses will help us clarify the meaningfulness of these perceptions in our consideration of respectability moving forward.

Beyond these demographic and sociological considerations, our theoretical setup expects correspondence between respectability and a set of important psychological considerations. First, insofar as the politics of respectability reflects concerns about the image of the racial group, we should find correspondence between the measure of respectability and concepts that tap how one feels about the in-group. More specifically, we should find that negative emotions, like shame, experienced at the group level, are associated with higher scores on the RPS. Though somewhat counter-intuitive, to the extent that the kinds of concerns imbedded within the framework of respectability represent threats to the social identity, we should also expect that higher identifiers will be more likely to endorse respectability than those for whom the identity is less important. Such a finding would be consistent with work by stigma researchers who find that high identifiers concern themselves more with the stigmatized nature of the group and, thus, respond more strongly to the kinds of identity threats that could motivate an embrace of the politics of respectability (Quinn et al. 2014). Likewise, I expect that an endorsement of negative stereotypes about the group also correspond with respectability, as it seems unlikely that one who thinks very well of the group already would have much motivation to encourage group members to behave *better*. Again, I will test these expectations using the full RPS and its two separate factors.

Validating the Respectability Politics Scale

Before examining more carefully the distribution and predictors of the RPS and its constitutive parts, let us first explore the structure of the RPS using this more representative data. To test the structure of the measure, I used a confirmatory factor analysis to examine whether the

scale maintained its two-factor structure in this data to reflect the theorized dimensionality of respectability—that it has at its core a *general* sense of how group members should behave and an investment in the *strategic* payoff of good behavior (i.e. better treatment by white Americans).²¹ First, as shown in Figure 3.4, each item of the RPS loaded significantly onto its respective factor, mirroring the results from the MTurk pilot study. Looking at the first three items of the scale, we observe that RP1_Responsibly, RP2_OthersRespect, and RP3_PositiveImage load strongly onto what we call the *general* factor. Reflecting the results of the exploratory factor analysis, these items loaded significantly onto this first factor, with loadings of .78, .91, and .87, respectively. Similarly, RP4_DeserveEquality and RP5_TreatedBetter, which tap more into individuals’ beliefs about the strategic or instrumental payoffs of respectability, load strongly onto this second factor, with loadings of .69 and .83, respectively. As previously mentioned, the theoretical expectation is that these two factors jointly reflect the tenets of respectability. In line with this thinking, I allowed the factors to correlate in the CFA analysis. As we observe, again in Figure 3.4, the correlation between the two factors ($r=.58$) is significant, suggesting the factors are not independent of each other and share a moderate, positive association.

Figure 3.4 about here

Turning next to testing the goodness of fit of the model, the chi-square value for the overall model was significant, $\chi^2(4) = 10.50, p < .05$. This suggests that the covariance matrix implied by the model was different from that observed in the data. Because the χ^2 test is sensitive to sample size, however, “it should not serve as the sole basis for judging model fit”

²¹ I use Stata 14’s Structural Equation Modeling package to conduct these analyses.

(Kline 2015; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, and Müller 2003). Turning to these other assessments of model fit, RMSEA=.058, CFI=.994, and SRMR=.019, indicating adequate model fit (Hu and Bentler 1999; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, and Müller 2003).²² Modification indices suggested a possible path between RP2 (i.e. “How important is it that Black people carry themselves in ways that others will respect?”) and the *strategic* factor of the RPS. Though not a path implied by the model I tested, this potential modification seems plausible theoretically, given this item primes respondents to think about how others (presumably Whites) may view or respond to group members’ behavior.

Unpacking the RPS and its Correlates

In this section, I examine the distribution of the RPS, its two factors, and the correlates of each. All items are standardized from 0-1 for ease of interpretation, with higher values indicative of higher levels of respectability. Before delving into the particulars of the RPS, let us consider the two factors independently.

Factor 1 Analyses: Recall, Factor 1 of the RPS consists of items that ask respondents about how important it is for members of the group to behave responsibly, to behave in ways that others will respect, and to behave in ways that contribute to a positive image of the group. The CFA demonstrated that these items loaded together strongly on a single factor and the Cronbach’s alpha for these three items is .89, suggesting further that there is high inter-item

²²The RMSEA is the root mean squared error of approximation. Values range from 0-1; smaller values indicate better model fit. .06 or lower indicate acceptable model fit. The CFI is the comparative fit index, which compares the hypothesized model to the model that best fits the data. Again, values range from 0-1; larger CFI values indicate better fit. CFI>.95 indicates good fit. The SRMR is the standardized root mean square residual, which compares the covariance matrix of the sample with that of the hypothesized model. Values range from 0-1 and values of .08 or less indicate that the model is acceptable. (Note: Cutoffs taken from (Hu and Bentler 1999)).

correlation amongst these questions in the data. As observed in the MTurk data, respondents generally thought it quite important that members of the group comport themselves well, with few responding that it is not at all important for members of the group to behave well (See Figure 3.5). The median respondent had a score of .83 on this factor, indicating that she thought it more than very important that members of her group comported themselves well. Importantly, this set of questions had only a moderate bivariate correlation with the standard measure of authoritarianism ($r=.27$), suggesting that this measure captures something beyond individuals' preference for good behavior, broadly construed.²³

Figure 3.5 about here

In the multivariate context, we find, as displayed in Table 3.3, that scores on this factor correspond significantly with a number of relevant variables. Those who assigned greater importance to good behavior from within the group, as captured by responses to the three items that comprise this factor, tended to be older, scored higher on the authoritarianism battery, reported that religion was more important to their lives, and perceived greater discrimination toward members of their group. Scores on this factor, however, did not correspond with an endorsement of negative stereotypes about the group or with feelings of negative emotions like shame or embarrassment. Admittedly, these null findings present some initial challenges to my expectations that these particular items reflect identity-based concerns, as we would expect such concerns to map onto questions related to group-based shame and an endorsement of negative stereotypes about members of the group. These responses do not appear to have emerged randomly, however, as Blacks who perceived a more unequal racial landscape, as measured by

²³ Recall, one item in the authoritarianism battery asks respondents whether it is more important that a child be considerate or well-behaved. The correlation between this item, which invokes good behavior, and Factor 1 is .16 and is significant at the 95 percent confidence level.

perceptions of discrimination, were more likely to think it important that members of the group properly comport themselves. This is an interesting result and one I return to later in the chapter.

Table 3.3 about here

Factor 2 Analyses: Factor 2, as the reader will recall, focuses on individuals' sense that good behavior will lead to positive payoffs for the group as a whole. The pair of items that comprise this factor, **RP4_DeserveEquality** and **RP5_TreatedBetter**, had an inter-item correlation of .73 in the data. And, as Figure 3.6 shows, there was wide variation in scores on this factor. The median respondent had a median score of approximately .54, indicative of a moderate endorsement of the notion that good behavior and better treatment by society are linked with one another. Table 3.4 shows the results of a multivariate model predicting scores on this second factor. As we see, there were clear differences in the predictors of this factor, relative to Factor 1.

Table 3.4 about here

If these items capture the instrumental nature of respectability (i.e. good treatment stems from good behavior) as I suggest, we find no evidence here that these instrumental concerns differed among older and younger Blacks. Unsurprisingly, given this factor also deals with attitudes about behavior, we observe again that authoritarians scored higher on this factor, as did individuals for whom the racial identity was more important. Interestingly, there was no correspondence between linked fate and these instrumental concerns about behavior, which we might have expected given that linked fate asks individuals directly whether they believe that what happens to other Blacks will affect their own lives. I will make additional comments about how we might think about linked fate in this context when discussing the composite measure, but it may be the case that the role of linked fate is conditional on other considerations or that this

particular measure is too rough a proxy for a more valanced sense that the group bears the burden for the mistakes of the few. Again, I will return to a discussion of this possibility later in the chapter.

Beyond these measures of identity, more religious Blacks scored higher on this factor and perceptions of discrimination weakly mapped onto lower scores. Again, these findings demonstrate the real challenge of this measurement exercise, as it could be the case that when asked about how important it is for Blacks to behave responsibly in public, increased perceptions of discrimination align with a sense that Blacks will be punished for stepping out of line. At the same time, when asked about the likelihood that society will treat Blacks better if they simply behave better, respondents who perceived more discrimination may have been more suspicious of this possibility. Perhaps most interestingly, there were strong and significant relationships between an endorsement of negative stereotypes about the group and feelings of group-based shame with a sense that good behavior would lead to better treatment.²⁴ This makes sense, both theoretically and intuitively. Those who think the group is characterized more by negative traits or feel ashamed when they think about how the group is viewed by others likely center the responsibility for poor treatment by others in the behaviors and predilections of group members. And, consistent with this belief, are more likely to think that if members of the group simply adopt better behaviors, better treatment will logically follow.

Focusing on the subscales is useful, as it allows us to get a clearer sense of how respondents are engaging these components of respectability that correlate with one another, but

²⁴ Stereotype endorsement was measured by asking respondents how they would rate most members of the group on two separate items. One item asked respondents to place most Blacks on a non-violent—violent spectrum and the other asked them to place most Blacks on a lazy—hardworking spectrum. The items were indexed together and scores were rescaled 0-1, with higher scores indicating a stronger endorsement of the negative stereotypes.

are empirically distinct. Theoretically, however, I expect these components work synchronously, such that individuals vary both in their general concern about the public behavior of Blacks and in their sense that good behavior has this instrumental payoff. With this theoretical expectation in mind, I indexed the two factors to construct a composite measure of respectability, which I refer to as the RPS. Variation in composite scores on this measure, I argue, are a better indication of individuals' overall endorsement of respectability than variation in the scores of either of the two factors.²⁵²⁶ Looking at the overall distribution of the RPS in this sample displayed in Figure 3.7, we observe, as we did in the MTurk sample, a rightward skew, indicative of respondents' general endorsement of the tenets of respectability, as measured by the composite scale.²⁷ Consistent with this observation, the median respondent had a score on the RPS of .7, with scores standardized between 0 and 1. The weighted mean of the overall distribution was .68.

These descriptive statistics suggest that respectability is not some fringe ideology in the Black community limited to Black elites or localized to very small pockets of the community. To the contrary, the politics of respectability appears a widely accepted worldview among Black Americans, with few rejecting in whole the belief set that sustains it. The vast majority of the sample thought it important that members of their group comport themselves well and agreed with the notion that good behavior from within the group is at least tenuously related to how the group fares in society. And importantly, the evidence does not support the idea that the RPS is

²⁵ The five RPS items when indexed have a Cronbach's alpha of .82.

²⁶ In this manuscript, I will present models where the composite measure is the key independent variable alongside sets of models where both factors are included. Such analyses will help us better understand whether this expectation holds in the data.

²⁷ Though fairly clear from the histogram presented in Figure 3.7, an empirical test of skewness and kurtosis relative to a normal distribution allows us to reject the null hypothesis that this scale has the properties of one that would be normally distributed.

simply a new measure of authoritarianism reconstructed. Though the RPS and the authoritarianism battery did correlate modestly ($r=.36$), the social, demographic, and psychological correlates are different, as we observe in this next set of analyses.

Table 3.5 displays results from a multivariate model predicting scores on the RPS. Here again we find that older Blacks were more likely to score higher on the RPS, relative to their younger counterparts. This finding not only makes intuitive sense, as discussed earlier; the finding is consistent with recent qualitative work by Kerrison and colleagues (2018) that finds Black youth are rather suspicious of respectability's efficacy, believing that irrespective of how they behave or how they comport themselves, they still find themselves susceptible to the dangerous power of the state. Though the values of respectability are often discussed as middle class or bourgeois values, there was no evidence here that income discriminates between those who were likely to embrace or reject the politics of respectability. This null finding is an important one, as it demonstrates that concerns about respectability are not particular to upper-middle class Blacks but are concerns that find a home at both ends of the distribution.

Table 3.5 about here

Moreover, and again consistent with expectations, there was a strong relationship in the data between scores on the authoritarianism battery and scores on the RPS. Though it remains unclear precisely what the authoritarianism battery is capturing conceptually for Black respondents, Black respondents who placed greater value on those characteristics more aligned with what we standardly regard as authoritarian were more likely to embrace the politics of respectability. Again, this is not particularly surprising given respectability's concern with behavior, but these analyses are the first to allow for an examination of the relationship between these concepts. In thinking about the politics of respectability, there is a tendency among

commentators to think of its adherents as individuals who are detached from their membership in the social group. As discussed in the previous chapter, however, this lay thinking does not align with what we know about many of the elite proponents of respectability who were often regarded as “race people” and who were outwardly quite concerned with the status of the racial group (see Gaines 2012). In these data, the evidence is consistent with this idea. Blacks who reported that their racial identity was more important to who they are were more likely to embrace the politics of respectability. We find no relationship, however, between linked fate or perceptions of discrimination and this measure of respectability. For reasons I discuss previously, I am not convinced that the relationship between these concepts and respectability is unconditional, and will discuss in brief the findings from a model that estimates the interactive relationship between perceptions of discrimination and linked fate with an endorsement of negative stereotypes about the group.

To conclude analyses of this simple model, however, the more religious were more likely to embrace the politics of respectability, as were those who endorsed more negative stereotypes about the group and those who reported more frequent experiences of group-based shame or embarrassment. In light of these findings, there is strong suggestive evidence that the politics of respectability corresponds with emotional and ego-centric beliefs about the group, but the evidence is less compelling with respect to the role of instrumental considerations, as we would expect linked fate and perceptions of discrimination to matter much more if Blacks were concerned with the potential costs of bad behavior in deciding whether to embrace or reject the politics of respectability.

The simple model presented in Table 3.5 is an additive model that assumes that each covariate independently corresponds with scores on the RPS. In thinking more about results of

this model, I wondered whether it was reasonable to expect that perceptions of discrimination and feelings of linked fate should have the unconditional relationship with respectability assumed by the model. With respect to linked fate and perceptions of discrimination, there are competing expectations about what the relationship between these concepts and respectability would be, depending on how one thinks about what the concepts imply. Again, one who perceives that there is much discrimination toward the group may place the blame for this discrimination on the group or may view it instead as stemming from an unequal social system for which Blacks bear little, if any, responsibility. Likewise, one who feels a great sense of linked fate with members of her racial group may regard this as beneficial or costly, depending on what she thinks about members of the group.

With these possibilities in mind, I estimated another model, displayed in Table 3.6, that interacts perceptions of discrimination and linked fate with a measure of stereotype endorsement. The thinking here is that this measurement strategy ought to provide some theoretical clarity as to the relationship between these concepts and respectability, as those who differ in their embrace of negative stereotypes about the group also likely differ in their read of these instrumental considerations. The results are mostly consistent with the findings presented in Table 3.5, but interestingly we observe a strong and positive relationship between the interaction of perceptions of discrimination and stereotype endorsement and an embrace of respectability. Because the coefficients of these interactions can be difficult to interpret, I display the marginal effects in Figure 3.8.

Table 3.6 about here

Figure 3.8 about here

As we observe in Figure 3.8, among those who perceived low levels of discrimination toward the racial group (one standard deviation below the mean), endorsement of negative stereotypes about the group do not appear to bear on decisions to embrace or reject the politics of respectability. Among those who perceived a greater amount of discrimination toward the group (one standard deviation above the mean), a different pattern emerges. We observe among this set of respondents a divergence between individuals who endorsed more negative stereotypes about the group and those who rejected these stereotypes. Those who perceived a great deal of discrimination toward the group and who also endorsed more negative stereotypes about the group are likely individuals who simultaneously think the deck is stacked against Black Americans and also believe that Black people themselves are partially to blame for their lot. It therefore makes sense that these individuals more strongly embraced the politics of respectability relative to Blacks who perceived high levels of discrimination while rejecting more negative portrayals of their racial group. These results suggest that instrumental considerations do not uniformly affect individuals' desire to correct the behavior of in-group members and that these considerations work alongside existing beliefs about group members.

Is Respectability Just Authoritarianism?

Beyond understanding what differentiates adherents of respectability from those who reject the worldview, it is important to distinguish the RPS from a measure of authoritarianism that on first view might be seen as capturing a similar construct. As the results of prior analyses demonstrate, the RPS and the child rearing battery thought to measure authoritarianism do share some common variance, but it is clear from the results presented in Table 3.7 that the correlates of authoritarianism differ from those of the RPS. With respect to the authoritarianism battery, we find, for example, no relationship with age, though age was a fairly strong predictor of scores on

the RPS. We also find relationships between income, gender, party identification, and ideological self-identification, though none of these variables correspond with scores on the RPS. We do observe, consistent with findings regarding the RPS, that the more religious were more likely to endorse more authoritarian principles, but importantly find no relationship with authoritarianism and stereotype endorsement or feelings of group-based shame. These null results stand in stark contrast to the relationships we find between these psychological, group-relevant measures and the RPS. Given the modest relationship between the constructs and the apparent differences in predictors, I am confident that the RPS and the standard measure of authoritarianism are capturing different constructs, though again, all models predicting attitudes will include both measures.

Table 3.7 about here

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced the first measure of respectability, have discussed the psychometric features of the measure, and reported on its distribution, both in a convenience sample and in a more representative sample of Black Americans. Respectability, we find, has more than a few adherents, with a majority of both samples scoring above the midpoint on the Respectability Politics Scale. Using this measure, we are able to observe, for the first time, the correlates of respectability in a multivariate context, finding some support for the role of emotions and instrumental considerations in affecting the likelihood that individuals embrace or reject the politics of respectability. Further work is needed to more carefully refine the items to ensure that questions, particularly those related to Factor 1, are being read by respondents as intended, but analyses presented reveal that this initial measure shows great promise in helping capture variation in the attitudes regarding the politics of respectability. Importantly, this chapter

also demonstrates that this measure of respectability is not simply a rehashing of authoritarianism, as these measures appear to manifest from different lived experiences and considerations. In the next chapter, we will examine whether the Respectability Politics Scale, above and beyond existing measures, bears on the politics of Black Americans and their attitudes about punitive social policies.

Chapter 3 Tables and Figures

Table 3.1: Summary Statistics of Piloted Items for RPS

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
rp_avoidloud	0.44	0.36	0	1
rp_inform	0.55	0.34	0	1
rp_actrespinpub	0.72	0.28	0	1
rp_groombeforepublic	0.59	0.35	0	1
rp_avoidbaddress	0.37	0.35	0	1
rp_hairstyles	0.19	0.29	0	1
rp_behavefreely	0.57	0.33	0	1
rp_setsbackk	0.48	0.32	0	1
rp_carryselfrespect	0.68	0.32	0	1
rp_punishforstereotypes	0.33	0.32	0	1
rp_treatedbetter	0.45	0.32	0	1
rp_takeresponsibility	0.72	0.26	0	1
rp_didntworkhard	0.34	0.20	0	1
rp_convincewhiteppleq	0.42	0.39	0	1
rp_positiveimage	0.68	0.31	0	1
rp_avoiddependency	0.49	0.34	0	1
rp_blackleaders	0.68	0.30	0	1
<i>N</i>	246			

Table 3.2: Factor Loadings and Commonalities of Pilot Items

Variable	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	Uniqueness
rp_avoidloud	0.11	0.59	0.01	-0.01	0.06	-0.05	0.03	-0.07	0.22	0.48
rp_inform	0.15	0.00	0.50	-0.05	0.06	0.02	0.01	0.01	-0.09	0.62
rp_responsibly	0.73	-0.03	0.00	-0.01	0.02	0.05	0.20	-0.04	0.02	0.36
rp_groomthemselves	0.47	0.22	0.04	-0.06	-0.02	0.01	0.20	-0.12	0.06	0.43
rp_avoidbaddress	0.04	0.59	0.17	-0.01	0.03	0.11	-0.08	-0.11	0.10	0.38
rp_professionalhairstyles	0.04	0.36	0.06	-0.01	-0.15	0.25	0.00	0.08	0.02	0.67
rp_behavefreely	0.00	-0.48	0.04	0.01	0.08	0.06	-0.05	0.33	0.00	0.66
rp_setsback	0.20	0.08	0.37	0.20	-0.04	-0.01	-0.03	-0.07	-0.05	0.54
rp_othersrespect	0.78	0.06	-0.08	0.07	0.03	0.01	-0.04	0.07	0.01	0.35
rp_punishforstereotypes	-0.10	0.16	0.51	0.06	0.03	-0.07	0.04	0.09	0.12	0.68
rp_treatedbetter	0.01	0.66	-0.03	0.11	0.07	0.07	-0.03	-0.05	-0.14	0.42
rp_takeresponsibility	0.19	0.03	0.01	-0.02	0.43	0.11	0.00	0.19	0.02	0.64
rp_workharder	-0.05	0.11	-0.06	0.05	0.19	0.41	0.03	0.01	-0.06	0.75
rp_deserveequality	0.10	0.67	0.02	-0.02	0.03	-0.04	0.03	0.14	-0.08	0.43
rp_positiveimage	0.64	0.16	0.04	0.01	0.04	-0.12	-0.10	0.05	-0.03	0.43
rp_avoiddependency	0.21	0.17	0.12	0.29	-0.04	0.17	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.53
rp_blackleaders	0.31	0.02	0.07	-0.01	0.42	0.01	-0.02	-0.07	0.02	0.54

Note: Based on principal factor analysis with oblique promax rotation of pilot items for the Respectability Politics Scale

Figure 3.1: Scree plot

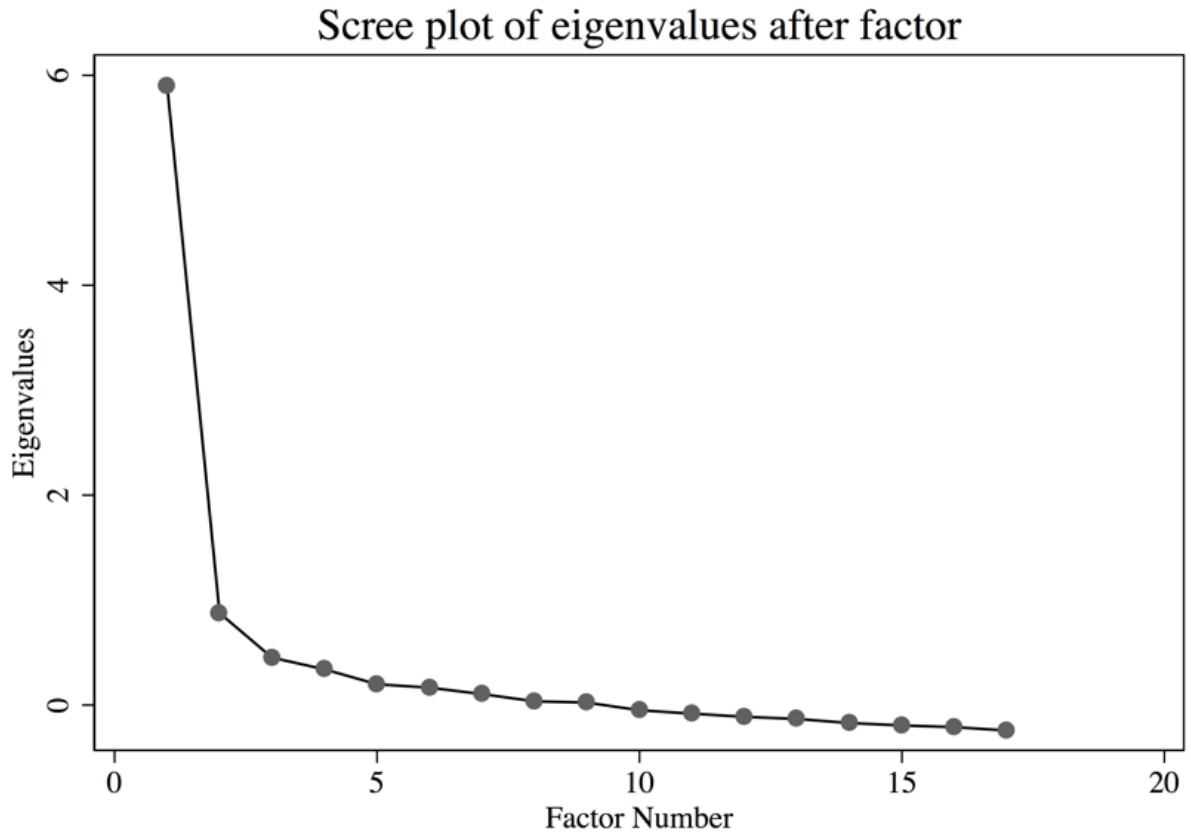
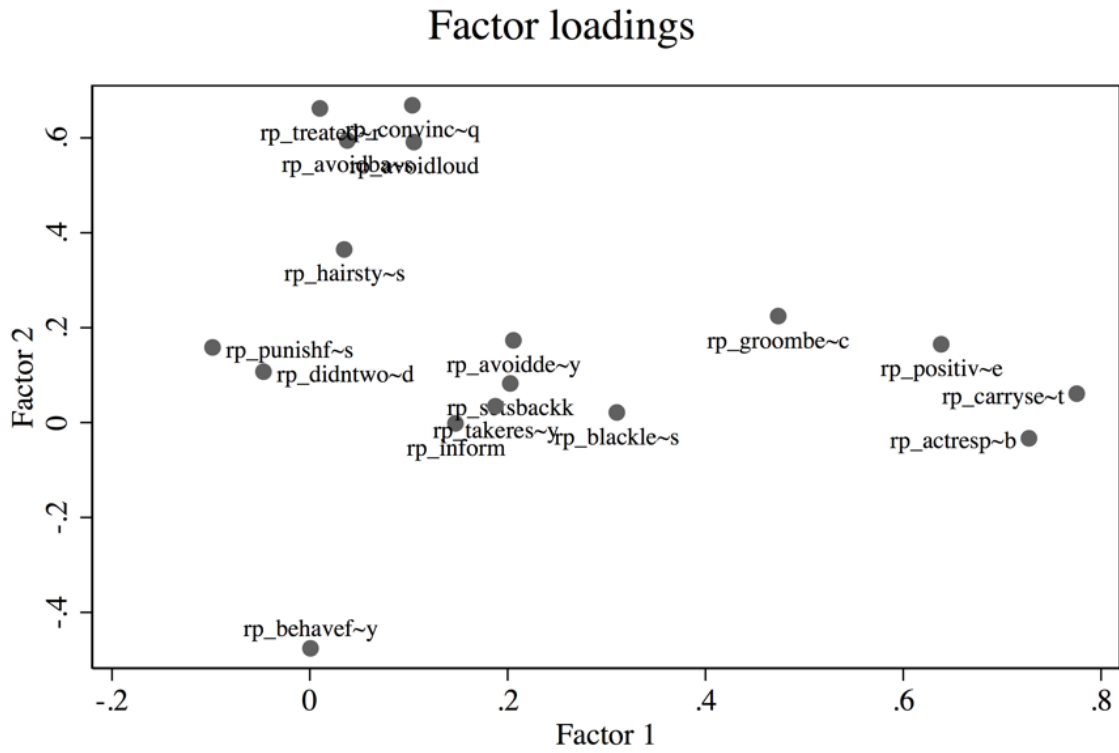


Figure 3.2: Plot of Factor Loadings



Rotation: oblique promax(3)
Method: principal factors

Figure 3.3: Distribution of Respectability Politics Scale in MTurk Study

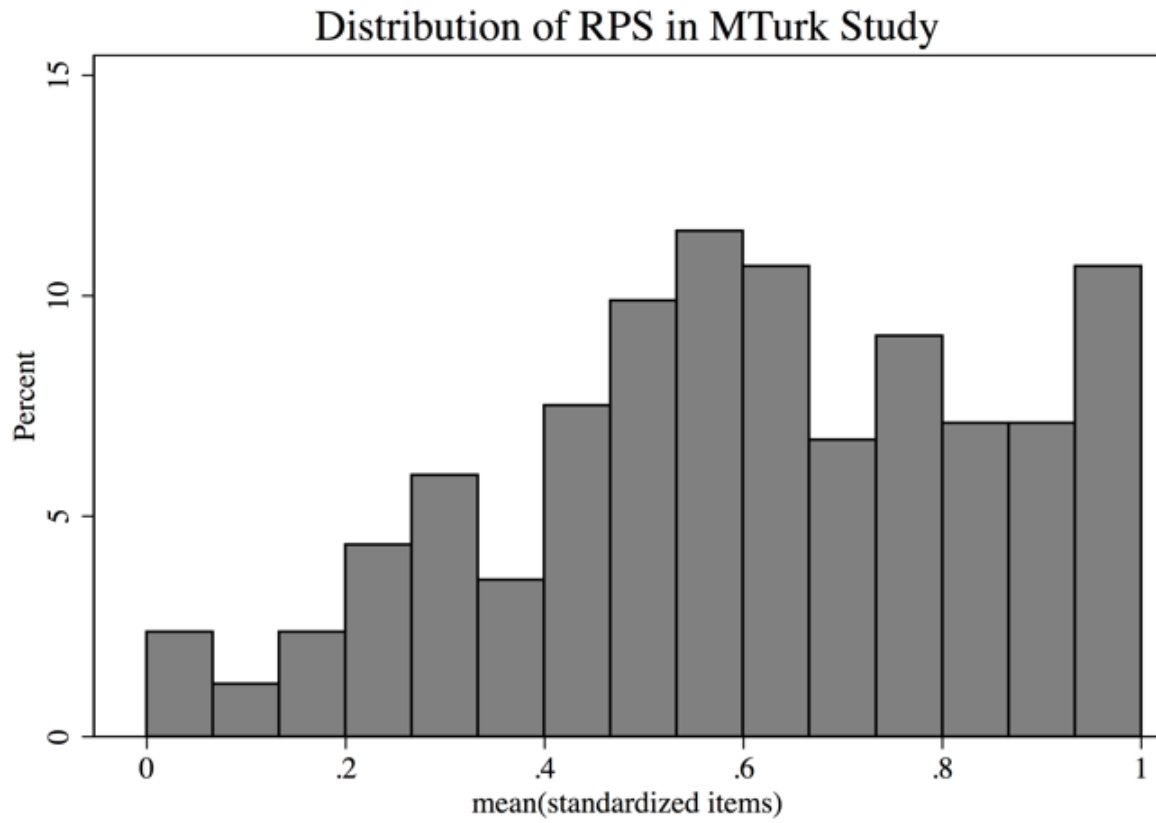
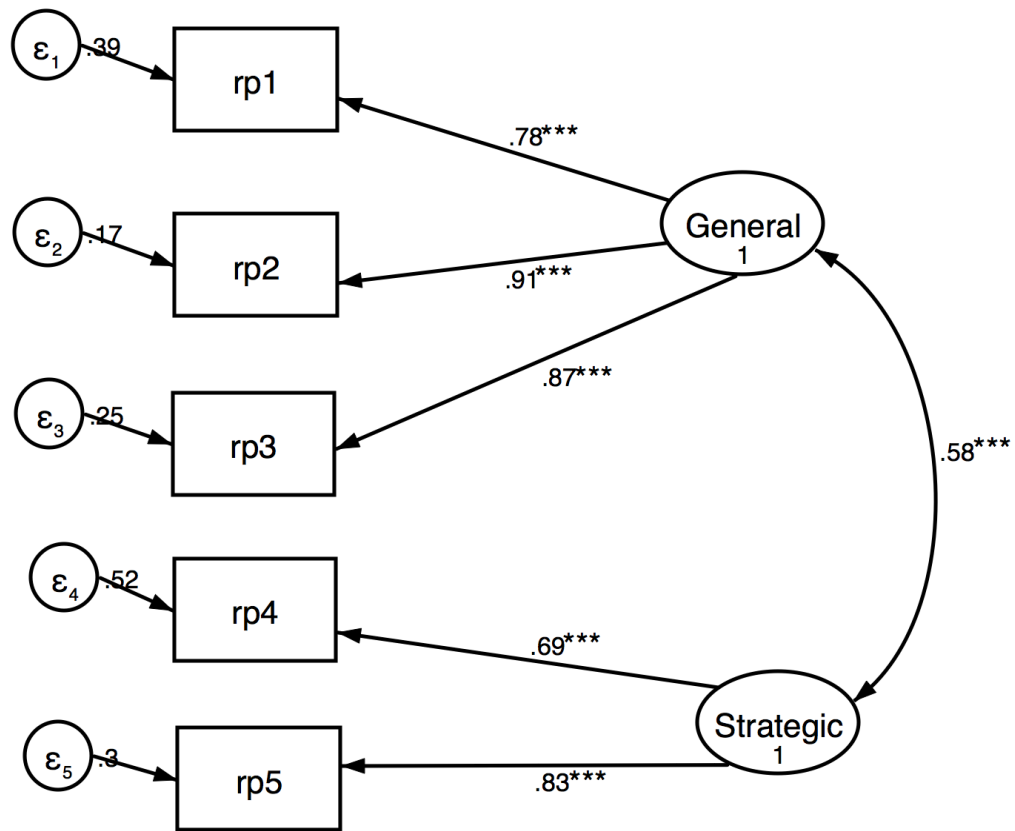


Figure 3.4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of RPS in YouGov Study



***p<.001

Figure 3.5: Distribution of Factor 1

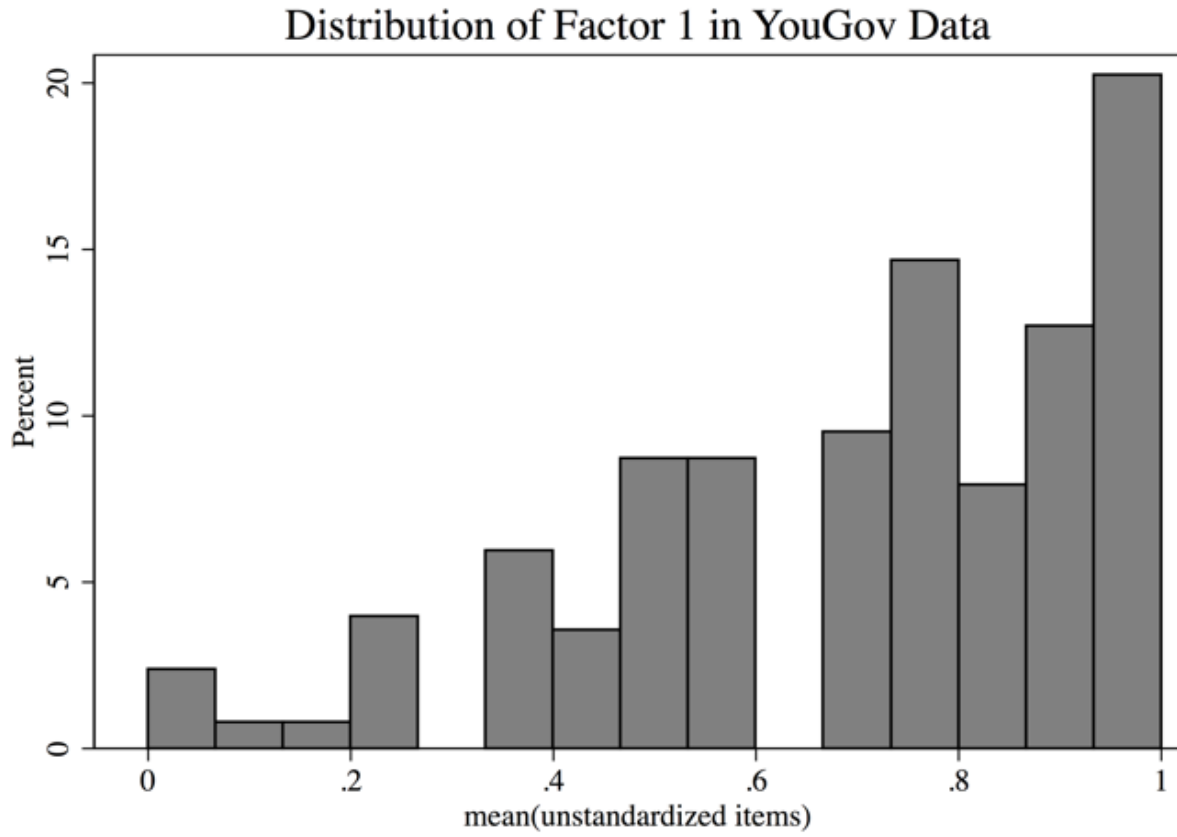


Table 3.3: Correlates of Factor 1 of the Respectability Politics Scale

	b	se	
Age	0.14	0.05	**
Education	-0.04	0.05	
Income	0.01	0.04	
Female	-0.01	0.02	
Party Id (Democrat)	0.05	0.05	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.04	0.04	
Authoritarianism	0.15	0.04	***
Racial Id Importance	0.04	0.04	
Linked Fate	-0.04	0.03	
Importance of Religion to Life	0.12	0.03	***
Perceived Discrimination	0.17	0.05	***
Stereotype Endorsement	-0.01	0.05	
Shame	0.05	0.04	
Constant	0.38	0.07	***
N	466		
R-squared	0.18		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Figure 3.6: Distribution of Factor 2

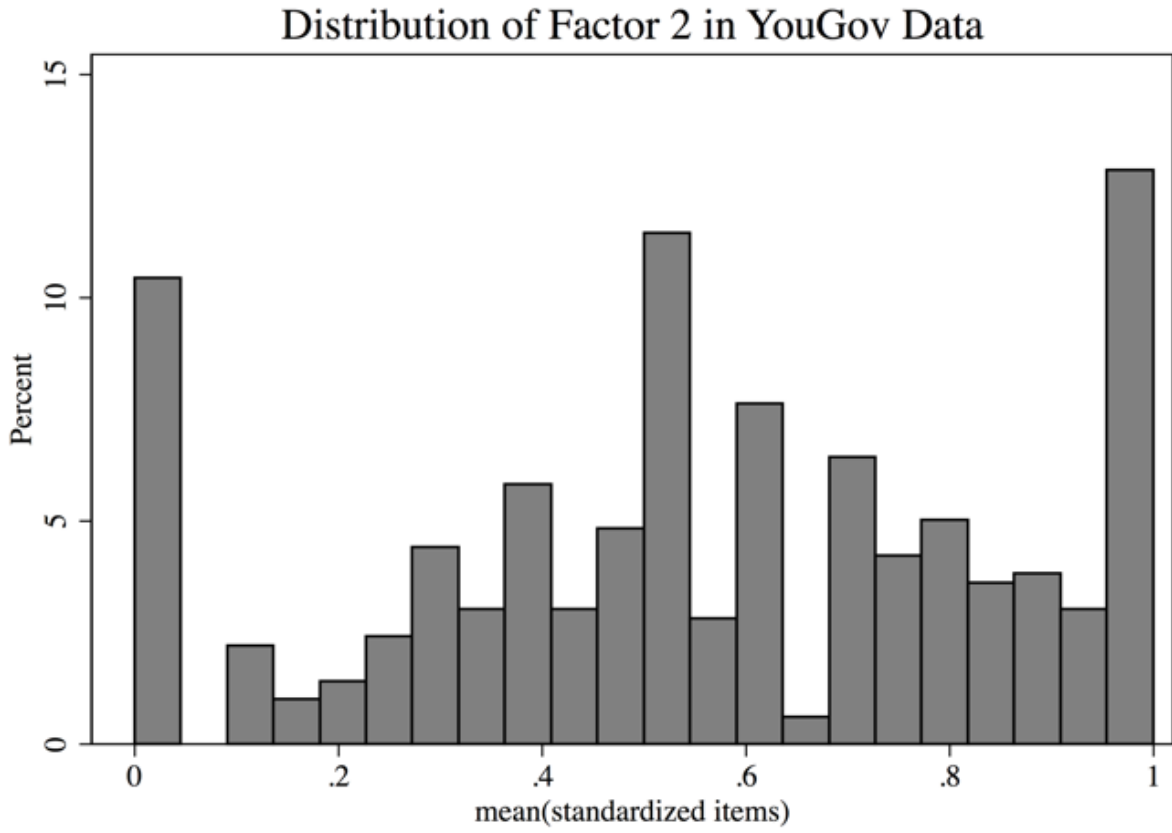


Table 3.4: Correlates of Factor 2 of the Respectability Politics Scale

	b	se	
Age	0.09	0.06	
Education	0.07	0.06	
Income	-0.08	0.05	
Female	-0.02	0.03	
Party Id (Democrat)	-0.10	0.05	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.02	0.05	
Authoritarianism	0.27	0.05	***
Racial Id Importance	0.12	0.04	**
Linked Fate	-0.02	0.03	
Importance of Religion to Life	0.11	0.04	**
Perceived Discrimination	-0.10	0.06	
Stereotype Endorsement	0.25	0.06	***
Shame	0.12	0.04	**
Constant	0.21	0.09	*
N	466		
R-squared	0.22		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Figure 3.7: Distribution of the RPS

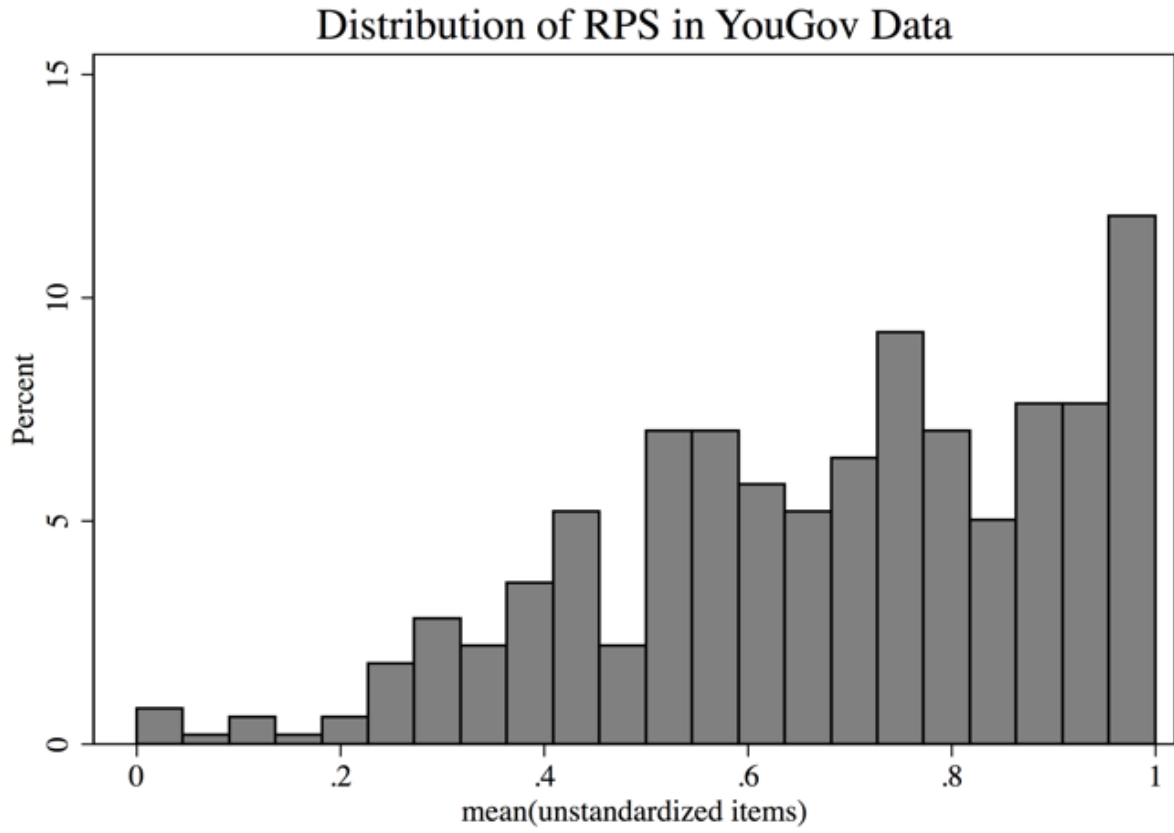


Table 3.5: Correlates of the Respectability Politics Scale

	b	se	
Age	0.12	0.05	**
Education	0.01	0.05	
Income	-0.03	0.04	
Female	-0.01	0.02	
Party Id (Democrat)	-0.01	0.04	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.03	0.04	
Authoritarianism	0.20	0.04	***
Racial Id Importance	0.08	0.03	*
Linked Fate	-0.03	0.03	
Importance of Religion to Life	0.12	0.03	***
Perceived Discrimination	0.06	0.05	
Stereotype Endorsement	0.10	0.05	*
Shame	0.08	0.03	*
Constant	0.30	0.07	***
N	466		
R-squared	0.21		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 3.6: Correlates of the Respectability Politics Scale with Interactions

	b	se	
Age	0.12	0.05	**
Education	0.01	0.05	
Income	-0.03	0.04	
Female	-0.01	0.02	
Party Id (Democrat)	-0.01	0.04	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.02	0.04	
Authoritarianism	0.20	0.04	***
Racial Id Importance	0.07	0.03	*
Linked Fate	-0.10	0.05	*
Stereotype Endorsement	-0.43	0.16	**
Importance of Religion to Life	-0.43	0.16	**
Linked Fate X Stereotype Endorsement	0.16	0.11	
Importance of Religion to Life	0.12	0.03	***
Perceived Discrimination	-0.18	0.09	
Perceived Discrimination X Stereotype Endorsement	0.56	0.20	**
Shame	0.09	0.03	**
Constant	0.52	0.09	***
N	466		
R-squared	0.24		

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Figure 3.8: Model of RPS including Interactions

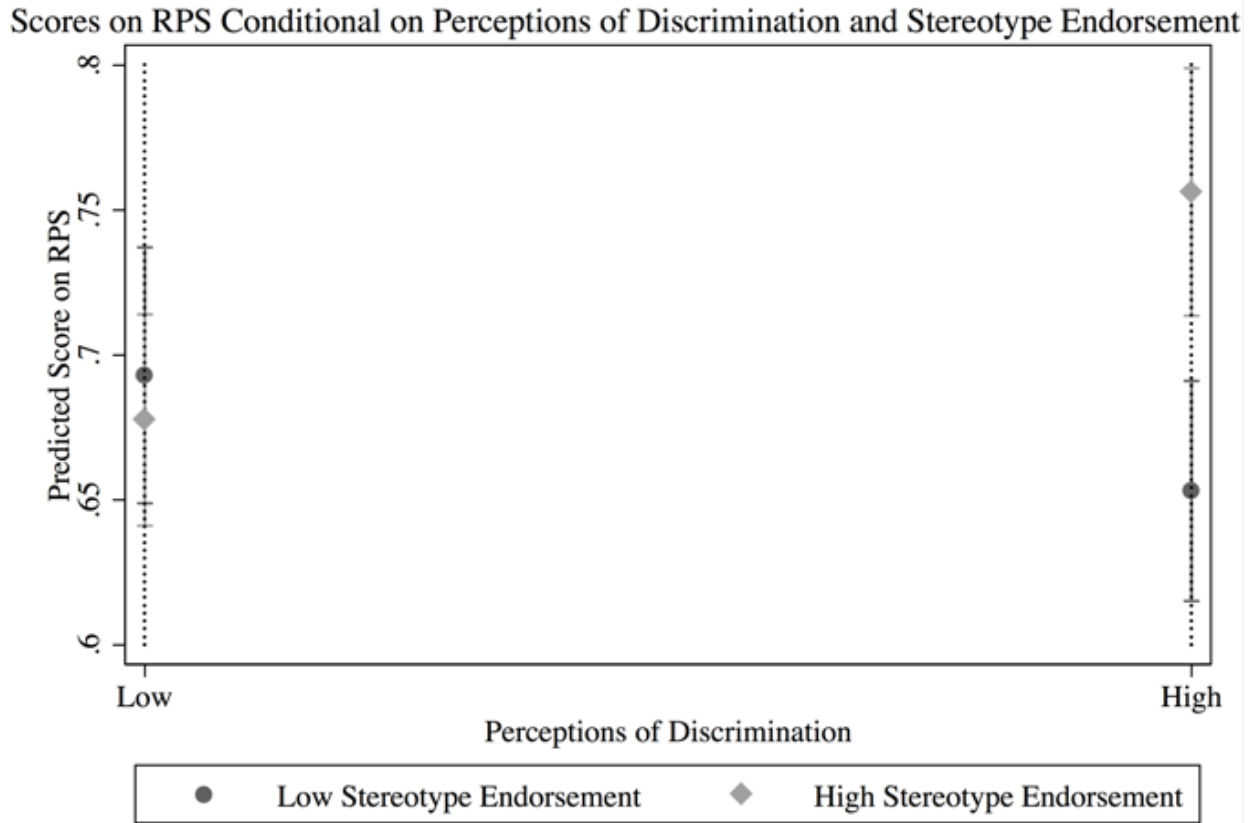


Table 3.7: Correlates of Authoritarianism

	b	se	
Age	0.03	0.06	
Education	-0.19	0.06	**
Income	-0.12	0.05	**
Female	-0.07	0.02	**
Party Id (Democrat)	0.13	0.05	*
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.14	0.05	**
Racial Id Importance	-0.02	0.04	
Linked Fate	-0.05	0.03	
Importance of Religion to Life	0.26	0.04	***
Perceived Discrimination	0.05	0.06	
Stereotype Endorsement	0.04	0.06	
Shame	-0.04	0.04	
Constant	0.65	0.08	***
N	466		
R-squared	0.22		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Full Set of Respectability Politics Scale Pilot Items [Order randomized]

Members of various groups hold a number of beliefs about how others members of the group should behave. We are interested in your thoughts about how other members of your racial group should behave.

How important is that Black people avoid being unreasonably loud in public?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

How important is it that Black people inform other members of the group when they are acting irresponsibly?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

How important is it that Black people act responsibly in public?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

How important is it that Black people groom themselves appropriately before going into public?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

How important is it that Black people avoid styles of dress that reflect poorly on the racial group?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

If Black people want to succeed in America, how important is it that they maintain professional hairstyles in the workplace? For example, how important is it that Black

people avoid dreadlocks, braids, or uncommon natural hairstyles while on the job?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

How important is it that Black people have the freedom to behave however they want even if it means being judged negatively by other racial groups?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

When some Black people behave poorly, how much does it set the Black community back?

None at all
A little
A moderate amount
A lot
A great deal

How important is it that Black people carry themselves in ways that others will respect?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

How important is it for Black people to punish those members of the group who confirm negative stereotypes about the group?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

How likely is it that Black people would be treated better by society if members of their racial group behaved better?

Extremely unlikely
Moderately unlikely
Slightly unlikely
Neither likely nor unlikely
Slightly likely
Moderately likely
Extremely likely

How important is it for Black people to take responsibility for the way their lives turn out?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

When Black people don't succeed in life, how often is it because they didn't work hard enough?

Never
Sometimes
About half the time
Most of the time
Always

If Black people want to convince White people that they deserve equality, how important is it that members of the group behave better?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

How important is it that Black people behave in ways that contribute to a positive image of the group?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

How important is it that Black people avoid the appearance of being too dependent on the government?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

How important is it that Black leaders talk more about the problems within the community caused by Black people themselves?

Not at all important
Slightly important
Moderately important
Very important
Extremely important

Chapter 4: Respectability and Black Attitudes toward Punitive Social Policies

In previous chapters, we have focused on the politics of respectability as a concept deeply rooted in the history of race in the United States. Respectability, I have argued, is not merely an ancillary feature of Black life in America that takes hold among the fringes of this diverse community. As the results presented in Chapter 3 make clear, it is instead a popular worldview embraced by many within the Black community. The concerns that respectability engenders regarding comportment, public image, and behavior are concerns that manifest across various lines of division. When asked to respond to items that capture their own embrace of respectability, respondents vary in the strength of their endorsement, but few fully reject the politics of respectability.

The burden remains, however, to demonstrate that respectability, separate and apart from existing constructs, contributes meaningfully to our understanding of heterogeneity in Black public opinion. More specifically, given the theoretical framework introduced at the outset, it remains to be seen whether and, if so, to what extent respectability shapes Black attitudes toward punitive social policies that bear on the lives of Black Americans.

In thinking about the politics of punishment among Black Americans, our empirical work has failed to keep pace with what we know about Black attitudes in this domain. As discussed in previous chapters, we know, for example, that a significant subset of Black Americans favors capital punishment, despite the disparate impact the death penalty has on the lives of Black men

in America. We know, similarly, from the work of various scholars, that this is not an aberration. Support within the Black community for the war on drugs and other policies that gave rise to America's system of mass incarceration is well documented (Alexander 2012; Forman Jr 2017b; Fortner 2015). Beyond this observed heterogeneity in Black attitudes toward criminal justice policies, we observe, too, diversity in attitudes toward policies related to the state's provision of social services and in individuals' judgments about how paternalistic the state ought to be toward those who receive its benefits (Soss, Fording, and Schram 2008). With few notable exceptions, however, the extant literature provides little insight into the kinds of considerations that shape Black attitudes toward these kinds of racialized punitive social policies, focusing instead on exploiting variation in White attitudes about the same.

The argument advanced in this dissertation is straightforward. To understand Black attitudes regarding punitive social policies perceived to target the in-group, we must attend to the kinds of group-based considerations that likely undergird attitudes of this type. In adopting a group-centric approach to understanding variation in these domains, this work is in keeping with an approach that acknowledges the group-centric nature of American politics (see Nelson and Kinder 1996, for example). More than that, this approach acknowledges the need to think carefully about the kinds of considerations that may uniquely motivate responses to those who share in a salient social identity. Whereas the existing literature focuses primarily on those factors that shape the attitudes of dominant group members toward policies perceived to target members of other, more subjugated groups, the analyses in this chapter are concerned with examining how members of the target group come to think about the same class of issues.

To reiterate, the theoretical framework that guides the analyses in this chapter expects that Blacks vary in their concern about the behavior of in-group members and, likewise, hold

differing views regarding the connection between the group's behavior and the group's status in society. These views are collectively captured using the Respectability Politics Scale, the measure introduced in the previous chapter. Again, scores on this measure distinguish between individuals who reject and accept the politics of respectability. Those with lower cumulative scores on the measure are less concerned about the behavior of in-group members and are less likely than higher scoring individuals to believe that treatment of the group will improve if members of the group behave better. Variation in respectability measures, therefore, is expected to correspond with variation in attitudes toward punitive policies perceived to correct or stave off certain kinds of behavior, particularly behavior that aligns with negative stereotypes about the group. This modeling approach, which takes advantage of a multivariate empirical framework, allows us to place the politics of respectability in direct contention with existing concepts.

Though I will refrain from going through, once again, a list of these concepts, I want to restate here that the empirical bar is a high one for the politics of respectability to overcome.²⁸ Variation in a range of factors could likely explain variation in our outcomes of interest—outcomes that focus principally on individuals' beliefs about racialized punitive social policies. In a standard American politics framework, we would look first to variation in partisanship or ideology as chief predictors of how individuals may come to think about these and other policies. Importantly, too, the RPS in the multivariate context, will have to contend with the possible influence of other familiar constructs like linked fate, which occupies a central role in much of our theorizing to date about Black politics. Both conceptually and empirically, linked fate and the Black Utility Heuristic, for which linked fate serves as an operational proxy, are key players in any work seeking to make sense of variations in the attitudes of Black Americans. In the

²⁸ See Chapter 3 for a more thorough discussion.

domain of Black politics research, few concepts emerge with greater star power. And finally, in the multivariate context, we can examine whether respectability gives us purchase beyond some more general concerns about behavior, which ought to be captured by something like authoritarianism. In short, the analyses presented in this chapter will put respectability to a difficult test, pitting it against a range of constructs thought to explain Americans' political attitudes in general (e.g. partisanship and ideology) and Black attitudes in particular (e.g. linked fate and identity centrality). As the results presented in the following pages will show, the RPS passes this initial test.

Beyond the multivariate analyses that will help demonstrate the meaningfulness of the RPS as a measure and of respectability as a construct, I also detail some results from a survey experiment that provides some insight into the constraints of the measures. In particular, the experimental analyses examine whether the RPS is differentially meted out in response to in-group members' behavior relative to those outside the group. As discussed in the existing literature, and as I theorize it here, the influence of respectability should be most pronounced in judgments that implicate members of the in-group, particularly considering the fact that respectability corresponds, at least to some degree, with self-conscious emotions like shame and embarrassment. For the sake of clarity, I will discuss the experimental set up used to test this expectation later in the chapter before discussing the results of the experiment. To preview the findings, however, the experimental results suggest a need to either further refine the measure or to extend our thinking about the scope conditions of respectability as a construct. I will provide some initial thoughts on the implications of these results at the end of the chapter, but return to this discussion in the concluding chapter.

First, let us focus our attention on the multivariate analyses that deal in turn with Black respondents' attitudes toward a range of punitive social policies. Again, the theoretical expectation guiding these analyses is rather straightforward. I expect that Blacks who more strongly endorse the politics of respectability will be more likely to support punitive social policies. Insofar as members of the group vary in their embrace of the politics of respectability—which we find relates to variations in authoritarianism, shame, and an endorsement of negative stereotypes about the group—they should also differ in their propensity to support punitive social policies meant to correct or punish “bad behavior” that deviates from norms of thrift, hard-work, modesty, respect for the law, etc.

To conclude that the politics of respectability is a meaningful construct that structures Black attitudes, the relationship between these attitudes and the RPS must persist even when considering potential alternative explanations related to partisanship (or partisan strength), ideology, linked fate, and an endorsement of negative in-group stereotypes. Importantly, the relationship must also hold after accounting for authoritarianism, which I regard here as a broader, more general attitude about behavior. As the evidence presented will show, the RPS meets this high burden across the set of items I examine, explaining variation in outcomes above and beyond these more familiar constructs.

Data and Methods

The data presented here is drawn from the July 2017 YouGov study described in the previous chapter. Recall that this data includes 500 Black respondents, and though the data are not drawn from a probability sample, respondents vary significantly in socioeconomic status, education, regional and religious background. Moreover, and importantly, there is heterogeneity across the set of outcomes. Again, the set of outcomes selected are intended to represent a range

of punitive social policies that bear disproportionately on the lives of Black Americans. Alongside these policy items are other questions that ought to align with attitudes regarding respectability, such as questions that ask individuals to assign structural or individual blame for the presence of gangs in American cities. In an effort to closely examine the measure of respectability introduced in the dissertation, I present two separate models for each outcome. The primary model of interest is the model that regresses the full RPS measure—the five-item measure—on the outcomes of interest. A second model is then estimated that examines the influence of the two individual factors that comprise the RPS. The reader will recall that the first factor includes three items that focus on individuals’ sense of how important it is that Blacks behave responsibly in public, that they carry themselves in ways that others will respect, and behave in ways that contribute to a positive image of the group. The second factor includes two additional items that gauge respondents’ sense that Blacks would be treated better by society and stand a better chance of convincing Whites that they deserve equality if the members of the group behaved better. All models include demographic controls, political covariates, and a set of potential confounders, chief among which is a measure of authoritarianism. Because these policy questions were asked after the experimental manipulation, I also include an experimental control in each of the models. For ease of interpretation, all variables are scaled between 0 and 1.

Results

Let us begin first with the policy discussed at the outset: support for sagging pants ordinances.²⁹ Among Blacks in the sample, 24 percent opposed these ordinances, though 54 percent of respondents expressed support for fining those who sagged their pants in public. The

²⁹ Full question wordings for all outcomes used in analyses included in Appendix E.

remainder, nearly 22 percent of respondents, reported that they neither supported nor opposed this measure. Looking at Table 4.1, we observe that scores on the RPS strongly correspond with attitudes toward sagging pants ordinances, above and beyond the influence of other covariates in the model. More specifically, respondents one standard deviation above and below the mean on the RPS differ by nearly 17 percentage points in their support for sagging pants ordinances ($p < .001$). When we pit Factor 1 and Factor 2 against one another in a second model, we observe that Factor 1—the items about the importance of good behavior in view of others—is strongly related to attitudes about sagging pants ordinances ($p < .001$), though Factor 2, comprised of the items about how Blacks would fare if they behaved better, is not significantly related to these attitudes.

Table 4.1 about here

Turning our attention next to attitudes about bans on certain hairstyles in the U.S. military, such as braids, dreads, and other natural hairstyles, we do not find that scores on the RPS contribute significantly to individuals' beliefs about this controversial policy. Again, there is much variation in opinion about this policy, but it is much less popular than fines for sagging pants. Whereas the majority of Black respondents support fining those who sag their pants in public, the majority of respondents oppose banning Black hairstyles in the U.S. military. Interestingly, perceptions of discrimination and gender are powerful predictors of attitudes toward these bans, with women and those who perceive greater discrimination toward Blacks more likely to oppose these bans, *ceteris paribus*. Looking at the exploratory model where the two factors are included as separate covariates, we continue to observe the influence of gender and perceptions of discrimination, but a puzzling pattern emerges with respect to the two factors. Those who score higher on the Factor 1 are less likely to support bans on these hairstyles, though

higher scores on Factor 2 correspond with more support. Because I did not expect these patterns to emerge in the data, I want to be careful in drawing too much of an inference from them, but my initial reaction, based on the other findings in the model, is that Blacks who serve in the armed services are likely already regarded by their in-group members as respectable individuals. Because they are already viewed as upstanding members of the group, policing their hairstyles may seem unnecessary or even counterproductive to some. The strong and positive relationship between the second factor and attitudes about this policy, however, suggest that those who believe that Blacks are engaged in some kind of *quid pro quo* when it comes to equality, are more willing to restrict certain hairstyles among these individuals ($p < .01$).

Table 4.2 about here

With respect to beliefs about how much the government should help a woman in one's community who contracts a sexually transmitted disease after having sex with multiple partners, I find no evidence that the RPS or that the individual factors explain responses to this question. I included the item to examine whether the measure might help us understand Black attitudes toward seemingly promiscuous behavior among members of the group, but at least in this context, the measure does not discriminate. It is perhaps the case that this particular manifestation of sexual promiscuity (contracting a sexually transmitted disease after having sex with multiple people) does not evoke in individuals concerns about out-group judgments, as this may be viewed more as a private matter. It could also be the case that while I hoped that "a woman in your community" would cue respondents to think about those who belong to their own racial group, a more explicit mention of race may have been necessary to have respondents make that connection. Here, on this question about how much help the government ought to provide—a clearly partisan question—we observe that partisanship and ideology emerge as key predictors,

with those more strongly attached to the Democratic Party and self-identifying liberals more likely to say the government should provide more help.

Table 4.3 about here

Though it is typical to ask individuals about the distribution of welfare subsidies, I ask here about individuals' beliefs regarding work requirements for welfare recipients. Given the standard portrayal of welfare recipients as undeserving and Black (Gilens 1999), the expectation is that these individuals will be viewed by other in-group members as threatening to the groups image, thereby eliciting the kind of punitive responses respectability engenders. As the results presented in Table 4.4 demonstrate, this expectation is borne out in the data. Individuals at either end of the RPS differ in their support for requiring welfare recipients to work ($p < .001$). An individual who wholly rejects the politics of respectability is likely to respond that it is only slightly important that welfare recipients be required to work or volunteer while receiving the benefit, while an individual at the other end of the RPS is likely to respond that such a requirement is very important. And when we separate out the two factors, we find that both of them positively and significantly correspond with support for this requirement.³⁰

Table 4.4 about here

We similarly observe that the full RPS and the two factors independently correspond with Black support for broken windows style policies (i.e. law enforcement stopping individuals who loiter, trespass, or are engaged in disorderly conduct in public). When asked about support for harsher penalties for those found in possession of illegal drugs, respondents who score higher on

³⁰ In pilot studies, I also explored whether the RPS corresponded with beliefs about whether funding should be increased for welfare or food stamps and find no significant relationship. This finding about the policing of recipients, however, is consistent across studies.

the RPS are also more likely to support these harsher penalties ($p < .001$), though the supplemental model suggests that the second factor is driving these results.

Table 4.5 about here

Table 4.6 about here

In line with suggestions that elites like Bill Cosby and Barack Obama were engaged in the politics of respectability when they scolded Black audiences for the behavior of in-group members, we also find that those who more strongly embrace the politics of respectability are more likely to blame poor parenting and hip-hop culture for the presence of gangs in American cities than failing schools or the lack of economic opportunities in these places ($p < .001$). Those high in respectability are also more supportive of corporal punishment in the home ($p < .01$), though we observe that the Factor 1 items about the importance of Blacks behaving well in public appear to correspond more strongly than the items about equality, which comprise Factor 2. This finding may align with qualitative work that suggests Black parents who use corporal punishment with their children worry about the negative consequences that will befall them if they misbehave (C. A. Taylor, Hamvas, and Paris 2011).

Table 4.7 about here

Table 4.8 about here

In 2015, riots broke out in Baltimore Maryland following the death of Freddie Gray, a Black man, in police custody. Several individuals involved in these riots were arrested. Many were teenagers. In this study, I asked respondents how much sympathy they had for those teenagers arrested in Baltimore who had engaged in riotous behavior following the death of Freddie Gray. Falling short of statistical significance, scores on the full RPS, do negatively correspond with reports of sympathy for these teenagers ($p < .10$). That is, those who score higher

on the RPS report less sympathy for those arrested, though again this finding is not statistically significant. Importantly, however, we do observe that when the influence of the two factors is estimated separately, the second factor is significantly related to lower levels of sympathy for these teenagers ($p < .05$). This finding makes sense theoretically, as this behavior conducted in public view could be viewed as threatening to the very cause for which these teenagers advocated, particularly among those who scored high on this second factor.

Table 4.9 about here

Finally, I was interested in examining whether variation in Blacks' embrace of respectability corresponded with their attitudes toward the death penalty, a policy that disproportionately bears on the lives of Black Americans. Consistent with theoretical expectations, the RPS strongly predicts support for the death penalty ($p < .001$). *Ceteris paribus*, respondents who score one deviation above and below the mean on the RPS differ by 11 percentage points in their support of the death penalty. Again, these findings persist above and beyond standard measures of partisan and group attachment and, importantly, persist in the presence of authoritarianism, which fails to even achieve statistical significance in the model. In the model in which factors 1 and 2 are included separately, we observe that individuals who score higher on the second factor are more likely to support the death penalty, whereas the first factor fails to achieve statistical significance.

Table 4.10 about here

Respectability and Policing of In-Group vs. Out-Group Behavior

Now that we have demonstrated that respectability powerfully corresponds with a set of punitive social policies, I wanted to test whether respectability differentially predicted responses to measures clearly targeted at the in-group relative to the out-group. The correspondence

between the RPS and in-group directed emotions like shame and group-relevant stereotypes suggest that respondents are, in fact, thinking about the in-group when they respond to the battery of questions that form the RPS, but I wanted a clear test of whether the measure's influence was constrained to in-group members. This can be considered in some respects a test of the measure's discriminant validity, at least if we assume that the measure ought to correspond with in-group behavior and not with responses to behavior that concerns out-group members.

As you may recall, respondents in the YouGov study were randomly assigned to one of two treatment conditions and exposed to six scenarios that either involved Black individuals or members of another target group. They were then asked to render a judgment about either the appropriateness of a policy (e.g. school dress codes), some behavior (e.g. protests at political rallies), or some punishment (e.g. life imprisonment under a state's three-strikes law).³¹ Because we are interested in whether the measure is differentially predictive of measures targeting the in-group versus those targeting the out-group, I estimate a model in which I interact respondents' condition (i.e. Black scenarios or non-Black scenarios) with respectability to predict the outcome. Respondents are coded 0 if they are in the non-Black scenarios condition and 1 if they are in the Black scenarios condition. For each outcome, a significant coefficient on the interaction would suggest that those who score higher or lower on the RPS respond differently when the target is a member of the out-group than they do when the target is a member of the in-group. A non-significant coefficient on the interaction suggests that an individual who scores high or low on the RPS is as punitive when the target is a member of the out-group as they are when the target is a member of the in-group. That is a test of the measure's discriminant validity, but we can also examine the extent to which the measure is more or less predictive within both

³¹ A full listing of the scenarios included is in the chapter appendix.

conditions. The graphic renderings of the results will allow us to examine both of these possibilities. In line with the analyses presented in the previous section, I also explore this expectation with respect to the two factors, considered separately.

At the risk of overwhelming the reader, I present a number of figures in the section below, but for clarity, let me describe in broad strokes the patterns that emerge. Contrary to my expectations, the RPS appears to bear on judgments that target non-Black subjects, just as it does when the target is Black. There are some exceptions that I discuss in detail, but the RPS discriminates more than I thought it would for non-Black scenarios. We observe similar patterns with respect to the first factor—the items that pertain to individuals’ sense of the importance of Blacks behaving well in public. The second factor appears to discriminate the most between responses in the non-Black and Black scenarios, though results are mixed, as we will see in the set of figures presented throughout this section. Because these results likely provide some of the more useful information as I think about refining the measure of respectability and as I consider the conditions under which the underlying motivations inspire more punitive responses, I will discuss the results of each scenario in some detail before concluding with some thoughts about what these experimental results, coupled with the results of the multivariate analyses, suggest moving forward.

Black Lives Matter Protests and Planned Parenthood Protests

Let us look first at responses to the scenario in which participants are told either that Black Lives Matter protestors or Planned Parenthood protestors have been interrupting campaign events. Respondents are asked how appropriate it was for protestors to use this tactic of interrupting to advocate for their position. As we observe in Figure 4.1a, individuals who score high on the RPS are as likely to say that the planned parenthood protest interruptions were

inappropriate as they are to say that the BLM interruptions were inappropriate. Similarly, those who score low on the RPS do not differ by condition, either. Looking at Figure 4.1a, we can see that the “Low Respectability” confidence intervals overlap in the two conditions, suggesting again that the RPS is not differentially affecting levels of punitiveness between the two conditions. We do observe, however, that whereas the RPS does not explain variation in the non-Black Planned Parenthood condition (i.e. overlap between those low and high in respectability), the RPS does significantly distinguish responses in the Black Lives Matter condition. In Figure 4.1b, we observe first that scores on the first factor explain variation in both conditions. That is, respondents in both conditions are equally punitive, depending on whether they are high or low scorers on this factor. In Figure 4.2c, we see that the second factor, which measures individuals’ beliefs that good behavior from within the group will lead to better treatment by society, does not explain variation in either condition, nor does it distinguish responses between the two conditions.

Figures 4.1a-4.1c about here

Life Imprisonment for Jack Pendleton or DeMarcus Jacobs based on Three-Strikes Law
In this scenario, respondents are told that a 25-year-old White or Black man has engaged

in a string of robberies in a wealthy suburb and that the case was recently featured on the local news. If he is convicted under the state’s three-strikes law, he could face life imprisonment. Respondents are asked how reasonable or unreasonable such a sentence would be. Here, we observe that the coefficient on the interaction is significant at $p=0.06$. Taking a look at Figure 4.2a will help us make sense of the differences that emerge. Here, observe that Blacks who score low on the RPS are much less likely to think that a life sentence is appropriate for DeMarcus than they are to think it is appropriate for Jack. Those high in respectability, however, are equally punitive toward Jack and DeMarcus. And whereas the RPS fails to explain variation in perceived

appropriateness of a life sentence for Jack, the measure strongly corresponds to attitudes when the punishment is targeted toward DeMarcus, the in-group member. The first factor again fails both tests. It neither distinguishes between the conditions, nor does it explain variation within (see Figure 4.2b). Factor 2, on the other hand, behaves much like the full RPS, with similar patterns emerging in the data (see Figure 4.2c). In this particular scenario, Black respondents who reject the politics of respectability are much more willing to cut DeMarcus a break than those who embrace respectability, as measured either by the full RPS or by responses to the second factor, which captures this more instrumental arm of the construct. Though we should be cautious in drawing too strong a conclusion from this one scenario, this finding seems to suggest that there are conditions under which respectability is localized to members of the in-group. Figuring out precisely what those conditions are requires additional study and testing.

Figures 4.2a-4.2c about here

Importance of Drug Testing Welfare Recipients when Whites or Blacks more likely to Use Drugs

When asked about the importance of drug testing welfare recipients after being told that White or Black recipients are more likely to use drugs, we see again that the RPS is predictive in both conditions. We observe, too, that individuals who score low on the second factor are most lenient toward members of their in-group, relative to all other individuals.

Figures 4.3a-4.3c about here

Importance of Hispanic Students Avoiding use of Spanish or Black Students Avoiding use of Ebonics

In this scenario, respondents were asked how important it is for Hispanic students to avoid using Spanish or how important it is for Black students to avoid using Ebonics at school. As the figures below show, the RPS and the individual factors explain variation in attitudes in both conditions. Consistently, however, high scoring individuals thought it most important that

the Black students avoid using Ebonics. The gap between low and high scoring individuals in each of the conditions, too, is different, as Black respondents at either end of the poles disagree most when asked about Black students using Ebonics. This discrepancy is most apparent with respect to the second factor, though it maintains across the three models and even emerges when factor 1 scores are considered. If that first factor is, as results from the previous chapter suggest, reflective of both individuals' concerns about the group and their sense of what might happen when in-group members step out of line, it makes sense that Blacks who score high on this factor think it important that Black students use proper English, lest they face negative consequences brought about by their place in a society that fails to treat them equally. Moreover, the use of Ebonics in public might be viewed as posing a threat to the group's image or may be seen as reinforcing negative stereotypes about the group's levels of intelligence or their fitness for full integration into society.

Figures 4.4a-4.4c about here

Reasonableness of Strict Dress Code in Black or Hispanic Schools

Similar to the previous scenario, this scenario asked respondents about the reasonableness of a strict dress code policy implemented in a school described as predominantly Black or predominantly Hispanic. I will not walk through each of the figures, but want to draw the reader's attention to Figure 4.5c in this set. Here, we observe that Factor 2 once again fails to explain variation in the condition where the school is described as predominantly Hispanic, though it does significantly predict responses in the condition where the school is described as Black, suggesting that it has a level of discriminant validity that is lacking for both the full RPS and the first factor. I will return to this point in the concluding remarks of this chapter.

Figures 4.5a-4.5c about here

Appropriateness of Arresting Connor or Jamal

In the final scenario, respondents are asked about the appropriateness of arresting a White man or a Black man following a discourteous interaction they had with a police officer who stopped them on their way to work for driving too quickly in a school zone. Here, we observe a set of somewhat puzzling findings. For example, in Figure 4.6a, respondents who score highest on the RPS are most punitive toward Connor, and we do not observe the patterns we would expect to observe in the other figures if the measure was discriminating in line with our theoretical expectations. There is perhaps some story to be told that individuals high in respectability in the Connor condition imagine that a Black person who spoke to the officer in the way Connor is described to have spoken to him would be held to account and, therefore, this White guy should be as well. That story requires more of a theoretical leap than I prefer, but it is instructive as I think more carefully about how contextual factors may influence the kind of judgments individuals make both about the behavior of in-group members and out-group members.

Figures 4.6a-4.6c about here

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to present a transparent portrait of the Respectability Politics Scale's influence on the attitudes of Black Americans. In an effort to more clearly understand the cumulative measure and its constitutive parts, I also examined the meaningfulness of the two factors in explaining variation in these attitudes as well. The results of the multivariate analyses are striking. We find, even after accounting for partisanship, ideology, authoritarianism, and measures of group identification, that this novel measure of respectability uniquely explains variation in opinion toward a range of policy questions. We find, for example, that those who more strongly embrace the politics of respectability are more likely to support harsher sentencing

for those found in possession of illegal drugs. They are similarly more likely to support policies like sagging pants ordinances, work requirements for welfare beneficiaries, broken windows policies that allow law enforcement officers to have more frequent contact with citizens, and are much more likely than those who reject the politics of respectability to support the death penalty, a policy that disproportionately affect Black people in the United States. There are, to be sure, cases in which the RPS does not appear to influence judgments, as we observe when we consider attitudes about military bans on certain hairstyles.

A deeper dive into the analyses that considers the influence of the two factors that comprise the RPS when pitted against each other provides mixed results. Coupled with the experimental results, there is a clear need to further interrogate the conditions under which the kinds of considerations proxied for by the two factors are most likely to influence individuals' judgments. As I note previously, my sense in developing the RPS was that the first factor would proxy for the kinds of ego-centric concerns that align with thoughts about threats to the group's image, and by extension, threats to one's own sense of self. The findings of this chapter paired with the findings of the previous chapter, give me greater confidence that the importance items that comprise Factor 1 most closely reflect individuals' sense that the world is an unequal place for Black people and that, as a result, it is important that Black people behave well. The word *important* seems to be doing a lot of the work in these items—more than I had thought previously. As a result, the RPS appears noisier than I would prefer. There is still much to gain from these analyses, however. We observe, for example, a number of cases where the second factor, which gets at the core of respectability politics—the sense that the lot of Black people would improve if they simply behaved better—corresponds with several outcomes of interest and behaves as we would expect in the discriminant analyses made possible by the experiment. There

is, to be sure, more work to be done to refine the RPS to ensure that it is capturing as clearly and efficiently the construct under consideration, but the findings of this chapter go a long way in laying the ground work for the additional theoretical and empirical work that is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

In the next chapter, I introduce one final experiment that returns to a question I raise throughout the dissertation: is the motivation to punish in-group members principally a response to negative psychological emotions brought about by bad behavior or the consequence of concerns that bad behavior will lead to negative real-life consequences for the group.

Chapter 4 Tables and Figures

Table 4.1: Support for Sagging Pants Fines

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.36	0.07	***			
Authoritarianism	0.19	0.06	**	0.19	0.06	***
Party ID (Democrat)	-0.03	0.07		-0.04	0.07	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.02	0.06		-0.01	0.06	
Racial ID. Importance	-0.03	0.05		-0.03	0.05	
Linked Fate	-0.06	0.04		-0.06	0.04	
Discrimination toward Blacks	0.13	0.07		0.11	0.07	
Stereotype Endorsement	0.06	0.07		0.08	0.07	
Age	0.25	0.07	***	0.25	0.07	***
Education	-0.12	0.08		-0.11	0.08	
Income	0.07	0.06		0.06	0.06	
Female	0.05	0.03		0.05	0.03	
Experimental Condition	-0.01	0.03		-0.01	0.03	
RPS Factor 1				0.29	0.07	***
RPS Factor 2				0.08	0.06	
Constant		0.10	0.10	0.08	0.10	
N		470		470		
R-squared		0.18		0.18		

^ $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.2: Reasonableness of Military Hair Bans

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.00	0.07				
Authoritarianism	-0.01	0.06		-0.02	0.06	
Party ID (Democrat)	-0.12	0.07		-0.09	0.07	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.05	0.07		-0.06	0.07	
Racial ID. Importance	-0.07	0.06		-0.08	0.05	
Linked Fate	0.11	0.04	*	0.10	0.04	*
Discrimination toward Blacks	-0.27	0.08	**	-0.21	0.08	**
Stereotype Endorsement	0.09	0.07		0.04	0.07	
Age	0.38	0.07	***	0.39	0.07	***
Education	0.03	0.08		0.01	0.08	
Income	-0.02	0.06		0.00	0.06	
Female	-0.14	0.03	**	-0.13	0.03	***
Experimental Condition	-0.04	0.03		-0.05	0.03	
RPS Factor 1				-0.23	0.08	**
RPS Factor 2				0.20	0.06	**
Constant	0.66	0.11	***	0.70	0.11	***
N	474			474		
R-squared	0.15			0.17		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.3: How Much Help to Provide Woman with STD

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.00	0.07				
Authoritarianism	-0.05	0.05		-0.05	0.05	
Party ID (Democrat)	0.20	0.06	**	0.20	0.06	**
Ideology (Liberal)	0.19	0.06	**	0.19	0.06	**
Racial ID. Importance	0.06	0.05		0.06	0.05	
Linked Fate	0.00	0.04		0.00	0.04	
Discrimination toward Blacks	0.12	0.07		0.12	0.07	
Stereotype Endorsement	-0.03	0.07		-0.03	0.07	
Age	0.18	0.07	**	0.18	0.07	**
Education	0.15	0.07	*	0.15	0.07	*
Income	-0.17	0.05	**	-0.17	0.05	**
Female	-0.02	0.03		-0.02	0.03	
Experimental Condition	-0.02	0.03		-0.02	0.03	
RPS Factor 1				0.00	0.07	
RPS Factor 2				0.00	0.06	
Constant	0.17	0.10		0.17	0.10	
N	471			471		
R-squared	0.14			0.14		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

**Note:* All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.4: Importance of Work Requirements for Welfare Recipients

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.48	0.07	***			
Authoritarianism	0.02	0.06		0.03	0.06	
Party ID (Democrat)	-0.01	0.06		-0.02	0.06	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.09	0.06		-0.09	0.06	
Racial ID. Importance	-0.06	0.05		-0.06	0.05	
Linked Fate	-0.06	0.04		-0.06	0.04	
Discrimination toward Blacks	0.02	0.07		0.02	0.07	
Stereotype Endorsement	0.05	0.07		0.06	0.07	
Age	0.00	0.07		0.00	0.07	
Education	-0.06	0.07		-0.05	0.07	
Income	0.20	0.06	***	0.20	0.06	***
Female	0.01	0.03		0.01	0.03	
Experimental Condition	-0.01	0.03		-0.01	0.03	
RPS Factor 1				0.29	0.07	***
RPS Factor 2				0.19	0.06	**
Constant	0.29	0.10	**	0.28	0.10	**
N	470			470		
R-squared	0.16			0.16		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.5: Importance of Stopping Individuals Loitering, Trespassing, Engaged in Disorderly Conduct in Public

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.38	0.06	***			
Authoritarianism	0.11	0.05	*	0.11	0.05	*
Party ID (Democrat)	-0.01	0.05		-0.01	0.05	
Ideology (Liberal)	0.08	0.05		0.08	0.05	
Racial ID. Importance	0.12	0.04	**	0.12	0.04	**
Linked Fate	0.00	0.03		0.00	0.03	
Discrimination toward Blacks	-0.10	0.06		-0.11	0.06	
Stereotype Endorsement	-0.01	0.05		0.00	0.06	
Age	0.08	0.06		0.08	0.06	
Education	-0.22	0.06	**	-0.22	0.06	**
Income	0.17	0.05	***	0.17	0.05	***
Female	0.03	0.02		0.03	0.02	
Experimental Condition	-0.03	0.02		-0.03	0.02	
RPS Factor 1				0.25	0.06	***
RPS Factor 2				0.13	0.05	**
Constant	0.22	0.08	**	0.21	0.08	*
N	471			471		
R-squared	0.22			0.22		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.6: Support for Harsher Drug Sentencing

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.29	0.06	***			
Authoritarianism	0.13	0.05	*	0.12	0.05	*
Party ID (Democrat)	0.00	0.06		0.03	0.06	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.11	0.06	*	-0.12	0.06	*
Racial ID. Importance	0.00	0.05		-0.01	0.05	
Linked Fate	-0.03	0.04		-0.04	0.04	
Discrimination toward Blacks	-0.10	0.06		-0.05	0.07	
Stereotype Endorsement	0.06	0.06		0.02	0.06	
Age	0.10	0.06		0.12	0.06	
Education	-0.10	0.07		-0.11	0.07	
Income	0.14	0.05	**	0.15	0.05	**
Female	0.05	0.03		0.05	0.03	*
Experimental Condition	-0.03	0.03		-0.04	0.03	
RPS Factor 1				0.02	0.07	
RPS Factor 2				0.27	0.05	***
Constant	0.21	0.09	*	0.23	0.09	*
N	469			469		
R-squared	0.15			0.17		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.7: Belief that Causes of Gangs in American Cities More Result of Personal and Cultural versus Structural Explanations

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.16	0.03	***			
Authoritarianism	0.03	0.03		0.02	0.03	
Party ID (Democrat)	0.01	0.03		0.02	0.03	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.04	0.03		-0.05	0.03	
Racial ID. Importance	-0.09	0.02	**	-0.10	0.02	***
Linked Fate	-0.02	0.02		-0.03	0.02	
Discrimination toward Blacks	-0.08	0.03	*	-0.06	0.03	
Stereotype Endorsement	0.09	0.03	**	0.07	0.03	*
Age	-0.02	0.03		-0.02	0.03	
Education	-0.04	0.04		-0.05	0.03	
Income	-0.02	0.03		-0.02	0.03	
Female	-0.01	0.01		-0.01	0.01	
Experimental Condition	0.00	0.01		0.00	0.01	
RPS Factor 1				0.02	0.03	
RPS Factor 2				0.13	0.03	***
Constant	0.43	0.05	***	0.44	0.05	***
N	465			465		
R-squared	0.20			0.21		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.8: Support for Corporal Punishment

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.20	0.06	**			
Authoritarianism	0.24	0.05	***	0.25	0.05	***
Party ID (Democrat)	-0.03	0.06		-0.05	0.06	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.13	0.06	*	-0.13	0.06	*
Racial ID. Importance	-0.07	0.05		-0.06	0.05	
Linked Fate	0.04	0.04		0.04	0.04	
Discrimination toward Blacks	0.11	0.07		0.07	0.07	
Stereotype Endorsement	-0.14	0.07	*	-0.11	0.07	
Age	-0.02	0.06		-0.03	0.06	
Education	0.00	0.07		0.01	0.07	
Income	0.07	0.05		0.06	0.05	
Female	-0.01	0.03		-0.01	0.03	
Experimental Condition	-0.07	0.03	*	-0.07	0.03	*
RPS Factor 1				0.24	0.07	***
RPS Factor 2				-0.02	0.06	
Constant	0.47	0.10	***	0.45	0.10	***
N	471			471		
R-squared	0.13			0.14		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.9: Sympathy for Rioting Teens Arrested in Baltimore

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	-0.12	0.07				
Authoritarianism	0.01	0.06		0.02	0.06	
Party ID (Democrat)	0.11	0.07		0.09	0.07	
Ideology (Liberal)	0.13	0.06		0.13	0.06	*
Racial ID. Importance	0.10	0.05		0.10	0.05	*
Linked Fate	0.11	0.04	**	0.11	0.04	**
Discrimination toward Blacks	0.25	0.07	***	0.23	0.07	**
Stereotype Endorsement	0.01	0.07		0.03	0.07	
Age	-0.17	0.07	*	-0.18	0.07	*
Education	0.16	0.08	*	0.17	0.08	*
Income	-0.03	0.06		-0.04	0.06	
Female	-0.04	0.03		-0.05	0.03	
Experimental Condition	-0.01	0.03		0.00	0.03	
RPS Factor 1				0.03	0.07	
RPS Factor 2				-0.14	0.06	*
Constant	0.13	0.10		0.11	0.10	
N	471			471		
R-squared	0.15			0.15		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Table 4.10: Support for the Death Penalty

	Model 1: Full RPS			Model 2: RPS Factors		
	b	se		b	se	
Respectability	0.25	0.07	***			
Authoritarianism	0.08	0.06		0.08	0.06	
Party ID (Democrat)	-0.03	0.06		-0.03	0.06	
Ideology (Liberal)	-0.03	0.06		-0.03	0.06	
Racial ID. Importance	0.05	0.05		0.05	0.05	
Linked Fate	-0.02	0.04		-0.02	0.04	
Discrimination toward Blacks	-0.02	0.07		-0.01	0.07	
Stereotype Endorsement	0.05	0.07		0.04	0.07	
Age	0.02	0.07		0.02	0.07	
Education	0.10	0.07		0.10	0.07	
Income	0.06	0.06		0.07	0.06	
Female	-0.05	0.03		-0.05	0.03	
Experimental Condition	0.04	0.03		0.04	0.03	
RPS Factor 1				0.11	0.07	
RPS Factor 2				0.14	0.06	*
Constant	0.25	0.10	*	0.25	0.10	*
N	470			470		
R-squared	0.08			0.08		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*Note: All variables scaled 0-1 for ease of interpretations.

Figure 4.1a

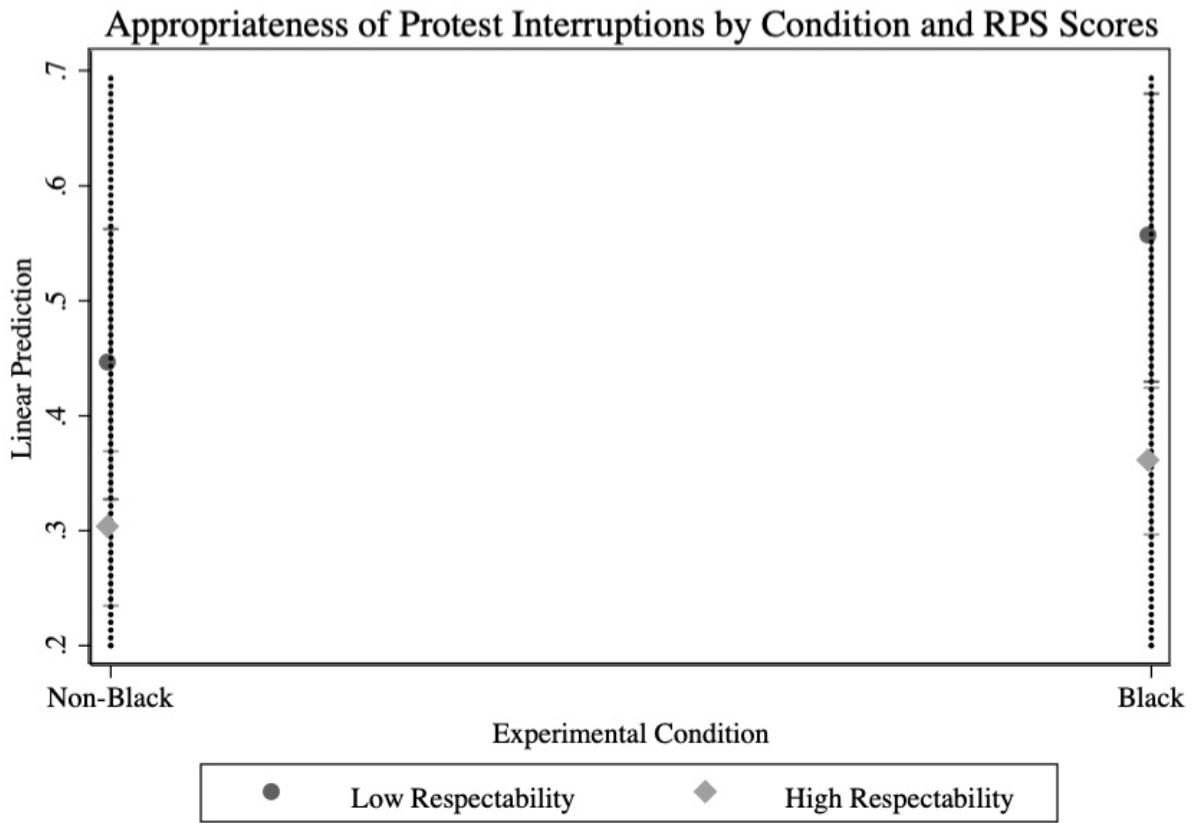


Figure 4.1b

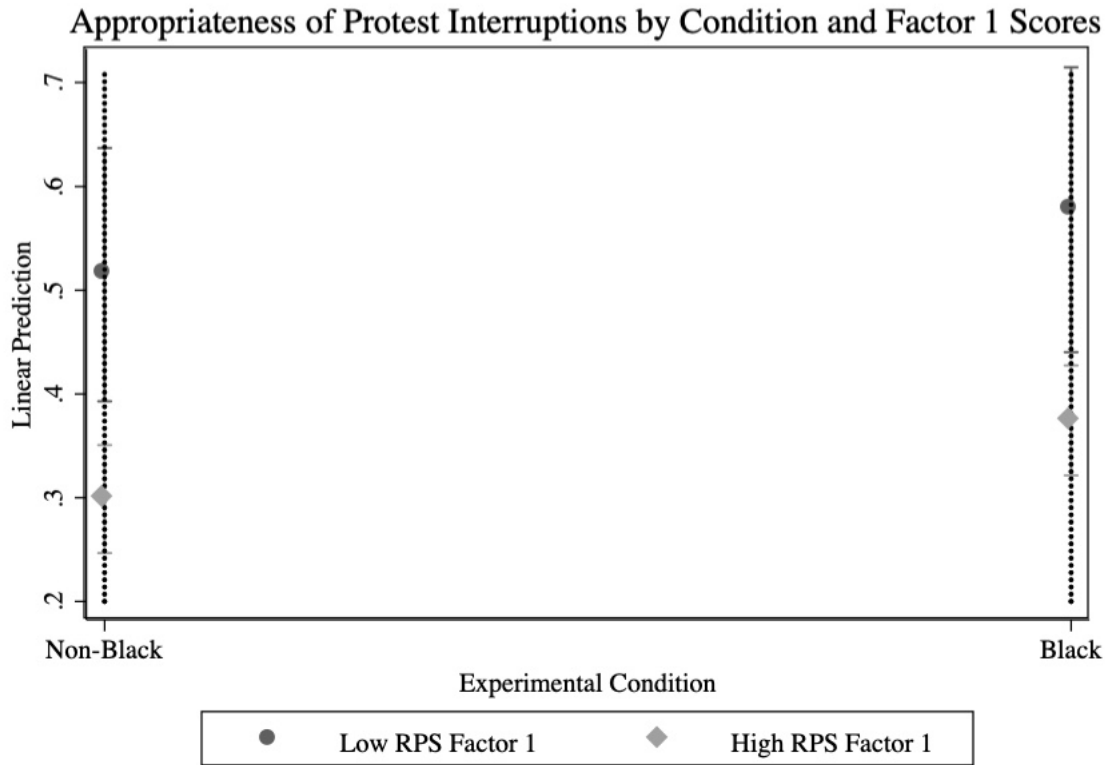


Figure 4.1c

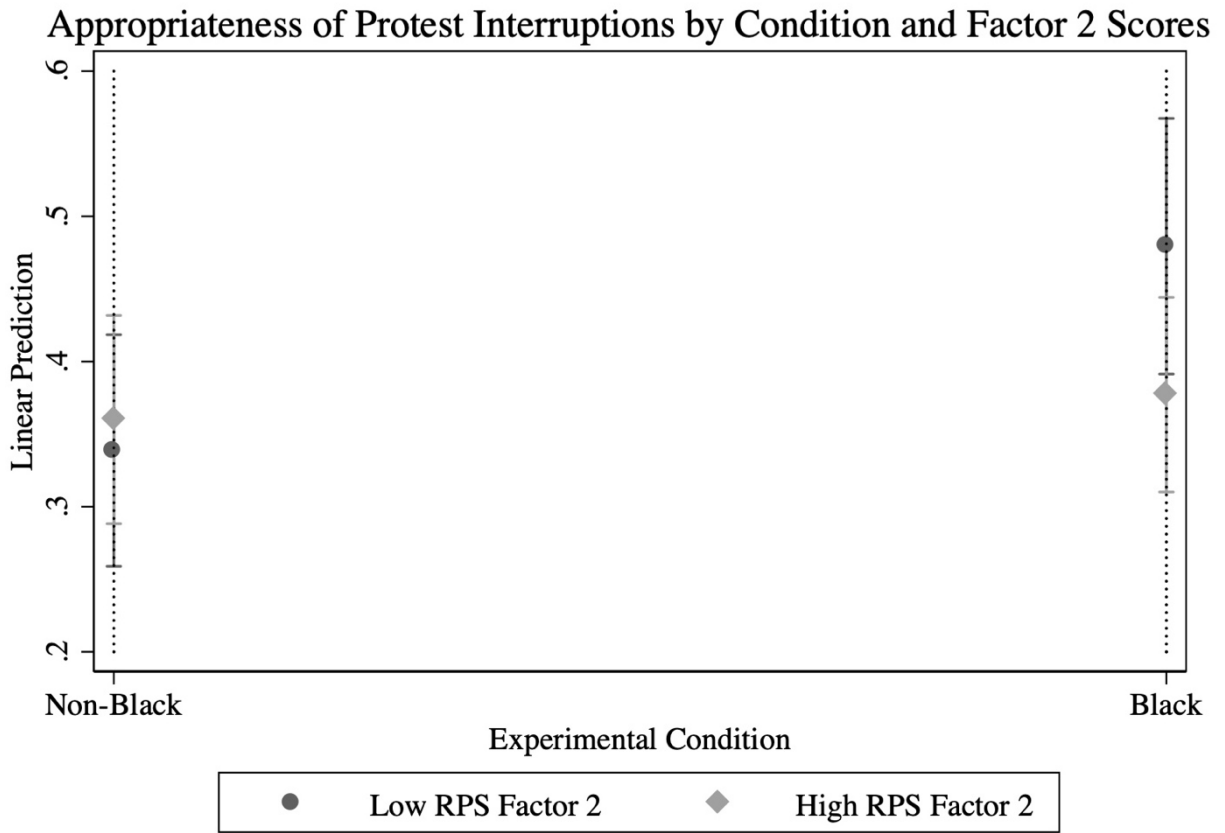


Figure 4.2a

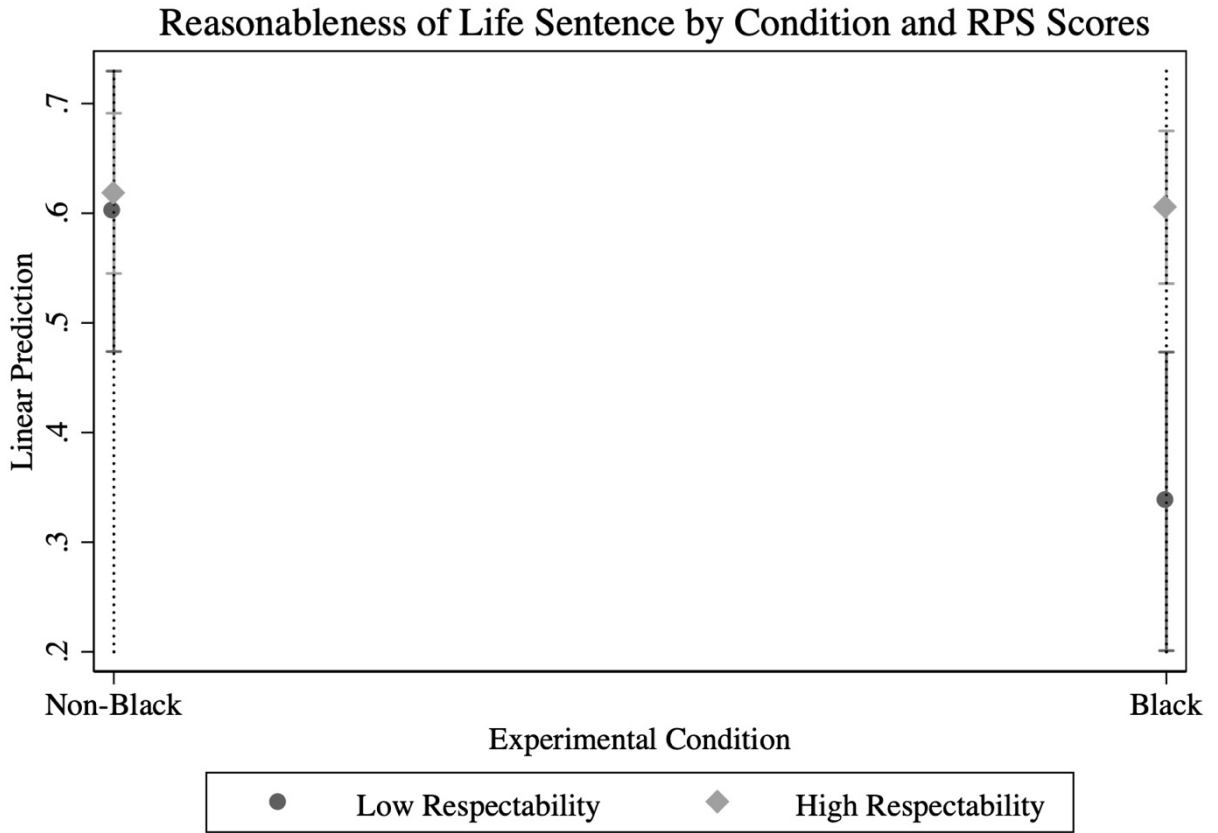


Figure 4.2b

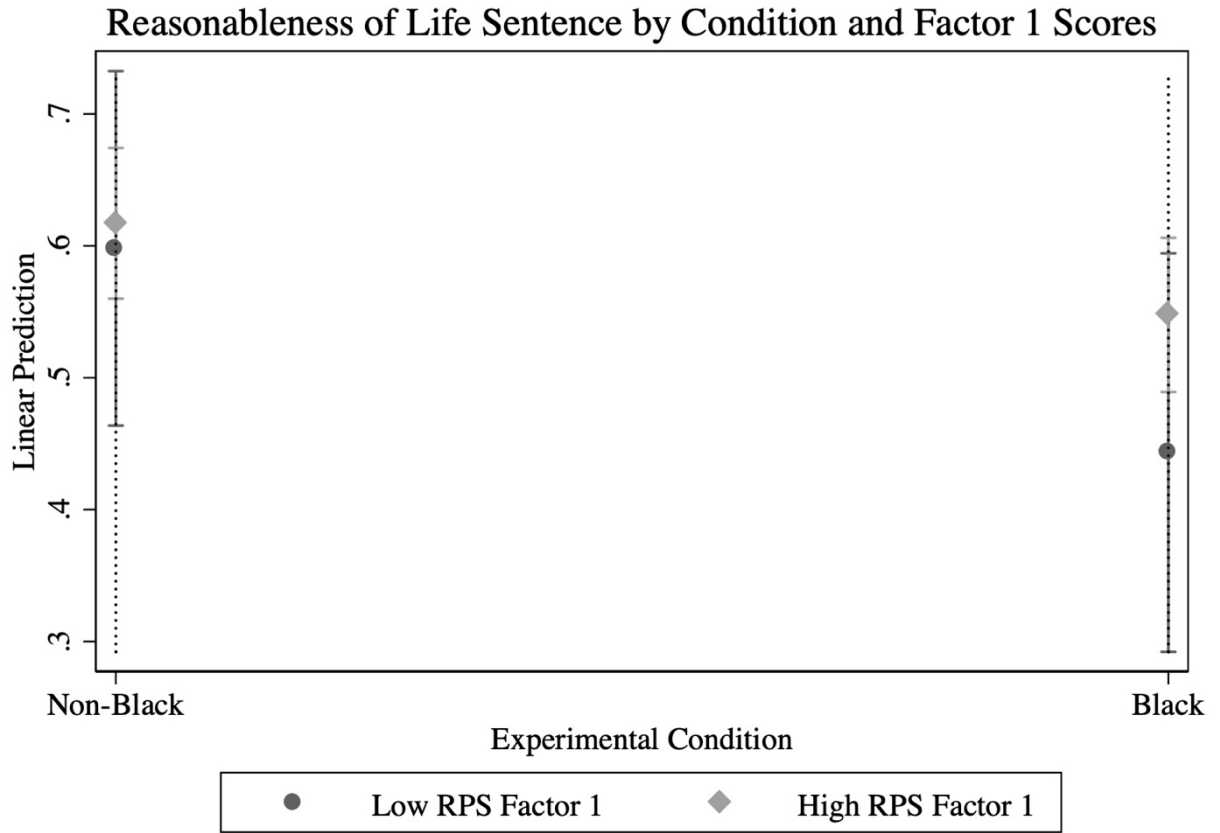


Figure 4.2c

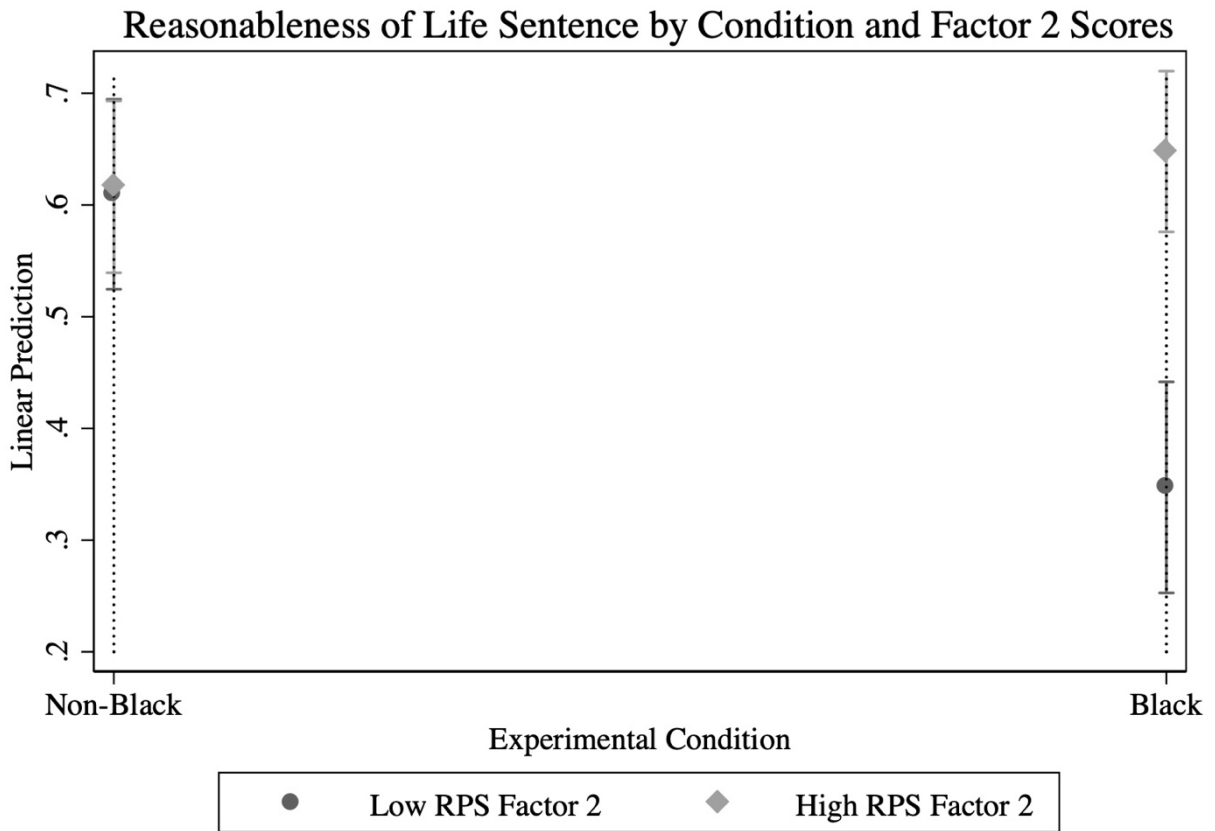


Figure 4.3a

Importance of Drug Testing Welfare Recipients by Condition and RPS Scores

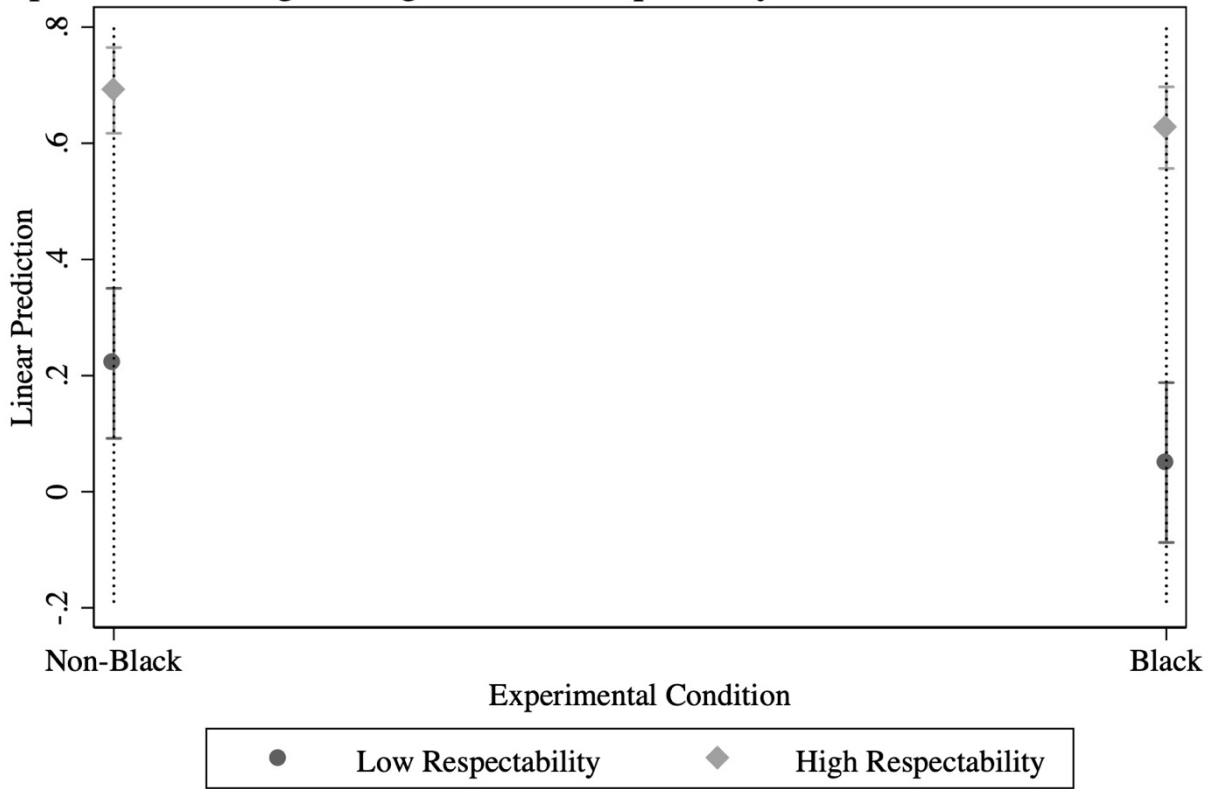


Figure 4.3b

Impt. of Drug Testing Welfare Recipients by Condition and Factor 1 Scores

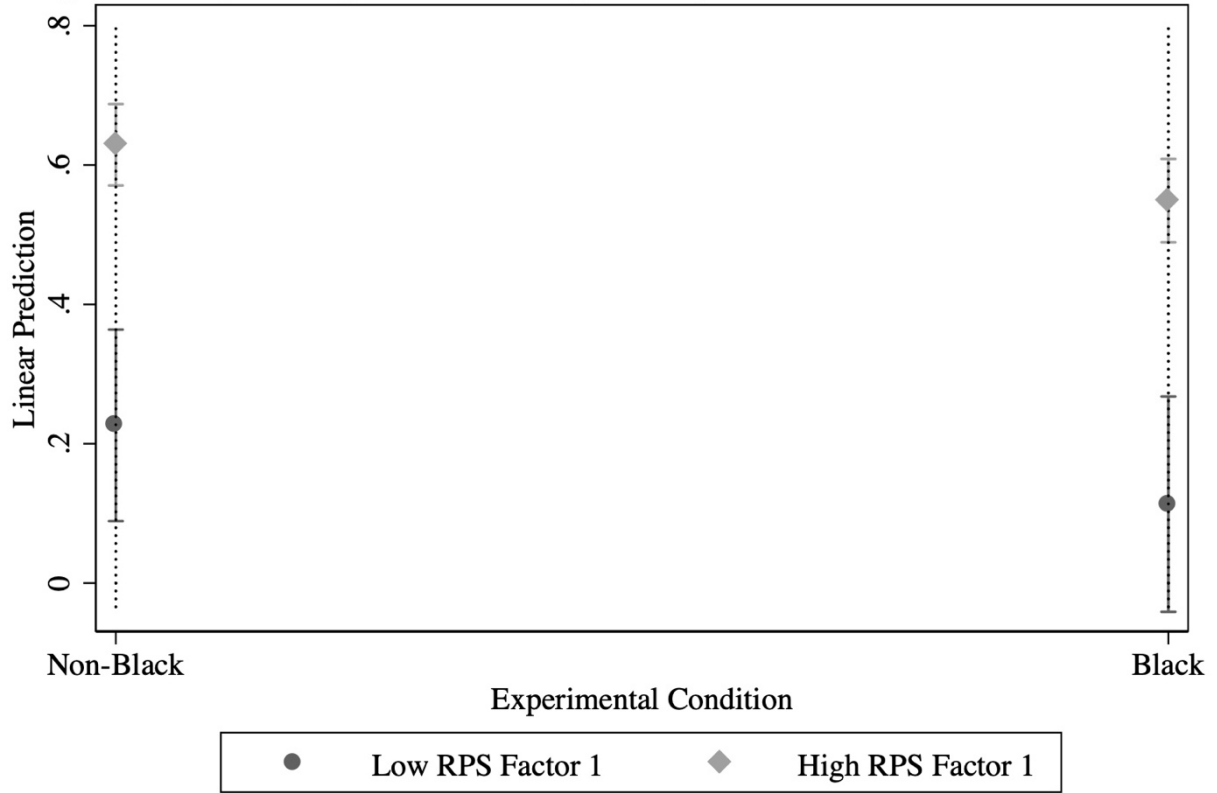


Figure 4.3c

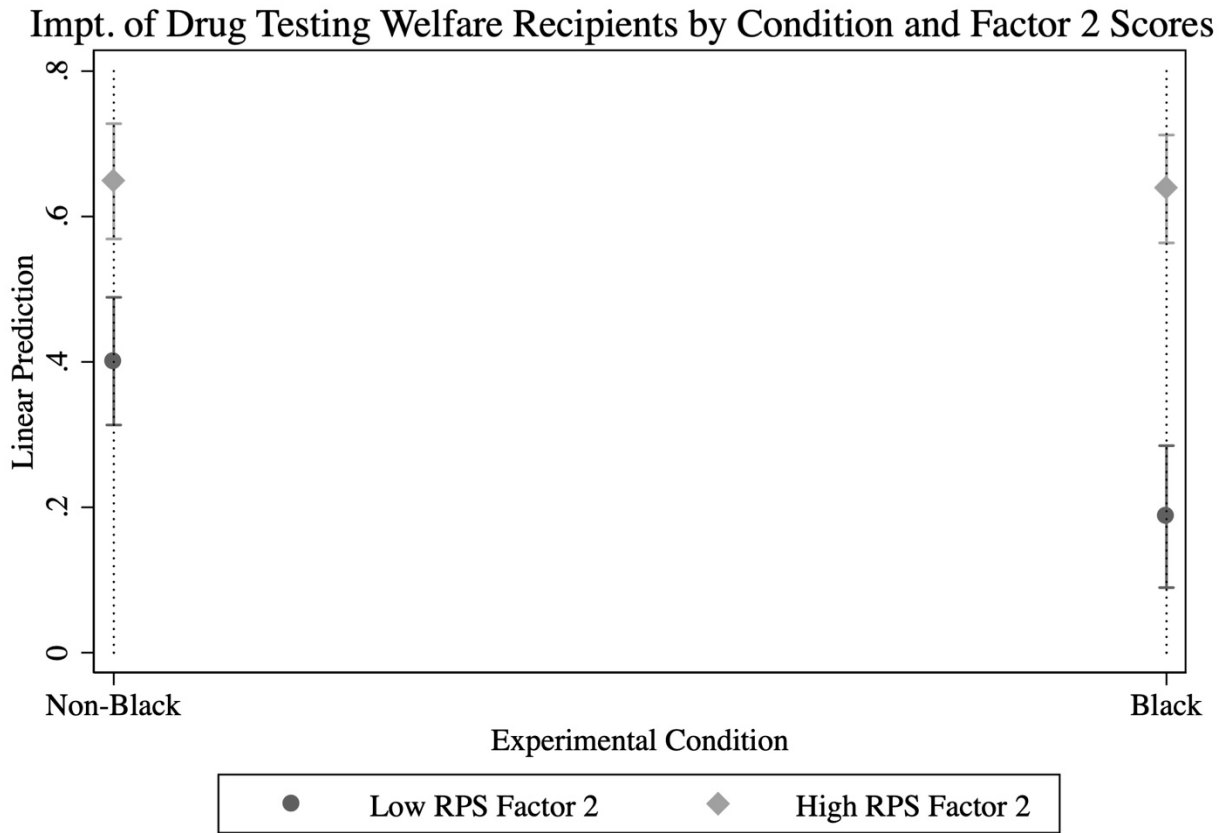


Figure 4.4a

Importance of Students Using "Proper English" by Condition and RPS Scores

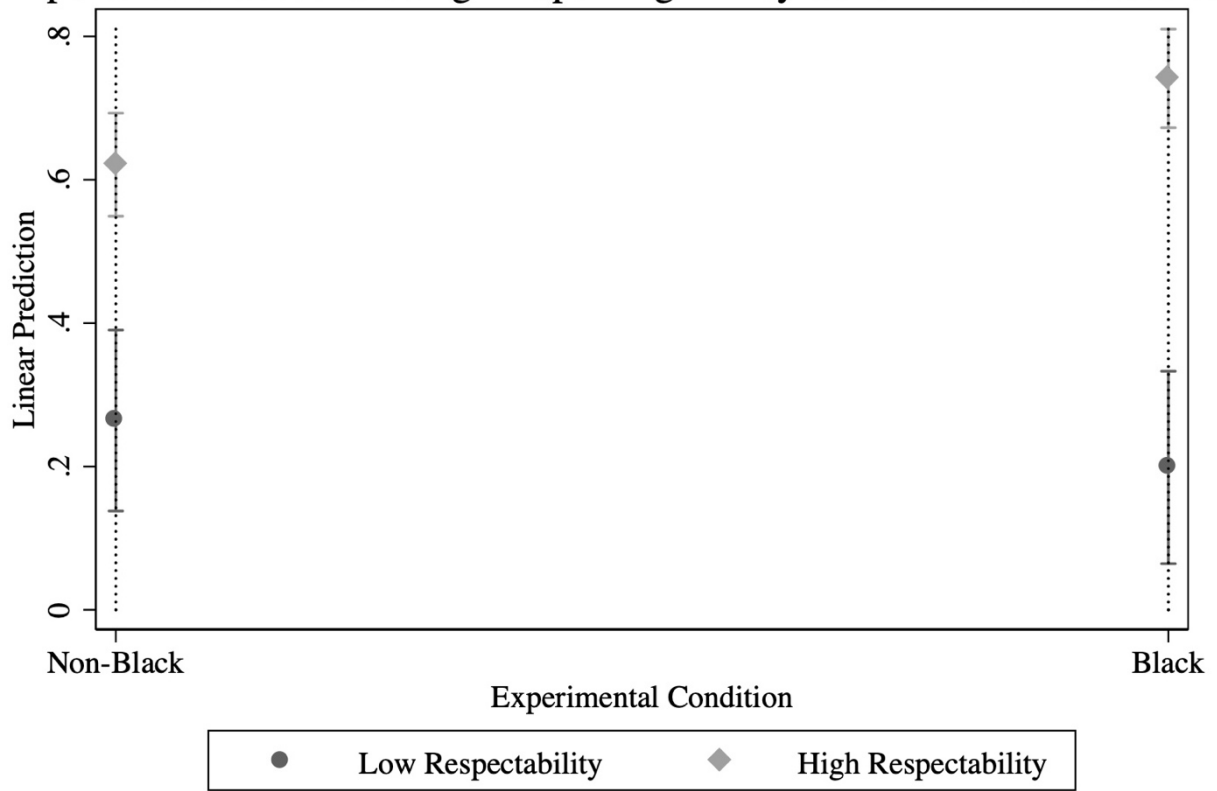


Figure 4.4b

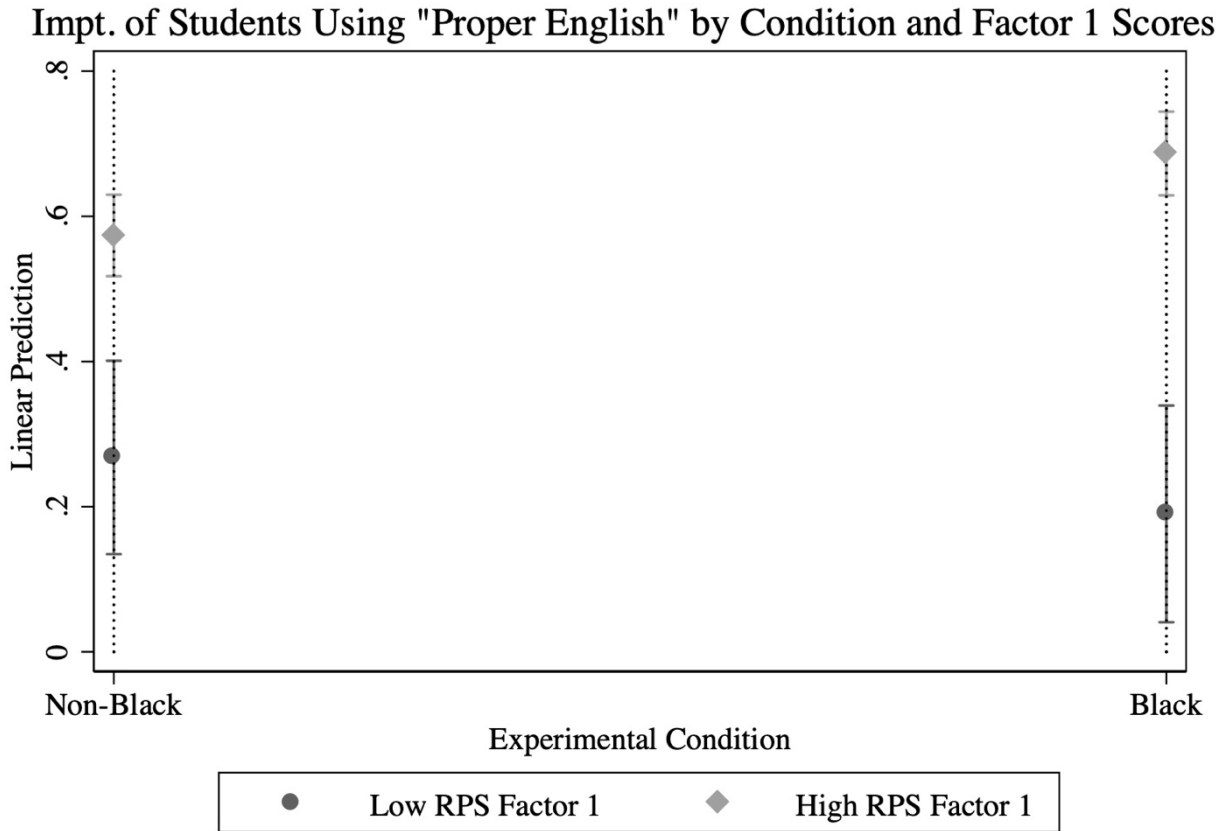


Figure 4.4c

Impt. of Students Using "Proper English" by Condition and Factor 2 Scores

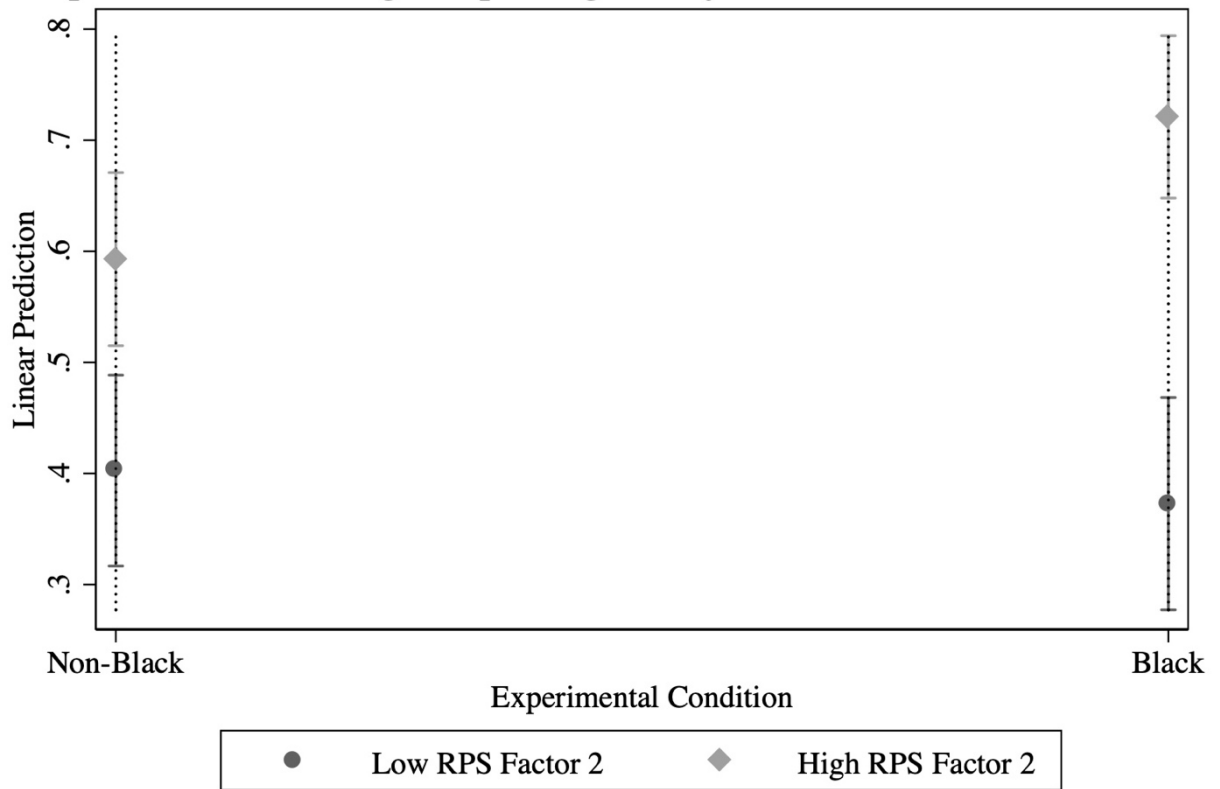


Figure 4.5a

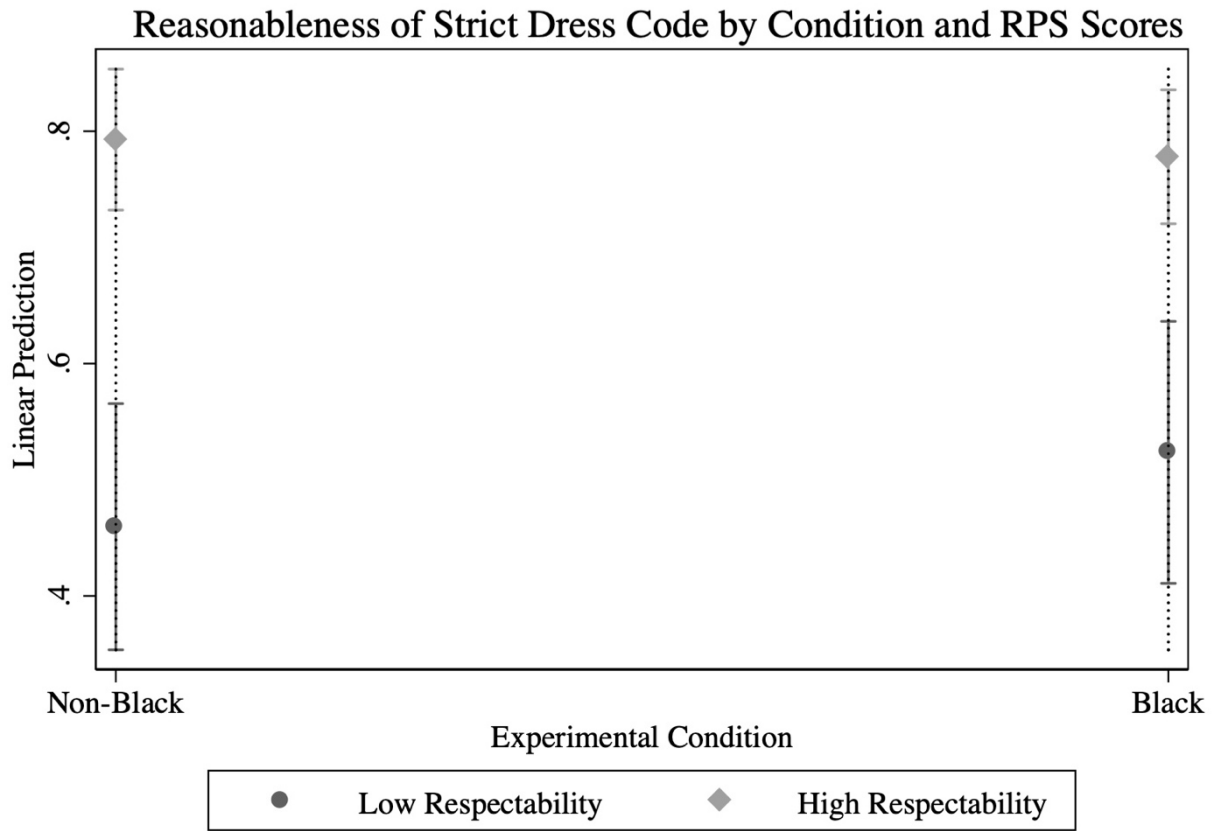


Figure 4.5b

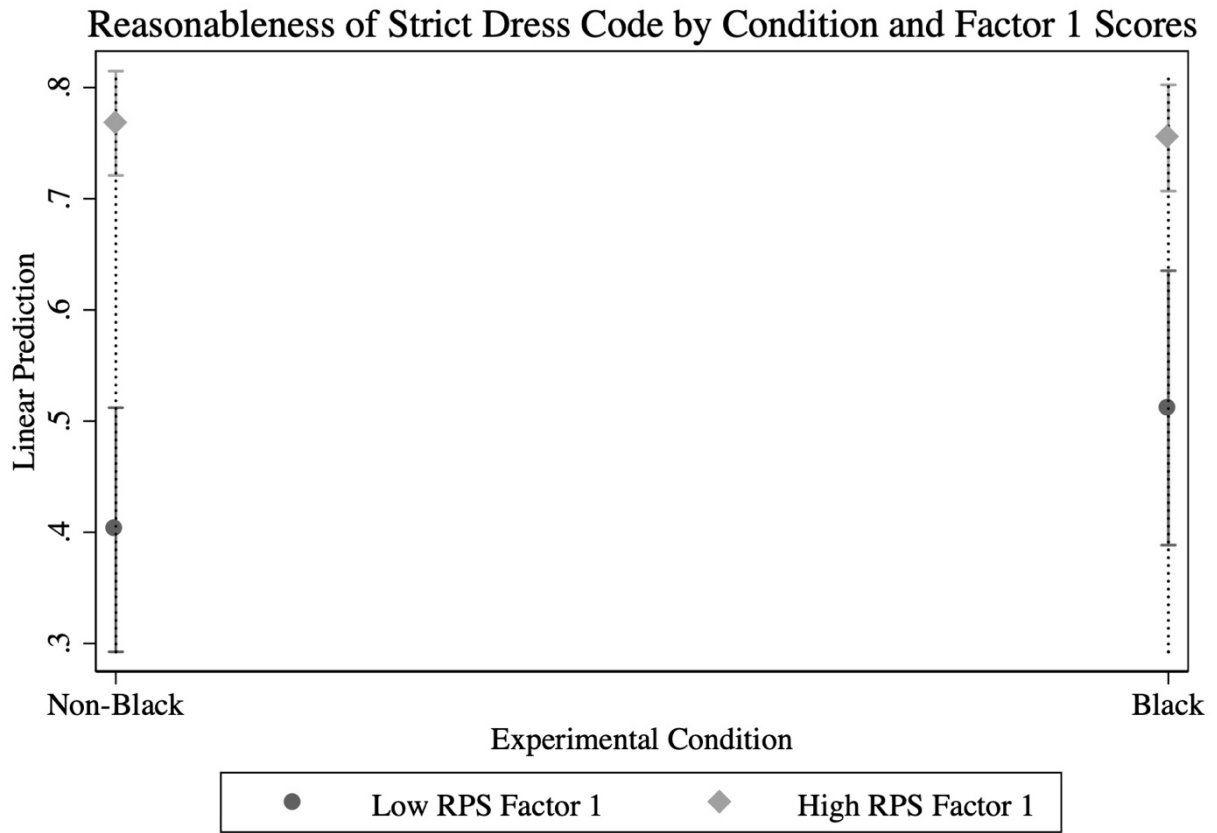


Figure 4.5c

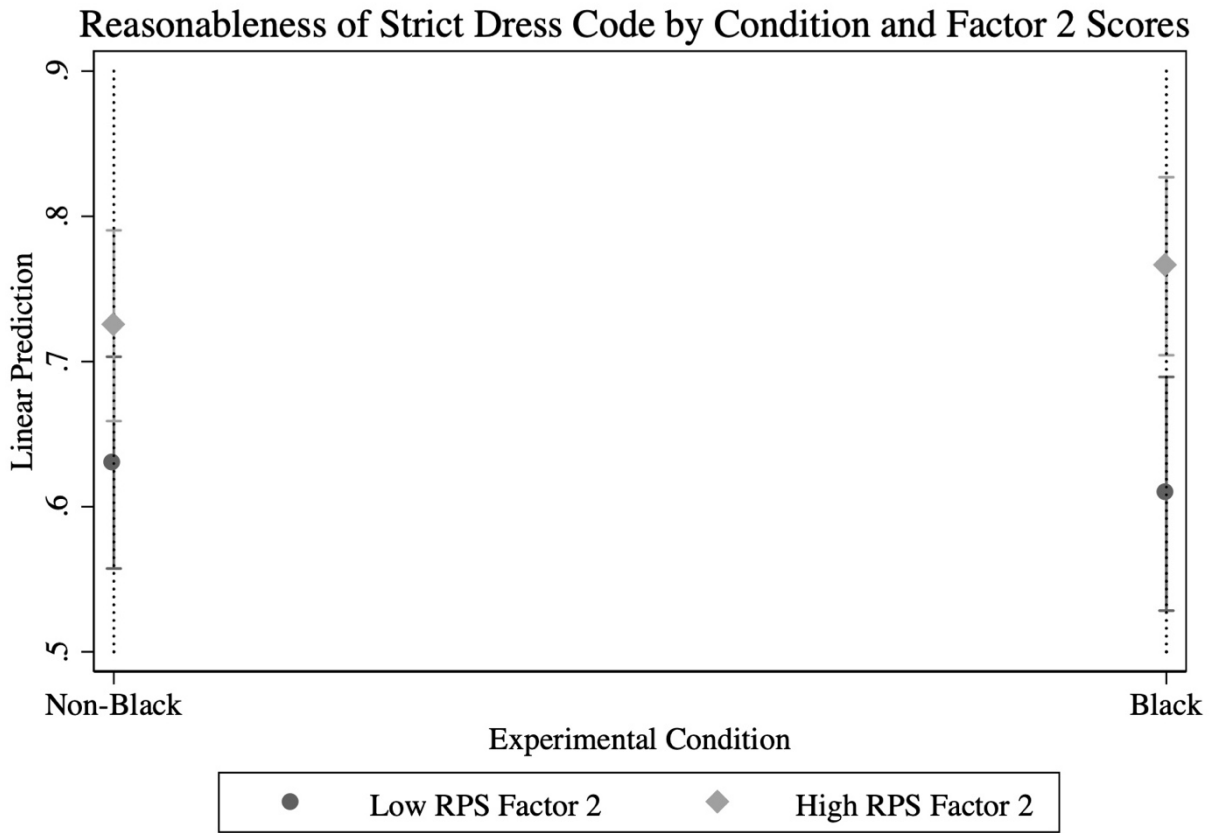


Figure 4.6a

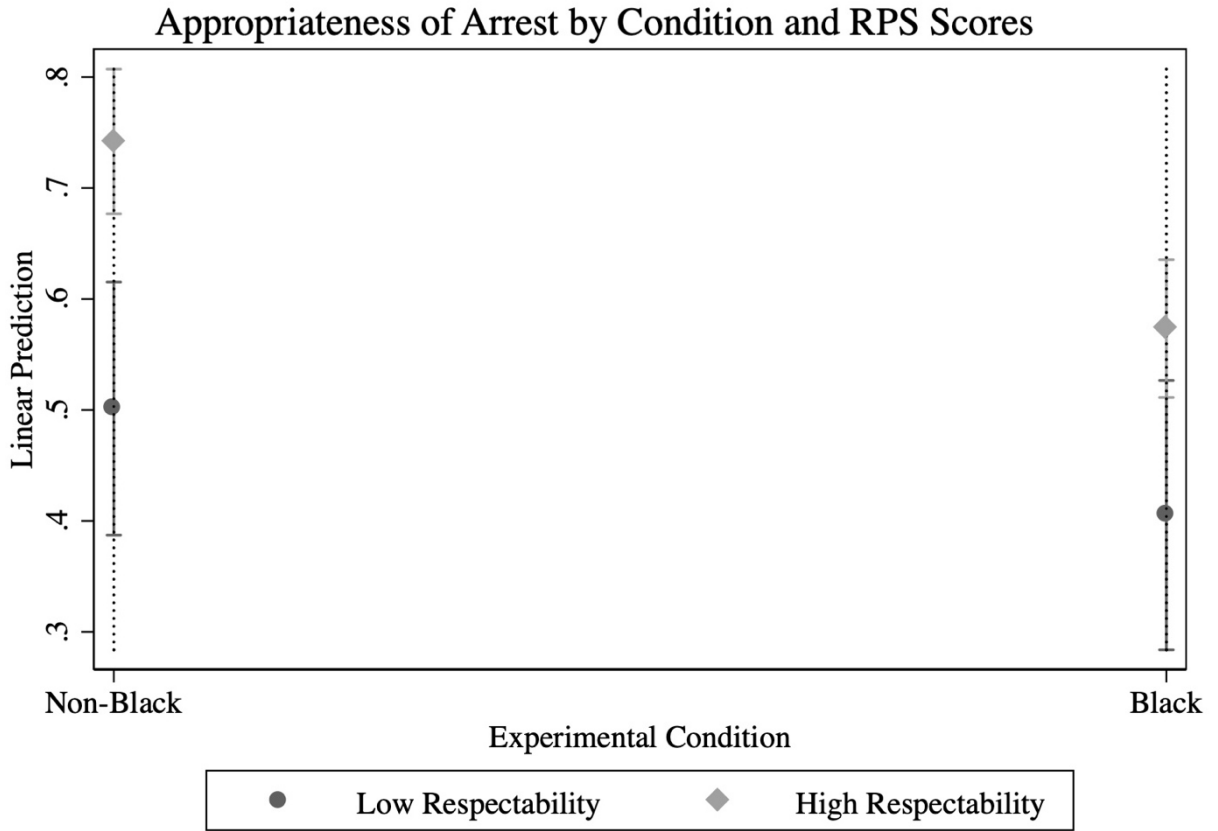


Figure 4.6b

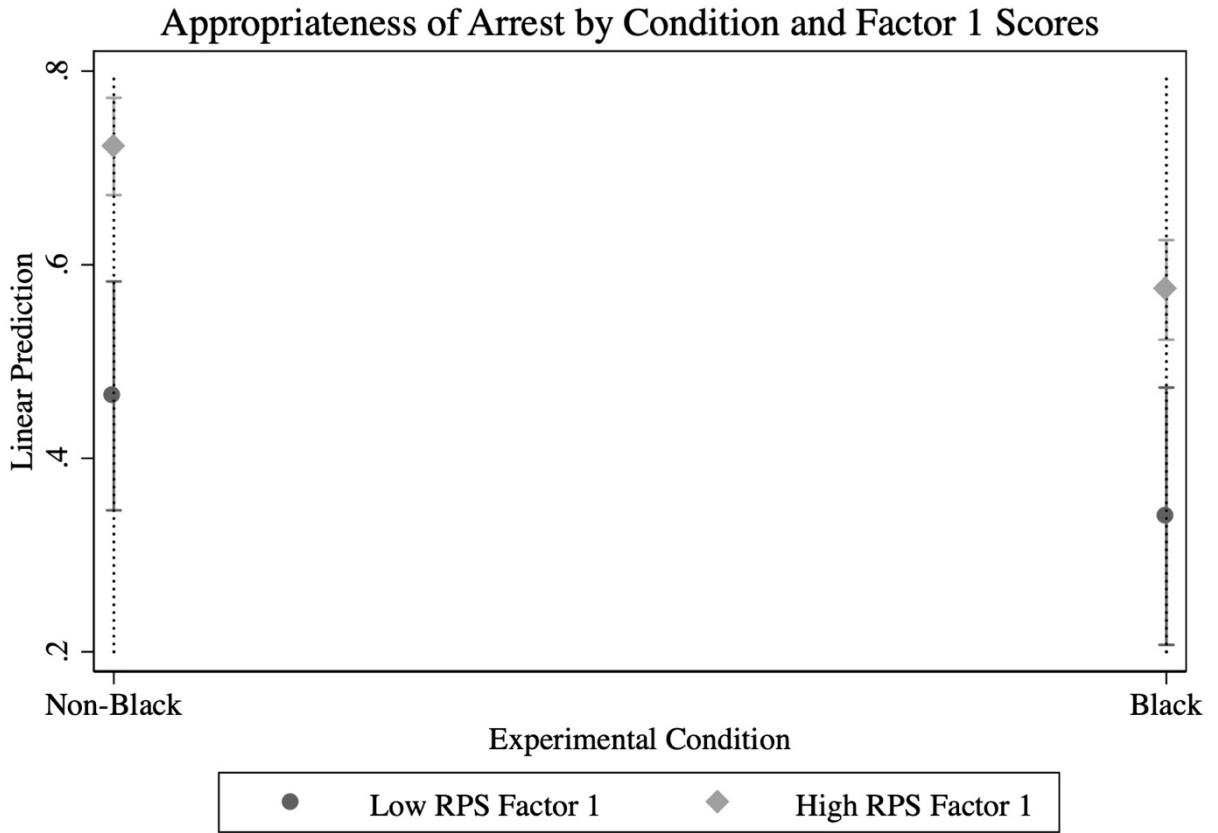
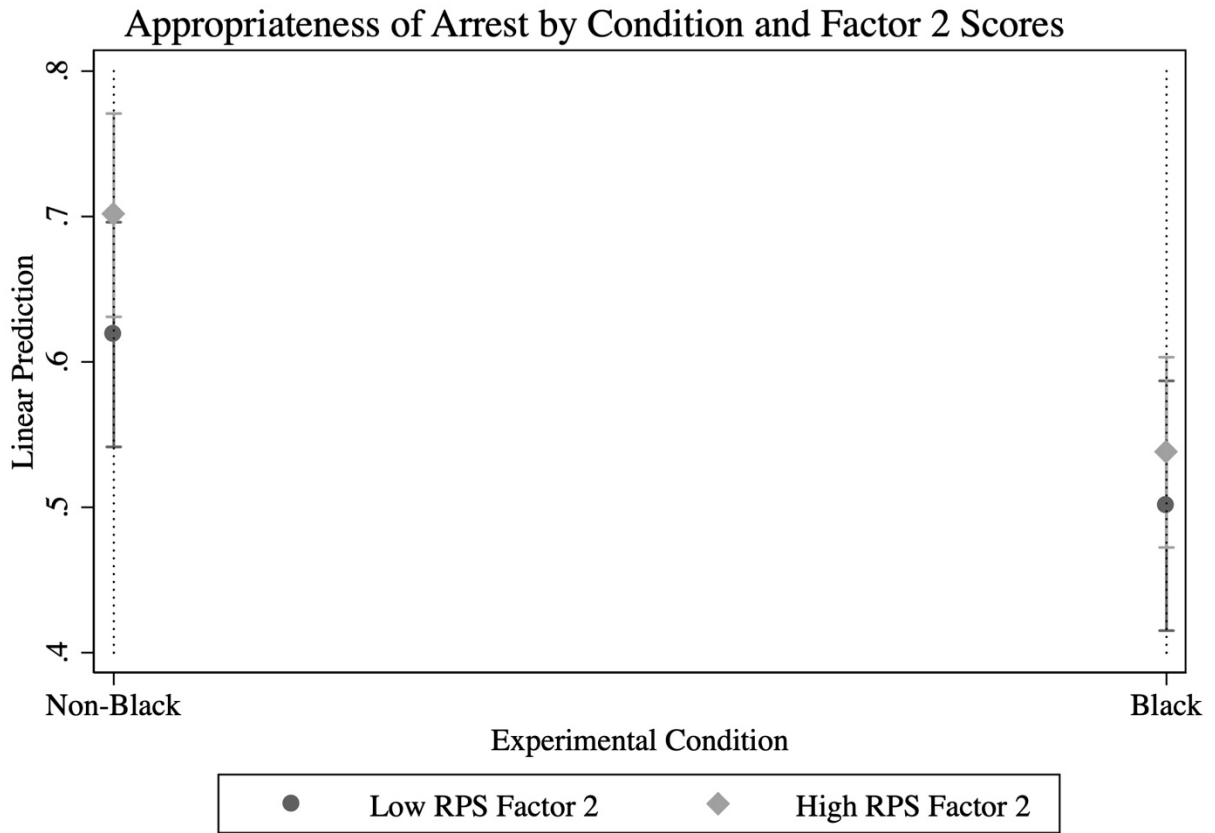


Figure 4.6c



Survey Questions Used in Analyses

1. How important is it for law enforcement to stop those who are loitering, trespassing, or engaged in disorderly conduct in public?
 - Extremely important
 - Very important
 - Moderately important
 - Slightly important
 - Not at all important

2. In some states, local governments have passed city ordinances that fine people who wear sagging pants that show their underwear in public spaces. Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose these fines?
 - Oppose a great deal
 - Oppose a moderate amount
 - Oppose a little
 - Neither favor nor oppose
 - Favor a little
 - Favor a moderate amount
 - Favor a great deal

3. How important is it that welfare recipients be required to work or volunteer while receiving welfare benefits?
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important

4. In recent years, the U.S. military has debated whether it should ban some hairstyles, including braids, dreads, or certain natural hairstyles. How reasonable or unreasonable would such a ban be?
 - Extremely reasonable
 - Moderately reasonable
 - Slightly reasonable
 - Neither reasonable nor unreasonable
 - Slightly unreasonable
 - Moderately unreasonable
 - Extremely unreasonable

5. Please indicate how much you think each of the following contributes to the presence of gangs in American cities. **[Randomize explanations]**

	A great deal	A lot	A moderate amount	A little	None at all
Poor parenting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of economic opportunity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Failing schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rap/Hip hop culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Imagine that a woman in your community contracted a sexually transmitted disease after engaging in unprotected sex with multiple partners. How much help do you think the government should provide her in terms of healthcare services?

- None at all
- A little
- A moderate amount
- A lot
- A great deal

7. Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose implementing harsher sentences for those found in possession of illegal drugs?

- Oppose a great deal
- Oppose a moderate amount
- Oppose a little
- Neither favor nor oppose
- Favor a little
- Favor a moderate amount
- Favor a great deal

8. Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

- Oppose a great deal
- Oppose a moderate amount
- Oppose a little
- Neither favor nor oppose
- Favor a little
- Favor a moderate amount

- Favor a great deal
9. Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose the use of corporal punishment in the home, for example, spanking?
- Oppose a great deal
 - Oppose a moderate amount
 - Oppose a little
 - Neither favor nor oppose
 - Favor a little
 - Favor a moderate amount
 - Favor a great deal

10. After a Black man died in police custody in Baltimore, Maryland, some teenagers were arrested for engaging in riot-like behavior.

How much sympathy do you have for these teenagers who were arrested?

- None
- A little
- A moderate amount
- A lot
- A great deal

[Authoritarianism Items; 1 per page; Full sample receives these items; randomize within each pair]

11. Although there are a number of qualities that people feel that children should have, every person thinks that some are more important than others. In this section, we will show you pairs of desirable qualities. Please tell us which one you think is more important for a child to have.

- Independence
- Respect for elders

12. Which one is more important for a child to have?

- Curiosity
- Good manners

13. Which one is more important for a child to have?

- Obedience
- Self-reliance

14. Which one is more important for a child to have?

- Being considerate
- Well-behaved

Identity Items

15. How important is being Black or African-American to your identity?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

16. How much discrimination is there in the United States today against Blacks?

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

17. When you think about how Black people, as a group, are viewed by others, how often do you feel each of the following emotions? **[Randomize order emotions presented in grid]**

	Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
Pride	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Irritation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anger	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shame	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excitement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Happiness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. We are now going to show you a seven-point scale on which the characteristics of the people in a group can be rated. In the first statement a score of '1' means that you think almost all of the people in that group tend to be 'hard-working.' A score of '7' means that you think most people in the group are 'lazy.' A score of '4' means that you think that most people in the group are not closer to one end or the other, and of course, you may choose any number in between. Where would you rate most Black people on this scale? **[Horizontally scaled]**

- Hardworking 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- Lazy 7

19. Where would you rate most Black people on this scale? [**Horizontally scaled**]

- Non-violent 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- Violent 7

20. How important is religion to your life?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important

Experimental Scenarios *[Experimental Manipulation]

At various points throughout the last year, Planned Parenthood [Black Lives Matter] protestors interrupted Democratic Party candidates and events to draw attention to their cause. At some events, they screamed loudly and pushed their way to the stage to make their case before large audiences.

How appropriate do you think it was for Planned Parenthood [Black Lives Matter] protestors to engage in this kind of behavior as a way of advocating for their cause?

- Extremely inappropriate
- Moderately inappropriate
- Slightly inappropriate
- Neither appropriate nor inappropriate
- Slightly appropriate
- Moderately appropriate
- Extremely appropriate

Jack Pendleton [Demarcus Jacobs], a 25-year-old White [Black] man, was recently featured on the local news for his involvement in a string of robberies in a wealthy neighborhood in a Midwestern city. Because he is a repeat offender, local prosecutors are attempting to charge him with violating the state's "three strikes law." If convicted under the three strikes law, he could face life imprisonment for his crime.

How reasonable or unreasonable would this sentence be?

- Extremely reasonable
- Moderately reasonable
- Slightly reasonable
- Neither reasonable nor unreasonable
- Slightly unreasonable
- Moderately unreasonable
- Extremely unreasonable

According to a new study from a non-partisan watch group, White [Black] Americans are slightly more likely than members of other racial groups to use drugs while receiving welfare benefits.

How important is it that welfare recipients be drug tested as a condition of receiving welfare benefits?

- Not at all important

- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

How important is it for schools to insist that students use “proper English,” instead of Spanish or some other native language [Ebonics or Black English] while communicating with others?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Templeton High, a predominantly Hispanic [Black] school, recently implemented strict dress code policies for their students to follow.

How reasonable or unreasonable are these kinds of dress code policies?

- Extremely reasonable
- Moderately reasonable
- Slightly reasonable
- Neither reasonable nor unreasonable
- Slightly unreasonable
- Moderately unreasonable
- Extremely unreasonable

While on his way to work, Connor Kennedy [Jamal Williams], a White [Black] construction worker, was stopped by a police officer who said he had been driving too quickly in a school zone. Connor denied that he had been driving too quickly and argued loudly with the officer about the ticket. The officer told Connor to calm down, as he would have a chance to make his case in court. He refused, cursed at the officer, and was arrested for disorderly conduct.

How appropriate do you think it was for the officer to arrest Connor?

- Extremely inappropriate
- Moderately inappropriate
- Slightly inappropriate
- Neither appropriate nor inappropriate
- Slightly appropriate
- Moderately appropriate
- Extremely appropriate

Chapter 5:
A Disruption in the Theater: Unpacking the Mechanisms of In-Group Punishment

At the core of the current project is a concern with understanding what motivates individuals to punish those in their social group who are thought to confirm negative stereotypes about the group or who otherwise violate dominant social norms. Though the theorizing and evidence up to this point suggest that both esteem-based and instrumental considerations are at work in motivating in-group punishment, questions remain regarding the primacy of each set of considerations. On the one hand, individuals may be motivated to punish in-group members whose behavior threatens their sense of self and evokes negative social emotions like shame and embarrassment. This motivation, which we may regard as psychic or symbolic in nature, is consistent with a view of identity that centers on group membership as a core feature of the self-concept. From this vantage point, policing and punishing bad in-group behavior can be viewed as regulatory, in the sense that its social function is to relieve the experience of negative group-based emotions that may arise as a consequence of the group member's behavior. This is, for many scholars of identity, the dominant perspective from which to think about group identification—a perspective that centers on ego and related constructs.

In a society so deeply stratified by race, this purely ego-centric view of identity leaves much wanting, however, as it fails to fully appreciate the role of power and difference in affecting the lived experiences of those who exist at the margins of society. As I have argued previously, for these individuals, group identity does more than affect their sense of self in a given context; identity affects their lived experiences in varied and often disadvantageous ways

that have real consequences for their standing in the world. This reality, I should note, is not lost on the stigmatized. Among members of stigmatized groups, there is a keen and sophisticated understanding of America's unequal social hierarchy and, as some of the results of this chapter will show, an equally rich understanding of the often-indiscriminate meting out of consequences by the dominant group. Stated differently, members of stigmatized groups understand that the dominant group wields an unequal amount of societal power and has at its disposal the ability to exact punishment on the whole based on the inferences they draw from the actions of a few. We recognize this understanding, for instance, in respondents' answers to questions regarding the connection between group members' behavior and the treatment of their racial group.

To be sure, these instrumental considerations are likely related to their more affective counterparts, but they are not dependent on them. One's concern about the potential costs of bad behavior for the group, and by extension the self, does not require that one feel ashamed or angered by the transgressions of the in-group member, but simply that one recognizes that there is some possibility that the in-group member's transgressions will create challenges for others who belong to the group. In-group punishment, therefore, may emanate not primarily from a desire to save face, but from a more primary desire to avoid the real, tangible costs that may result from the transgressions of similar others. Insofar as we think these motivations—instrumental and affective—represent competing or complementary explanations for in-group punishment, we should continue to examine closely where the strength of the evidence lies. That is the goal of this current chapter.

Data and Methods

The data presented in this chapter come from a study I conducted using Amazon's TurkPrime platform. As described previously, TurkPrime allows researchers to target individuals

based on particular demographic characteristics. Using the service, I recruited a target sample of 308 respondents. Respondents were told that the study's aim was "to better understand how individuals respond to various social experiences and situations." They were then instructed to read a scenario before being presented with a series of questions related to the scenario. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of three conditions, in which the race of those engaged in bad behavior was manipulated. The text of the scenario, with manipulations highlighted in brackets, is below:

Imagine you are in the following situation.

It's Friday night. You are eager to see a movie that happens to be showing at a small theater in a mostly White suburb about 25 minutes away from your home. Ten minutes after the movie has started, a crowd of [Black / White / *no race mentioned*] teenagers arrives, creating a disturbance that is so distracting everyone turns their attention to them. Even with all the attention they're getting from other patrons, the group of [Black / White / *no race mentioned*] teenagers continues talking and laughing loudly throughout the film. Members of the audience shake their heads and whisper to one another about what has occurred.

After reading the scenario, respondents were then asked a series of questions to gauge their emotional reaction to the teenagers' behaviors as well as their sense that the teenagers' behavior would have negative consequences for people like the teenagers. Following these questions, respondents were asked to evaluate the appropriateness of two different punitive responses to the teenagers' behavior. In particular, respondents were asked to evaluate how fair it would be for theater personnel to ask the teenagers to leave the theater and, separately, how appropriate it would be for personnel to call the police on the teenagers if the disturbance continued into the parking lot. Exploiting this design, we are able to explore whether and, if so, to what extent these affective and instrumental considerations affect punitive attitudes when the teenagers are described as Black (in-group condition) versus when the teenagers are described as White or when no race is mentioned (out-group conditions).

Though the study includes an experimental manipulation of the teenagers' race, the results presented will only be able to demonstrate whether there is a significant correlation between these affective and instrumental considerations and the outcomes of interest. I do not manipulate these considerations in this study or anywhere else in the manuscript. The current set up is still useful, however, as it will allow us to place the affective and instrumental considerations in direct tension with one another. More than that, the design will allow us to examine another expectation that the motivations for in-group and out-group punishment are, at least in some contexts, different in kind. Theoretically, for example, feelings of shame and embarrassment can reasonably be expected to map onto variation in punitive attitudes when the in-group is implicated, but ought not matter much at all when out-group members are the target. Likewise, we should expect that instrumental considerations regarding the collective cost of bad behavior for the offender's group ought to matter only when the group is inclusive of the self. Stated more plainly, there is little reason we should expect that one would care that some other group will have to bear some additional costs if a member or members of the group behaved poorly.

Results

Before delving into the questions about punishment, I want to briefly outline some of the descriptive findings that may provide some context as we discuss other findings from the study. To begin, let us consider the emotional responses participants had to the behavior of the teenagers in each condition. First, because the respondents are all Black and the disturbance in the theater may be regarded as stereotype-confirming behavior when engaged in by African-Americans, I expected that respondents would report the greatest feelings of shame and embarrassment when the teenagers were described as Black. As Figure 5.1 demonstrates, this is

precisely what we observe. On average, respondents report significantly more shame and embarrassment when the teenagers are described as Black than they do when the teenagers are described as White or when no race is mentioned ($p < .001$). Conversely, respondents report significantly more anger when the teenagers are described as White than when the teenagers are described as Black ($p < .001$). When the race of the teenagers is not mentioned, the amount of anger reported is indistinguishable from both the Black teens and the White teens condition.³² Of note, shame and anger correlate at .4 in the Black teens condition, but have a much more modest correlation of .16 in the White teens condition. Though discrete emotions ought to be considered separately in our theorizing about the affective motivations of in-group punishment, anger may operate as a secondary and complementary emotion to shame, exacerbating or even overriding the effects of shame, an emotion we often regard as having withdrawal and avoidance tendencies.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 about here

To capture individuals' sense of a more instrumental collective threat, I asked respondents "Do you think the behavior of these teenagers will make it more difficult for people

³² The noisiness of the no-race condition will remain fairly consistent across analyses presented in this chapter. The no-race condition presents two challenges, which make the results pertaining to the condition more difficult to interpret. First, 30 percent of respondents in the no race condition failed to accurately recall how the teenagers were described, meaning that they recalled that the teenagers had been described using a racial descriptor, even though they had not. Of those who misremembered how the no-race teens were described, 23 of the 30 percent recalled that they were described as White. Four percent recalled that they were described as Black and 2 percent responded that the teens had been described as Hispanic. Seventy-three respondents in the no-race condition (70 percent) did accurately recall that no race had been mentioned. For these respondents, a different challenge emerges. When these respondents are not told the race of the teenagers, they likely construct some image of them in their mind, and I have no way of knowing in this data what that image looks like for these respondents. Instead of throwing away data, I encourage the reader to interpret findings in the no-race condition cautiously.

like them to be welcomed into the theater in the future?” Respondents who answered “Yes” were then asked “How much more difficult?” Responses were then recoded on a standardized 5-point scale from 0-1, with 0 indicating a “No” response to the initial question and 1 indicating that a respondent answered “Yes” to the initial question and “A great deal” to the branching question. Here, again, I expect that, on average, respondents in the Black teens condition will perceive that people like the teenagers they read about (i.e. Black people) will face more difficulty being welcomed into the theater in the future than those in the White teens condition who likely expect that people like the teens they read about (i.e. White people) will face little difficulty based on the behavior of the White teens. For reasons described in the footnote on the previous page, our predictions regarding the no race condition are less certain. As the plot of means displayed in Figure 5.3 shows, the expectation regarding perceived costs in the Black and White teens condition is borne out in the data. The average respondent in the White teens condition believed that it would be “a little” more difficult for people like the teens to be welcomed into the theater in the future, though respondents in the Black teens condition believed it would be moderately more difficult for people like the Black teens to be welcomed into the theater in the future, with mean responses of .37 and .53, respectively—a difference of .16 percentage points. Again, we do not observe a significant difference between responses in the no race condition, relative to the Black teens condition.

Figure 5.3 about here

These descriptive findings are interesting, as they demonstrate the different affective responses to bad behavior from the in-group relative to the out-group and showcase the different perceptions of costs as they relate to the behavior of Black and White individuals. Beyond these findings, however, we are interested in whether emotional responses or instrumental

considerations correspond with punitive attitudes in this context and, if so, whether the motivations differ when one's own identity group is implicated in the offense. Here, I analyze the results of two separate regression models. In the first model, I consider respondents' beliefs about how fair it would be for theater personnel to ask the teenagers to leave the theater. I regress on this outcome, `escortout`, a set of demographic variables (`age`, `education`, `income`, and `gender`), a set of emotions items (`anger`, `fear`, and `shame`), and the measure of perceived costs to people like the teens, `difficulty`. Because I expect that the relationship between emotions and perceived costs may vary by condition, I interact each of the emotions and `difficulty` with an indicator variable, `condition`, where being in the Black teens condition is the omitted category. I then estimate the same model to examine respondents' views regarding the appropriateness of calling the police on the teenagers if they continue causing a disruption outside the movie theater (`callpolice`).

Focusing first on perceived fairness of escorting the teens from the theater, we observe a direct relationship between anger and the punishment. Those who think they would feel more anger in response to the teenagers' behavior are more likely to think it fair to ask the teenagers to leave the theater. This relationship is not moderated by condition, meaning anger's correspondence with this outcome is not dependent on the race of the teens creating the disturbance. Consistent with an in-group favoritism story, we also observe a main effect wherein respondents are slightly more lenient toward Black teens than they are toward White teens. Regarding the key covariates, we do not find support for the expectation that feelings of shame or embarrassment correspond with a willingness to have the teens removed from the theater, even when the teenagers are described as in-group members.

Table 5.1 about here

We do find, however, a strong and significant relationship between perceptions of costs for people like the teens and this punitive outcome of removing the teens from the theater. Importantly, and consistent with theoretical expectations, this relationship maintains only in the condition where the teenagers are described as Black. Here, respondents who believe that the Black teenagers (in-group members) are behaving in a way that will make it more difficult for people like them (i.e. Black people) to be welcomed into the theater in the future are significantly more likely to respond that removing the Black teenagers is fair. This consideration of costs to people like the teenagers does not meaningfully predict differences in punishment when the teenagers are described as White or when no race is mentioned.

Figure 5.4 about here

When we consider respondents' views about the appropriateness of calling the police on the teenagers, we observe again that these Black respondents find it more appropriate to call the police on the teenagers when the teenagers are described as White ($p < .001$). There is no significant relationship between any of the emotions and responses to this question. As in the previous case, feelings of shame do not correspond with attitudes toward this punitive outcome. Again, however, perceptions of cost to the group appear to only distinguish attitudes regarding punitiveness when the teenagers are described as Black, though this relationship in the Black teens condition fails to reach statistical significance at the 95 percent confidence level, as displayed in Figure 5.5 ($p = .07$).

As a final note, I want to draw the reader's attention to a comparison between Black respondents' feelings regarding the appropriateness of calling the police on members of their own group (i.e. the Black teens) relative to their feelings regarding the appropriateness of the police being called on out-group members. Again, an in-group favoritism story expects that these

respondents should be more willing to punish those outside the group. As I report previously, that is what we find. That in-group favoritism goes away, however, when individuals believe that the in-group member is behaving in a way that is costly to the group. Look again at Figure 5.5. Here, we observe that respondents who believe that the Black teenagers' behavior has high costs for the group are as supportive of having the police called on the Black teenagers as they are on the White teenagers. Those Blacks who view the Black teenagers' behavior as having little costs for the group behave as the vast literature on group identity and group favoritism expects.

Table 5.2 about here

Figure 5.5 about here

Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of this study was to put in contention with one another emotional motivations for in-group punishment and more instrumental considerations pertaining to the perceived cost of bad behavior for one's in-group. The study presented here is a simple one. Respondents are told to imagine that a group of teenagers is causing a disruption in a movie theater in a mostly White suburb about 25 minutes away from respondents' home. The teenagers are described as either Black, White, or simply as teenagers, with no race mentioned. Respondents are then given an opportunity to express their views regarding two different punitive outcomes. In neither case do we find any evidence that feelings of shame or embarrassment correspond with punitive attitudes, even when members of the in-group are responsible for the offense. Anger appears to be the chief emotion at play, particularly in structuring responses to the question of whether it would be fair to ask the teenagers to leave the theater. This finding makes sense, as the teenagers, regardless of their racial identification, are interrupting a film that the respondent has driven 25

minutes to see. Those more angered by the disturbance ought to be more willing to send the teenagers packing, and they are.

Arguably, the most important finding of this chapter is the strong relationship we observe between perceptions of cost to the people like the teenagers and respondents' support for having the Black teenagers removed from the theater. Again, this finding is unique to the Black teenagers condition, providing strong evidence that perceptions of collective costs correspond with individuals' willingness to punish in-group members. Though this finding is weaker when respondents are asked about the more severe (and seemingly extreme) punishment of calling the police on the teenagers if their disruption continues into the parking lot, what is striking is that the pattern maintains, even in these times when the Black community's relationship with law enforcement is particularly tense. Moreover, the findings here help further elucidate the ways in which these instrumental considerations may lead to a breakdown in in-group favoritism and in-group solidarity. For those of us who study or are interested in the politics of stigmatized groups, this is an important finding, as it highlights the role that these considerations may play in affecting punishment and other outcomes that implicate in-group members. Specific to the work of this dissertation, the results of this study suggest that instrumental concerns—those captured by Factor 2 of the RPS—may feature more centrally in Blacks' thinking about respectability than concerns related to esteem and other more emotional constructs.³³

To be sure, this study is not without its weaknesses. There is, as I note previously, some noisiness with respect to the no race condition, though that noisiness should not detract from the

³³In attempting to tease these esteem-based and instrumental considerations apart, I want to be cautious, as I do not intend to suggest that these considerations are fully separable. For members of stigmatized groups, in particular, esteem is bound up with all sorts of instrumental, status-based considerations.

findings that emerge in the other two conditions where the race of the teenagers is made known to the respondents. More important than that, this study does not manipulate the affective or instrumental considerations, leaving us with a set of correlational findings that emerge from a multivariate regression. Building on the results of this study, it will be important to design a follow up study that attempts to prime the affective and emotional considerations before asking respondents to render a punitive judgment about in-group members engaged in negative, stereotype-confirming behavior. Such a design will allow me to make a stronger argument about the existence of a causal link between affective and instrumental considerations and punitive outcomes pertaining to the in-group, or a lack thereof. Future iterations of the experiment will also manipulate the audience that witnesses the behavior in an attempt to understand more clearly the conditionality of the concerns that respectability engender. If, for example, I find that Blacks more harshly punish in-group members who engage in bad behavior in view of Whites, this would represent further evidence that group members, in structuring their attitudes about punishment, incorporate into their judgments considerations about how this behavior is viewed by members of the dominant group.

Chapter 5 Tables and Figures

Figure 5.1

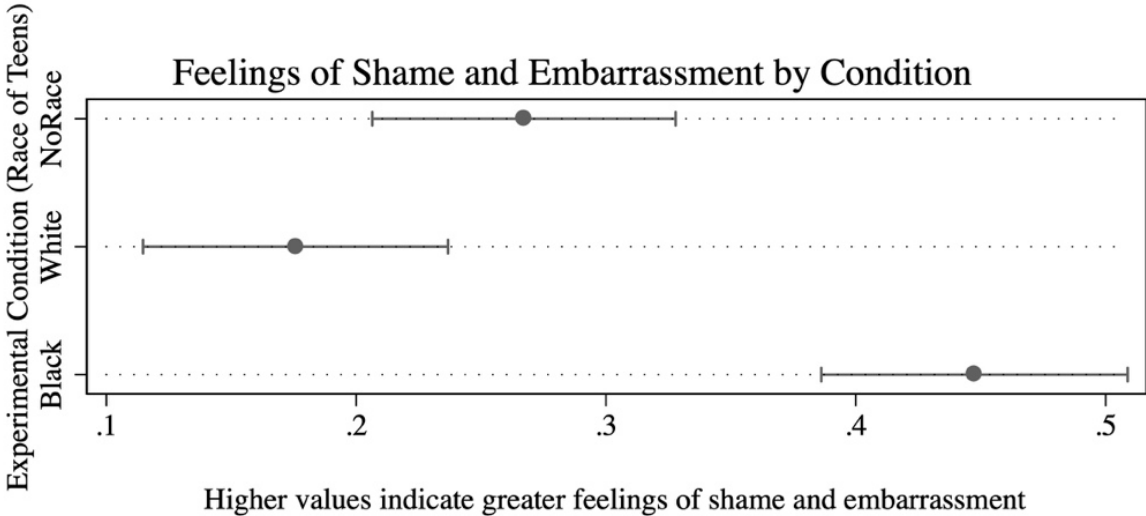


Figure 5.2

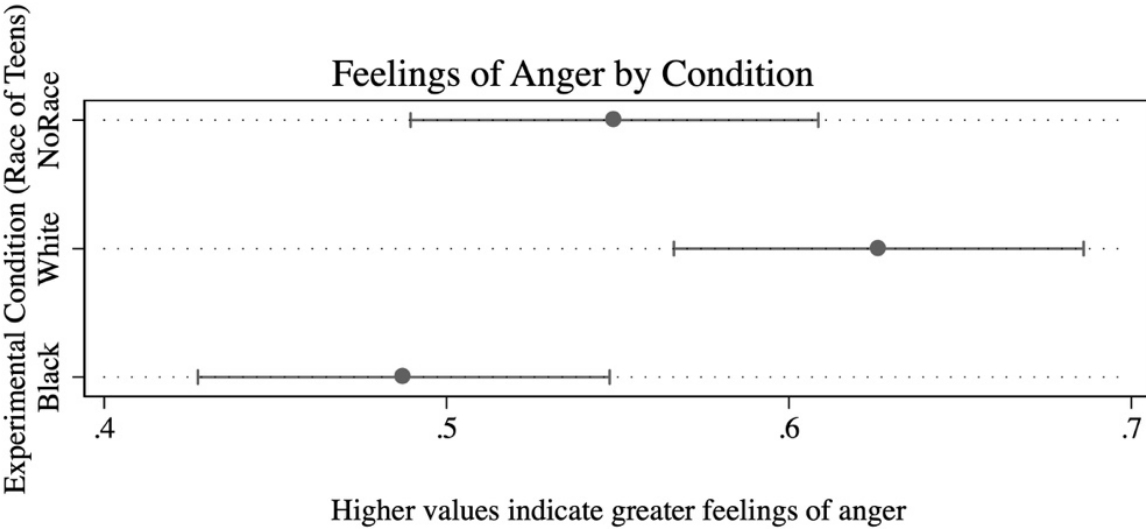


Figure 5.3

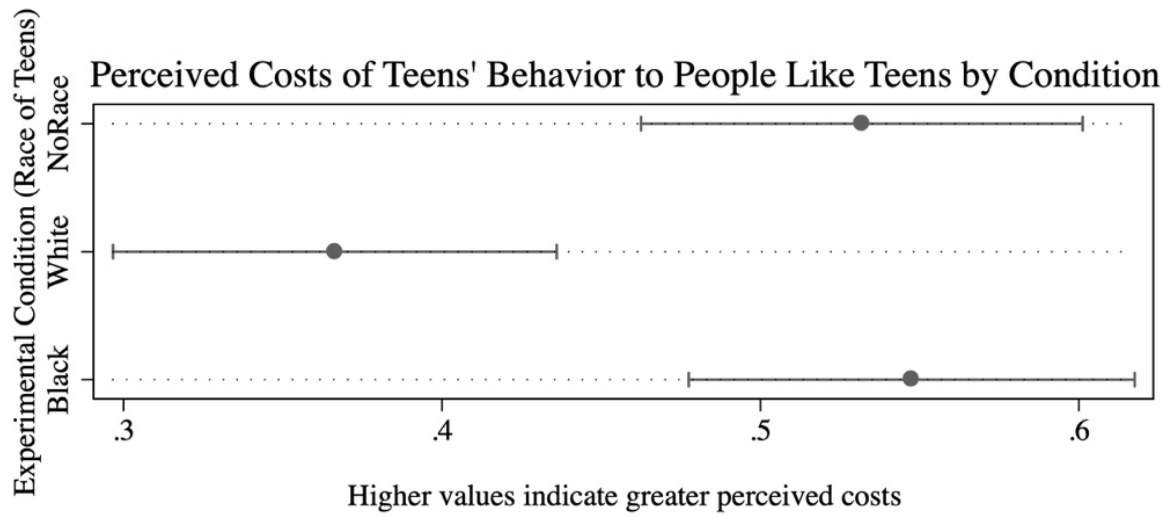


Table 5.1: Fairness of Asking Disruptive Teenagers to Leave Theater

	b	se	
Condition			
White Teens	0.31	0.08	***
No Race Teens	0.14	0.08	
Anger	0.42	0.09	***
Condition X Anger			
White Teens X Anger	-0.16	0.12	
No Race Teens X Anger	-0.03	0.11	
Shame	-0.06	0.08	
Condition X Shame			
White Teens X Shame	0.00	0.12	
No Race Teens X Shame	0.11	0.11	
Fear	-0.09	0.11	
Condition X Fear			
White Teens X Fear	-0.07	0.15	
No Race Teens X Fear	0.09	0.15	
Perceived Costs for People like Teens	0.22	0.08	**
Condition X Perceived Costs			
White Teens X Perceived Costs	-0.29	0.10	**
No Race Teens X Perceived Costs	-0.22	0.11	*
Age	0.05	0.06	
Education	-0.05	0.07	
Income	0.08	0.06	
Female	0.03	0.03	
Constant	0.43	0.07	***
N	299		
R-squared	0.27		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*The Black teenagers condition is the excluded category

Figure 5.4

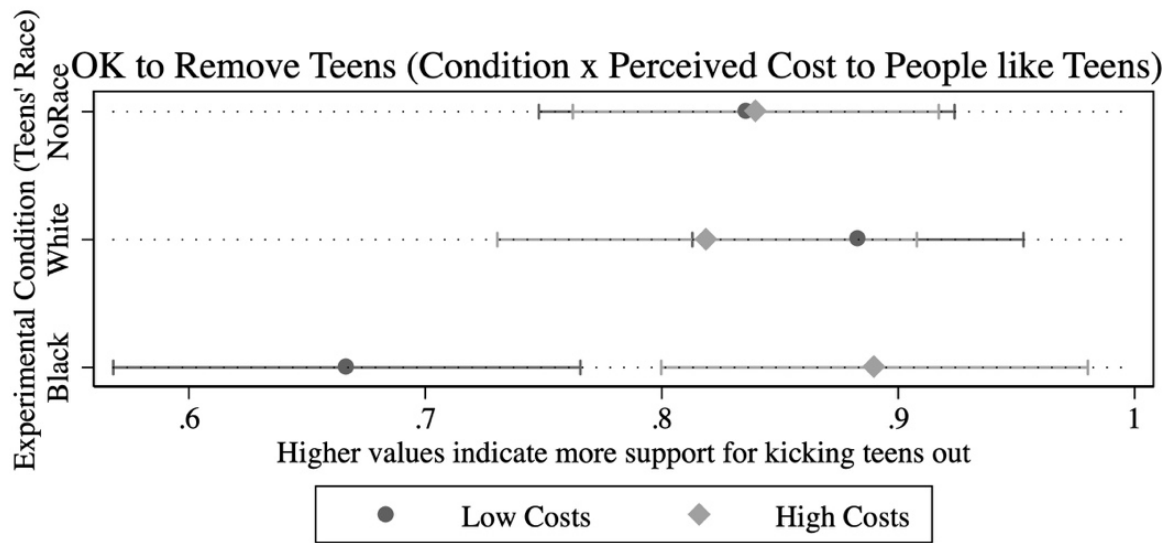


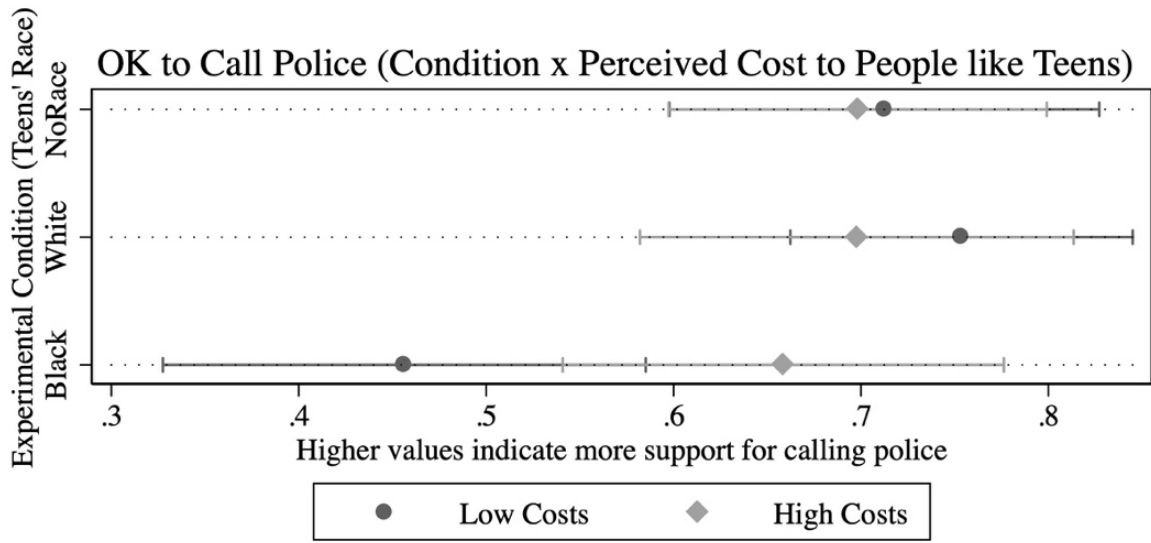
Table 5.2: Appropriateness of Calling Police on Teens if Disturbance Continues in Parking Lot

	b	se	
Condition			
White Teens	0.35	0.10	***
No Race Teens	0.19	0.10	
Anger	0.17	0.12	
Condition X Anger			
White Teens X Anger	-0.08	0.16	
No Race Teens X Anger	0.03	0.15	
Shame	-0.04	0.10	
Condition X Shame			
White Teens X Shame	-0.04	0.15	
No Race Teens X Shame	0.07	0.15	
Fear	0.08	0.15	
Condition X Fear			
White Teens X Fear	0.03	0.19	
No Race Teens X Fear	0.19	0.19	
Perceived Costs for People like Teens	0.20	0.10	
Condition X Perceived Costs			
White Teens X Perceived Costs	-0.26	0.13	*
No Race Teens X Perceived Costs	-0.22	0.14	
Age	0.27	0.08	***
Education	-0.14	0.09	
Income	0.07	0.08	
Female	-0.03	0.04	
Constant	0.33	0.09	***
N	299		
R-squared	0.18		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

*The Black teenagers condition is the excluded category

Figure 5.5



Theater Study Instrument

Start of Block: Intro

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study to better understand how individuals respond to various social experiences and situations. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and all responses will remain anonymous.

Please read all instructions carefully and respond as completely and honestly as you can.

If you have questions or concerns following your completion of the study, please feel free to contact the principal investigator for this study, Hakeem Jefferson, at hakeemjj@umich.edu.

If you are ready to begin, please click on the button below.

Page Break

On the next page, please read the scenario presented. You will be asked a few questions about the scenario after you have read it.

End of Block: Intro

Start of Block: Experimental Condition

Black Teenagers Condition

Imagine you are in the following situation.

It's Friday night. You are eager to see a movie that happens to be showing at a small theater in a mostly White suburb about 25 minutes away from your home. Ten minutes after the movie has started, a crowd of Black teenagers arrives, creating a disturbance that is so distracting everyone turns their attention to them. Even with all the attention they're getting from other patrons, the group of Black teenagers continues talking and laughing loudly throughout the film. Members of the audience shake their heads and whisper to one another about what has occurred.

White Teenagers Condition

Imagine you are in the following situation.

It's Friday night. You are eager to see a movie that happens to be showing at a small theater in a mostly White suburb about 25 minutes away from your home. Ten minutes after the movie has started, a crowd of White teenagers arrives, creating a disturbance that is so distracting everyone

turns their attention to them. Even with all the attention they're getting from other patrons, the group of White teenagers continues talking and laughing loudly throughout the film. Members of the audience shake their heads and whisper to one another about what has occurred.

No'Race Teens Condition

Imagine you are in the following situation.

It's Friday night. You are eager to see a movie that happens to be showing at a small theater in a mostly White suburb about 25 minutes away from your home. Ten minutes after the movie has started, a crowd of teenagers arrives, creating a disturbance that is so distracting everyone turns their attention to them. Even with all the attention they're getting from other patrons, the group of teenagers continues talking and laughing loudly throughout the film. Members of the audience shake their heads and whisper to one another about what has occurred.

End of Block: Experimental Condition

Start of Block: Emotions

If you found yourself in this situation, having witnessed the behavior of these teenagers, how embarrassed or ashamed would you feel?

- Not at all embarrassed or ashamed
 - Slightly embarrassed or ashamed
 - Moderately embarrassed or ashamed
 - Very embarrassed or ashamed
 - Extremely embarrassed or ashamed
-

Page Break

How afraid would you feel?

- Not at all afraid
 - Slightly afraid
 - Moderately afraid
 - Very afraid
 - Extremely afraid
-

Page Break

How proud would you feel?

- Not at all proud
 - Slightly proud
 - Moderately proud
 - Very proud
 - Extremely proud
-

Page Break

How angry would you feel?

- Not at all angry
 - Slightly angry
 - Moderately angry
 - Very angry
 - Extremely angry
-

Page Break

Do you think the behavior of these teenagers will make it more difficult for people like them to be welcomed into the theater in the future?

- Yes
 - No
-

Page Break

How much more difficult?

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little

End of Block: Emotions

Start of Block: Punishment

How fair would it be for theater personnel to ask the teenagers to leave the theater, given their behavior?

- Not at all fair
- Slightly fair
- Moderately fair
- Very fair
- Extremely fair

Page Break

If you were sitting near these teenagers in the theater, how likely is it that you would say something to them about their behavior?

- Extremely likely
- Moderately likely
- Slightly likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Slightly unlikely
- Moderately unlikely
- Extremely unlikely

Page Break

If these teenagers were to continue causing a disruption outside the movie theater, how appropriate would it be for theater personnel to call the police to intervene?

- Extremely inappropriate
- Moderately inappropriate
- Slightly inappropriate
- Neither appropriate nor inappropriate
- Slightly appropriate
- Moderately appropriate
- Extremely appropriate

End of Block: Punishment

Start of Block: Manipulation Check



Just to check, do you recall the race of the teenagers described in the scenario?

- They were White
- They were Black
- They were Hispanic
- They were Asian
- No race was mentioned

End of Block: Manipulation Check

Start of Block: Demographics

Before we conclude, we'd like to know a few things about you.

How old are you?

- Under 18
 - 18 - 24
 - 25 - 34
 - 35 - 44
 - 45 - 54
 - 55 - 64
 - 65 - 74
 - 75 - 84
 - 85 or older
-

What is your gender?

- Male
 - Female
 - Other
 - I prefer not to answer
-

What is your race? Check all that apply.

- White
 - Black or African American
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - Other
-

Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?

- Yes
 - No
-

What is your highest level of education?

- Less than high school
- High school graduate
- Some college
- 2 year degree
- 4 year degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate

What is the current annual income (in US dollars) of your household?

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$19,999
- \$20,000 - \$29,999
- \$30,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$59,999
- \$60,000 - \$69,999
- \$70,000 - \$79,999
- \$80,000 - \$89,999
- \$90,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 - \$149,999
- More than \$150,000

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Party ID

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or what?

- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent
- Other party {Specify} _____

Page Break _____

Would you call yourself a strong or not very strong Democrat?

- Strong
- Not very strong

Page Break _____

Would you call yourself a strong or not very strong Republican?

- Strong
- Not very strong

Page Break

Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or the Democratic Party?

- Closer to Republican
- Neither
- Closer to Democratic

End of Block: Party ID

Start of Block: Exit

Thank you very much for participating in this study. If you have any comments you'd like to make, please leave them in the comment box below. Once you are finished, please click the button below to conclude and exit the study.

End of Block: Exit

Chapter 6: Concluding Remarks and Future Directions

Throughout this dissertation, I have endeavored to center the attitudes of Black Americans in our conversation about race and the politics of punishment in the United States. Parting company with much of the existing literature that focuses on the role that out-group animus plays in motivating White support for racialized punitive social policies, this project concerns itself instead with understanding why, and under what conditions, Black Americans may choose to support measures that have adverse consequences for members of their own group. To answer this question, I turn to a construct familiar to those interested in examining Black life and Black culture—the politics of respectability. Long a part of our scholarly and cultural lexicon, respectability was first introduced as a means of describing a worldview concerned with upending systems of inequality by focusing on the behavior and comportment of the oppressed. Emphasizing values of thrift, temperance, politeness, and good manners, early advocates of respectability argued that if Blacks behaved better, it would be more difficult for Whites to justify treating them unequally.

Connecting the historical treatment of respectability provided by Higginbotham's pioneering work with insights from psychology and political science, I have attempted to take respectability seriously as a social scientific construct worthy of rigorous investigation. More than that, this project has sought to nuance our understanding of public opinion by investigating a set of considerations long absent from our thinking about the calculus of opinion formation among Blacks and those who belong to other stigmatized social groups. By focusing on the role

respectability plays in affecting Black Americans' thinking about punitive social policies in the 21st century, this project contributes significantly to our understanding of identity and the complex role it plays in affecting individuals' judgments and decisions. But more than complicating our understanding of identity and its role in American politics, this work advances on-going conversations about race and punishment in the United States. In particular, it highlights the deficient nature of a pure coalition building approach to reform that focuses on the attitudes and predilections of the out-group while assuming sympathy and absolution from the in-group. In these concluding remarks, I want to highlight for the reader the main takeaways from the dissertation before finishing with some thoughts about next steps and future directions.

Highlights from the Dissertation

I began this work interested in two broad questions. First, I was interested in understanding how members of stigmatized groups navigate their stigmatized identity and how the particulars of that navigation affect their thinking about politics. Based on my reading of the extant literature, political scientists have paid too little attention to the question posed by DuBois' imagined interlocutor in *The Souls of Black Folk*: "How does it feel to be a problem?" (Du Bois 1994, 1). Moreover, I was interested in understanding and unpacking Black attitudes toward punishment, particularly punishment that implicates members of their own social group. From a theoretical perspective, thinking about the politics of respectability made sense as a starting point for marrying these two interests. Situating this work alongside Higginbotham's seminal text that introduces respectability into our scholarly lexicon, I note in Chapter 2 that the politics of respectability is rooted in a history of subjugation and White supremacy. That is, respectability is a manifestation of stigma and the unique set of considerations that stigma forces upon the stigmatized. Central to the argument is that "being a problem" or being a member of a

stigmatized group burdens one with concerns not immediately present for those who exist outside the bounds of stigma. For Black Americans, and surely for members of other stigmatized groups, one such concern pertains to the behavior of in-group members. And these concerns, as I describe them, are both psychic and instrumental in nature, and have the potential to affect individuals' beliefs regarding punitive policies that may be viewed as protecting the image and status of an already precariously positioned group.

First, building on the tenets of social identity theory, Chapter 2 outlines the psychic costs that a group member's behavior may have for other members of the group. Because the self-concept is bound up with one's membership in salient social groups (H. Tajfel and Turner 1986), threats to the group's image have implications for one's own sense of self and may evoke negative social emotions like shame and embarrassment. Considered through this lens, respectability and a desire to punish transgressive, stereotype-confirming behavior may emerge out of a desire to save face—to maintain positive regard for the racial group, thus making it easier to maintain a positive sense of oneself. Though a costly endeavor, concerning oneself with the behavior of in-group members can be viewed as an emotion regulation strategy, with punishment serving as the most extreme consequence of an investment in protecting the image of the group. These ego-centric considerations, though central to the workings of social identity theory, are hardly considered in our examination of individuals' politics. The discussion of these considerations in Chapter 2 make clear why this is an unfortunate oversight, particularly in the study of stigmatized social groups.

Beyond considering the emotional substrates that may undergird respectability and the politics of punishment among Black Americans, Chapter 2 presents a framework for thinking about respectability and in-group punishment as responses to instrumental concerns regarding

the welfare of the group and its members. As members of a stigmatized group, Black Americans are not judged solely on the basis of their own behavior. Throughout the course of American history, Blacks have experienced the pain of an indiscriminate meting out of punishment, and negative stereotypes have been used to justify the poor treatment of group members. Bad behavior from within the social group is, therefore, not simply the responsibility and concern of the offending group member. It poses a collective threat to the group's status—threatening to confirm in the minds of Whites negative beliefs they have about Blacks, which has the potential to make life more difficult for the whole. These instrumental concerns about the way that bad behavior affects the status of the group are highlighted in seminal work in comparative politics, perhaps most famously in Fearon and Laitin's work on inter-ethnic cooperation (1996), but to date have yet to be investigated carefully in the study of American politics. Consistent with a view of respectability as a conscious political strategy that seeks to undo a system of oppression, the framework presented takes these instrumental concerns seriously as potential drivers of punishment among in-group members.

Chapter 3 introduces the measure of respectability (the Respectability Politics Scale) that forms the basis for the analyses carried out in the remainder of the manuscript. In this chapter, I walk the reader through my efforts to develop a valid measure of respectability, highlighting the importance of constructing an instrument that allows us to answer both first and second-order questions related to the concept. Though this work is chiefly interested with understanding respectability as a determinant of Black attitudes, there is much that we do not know about the basic properties of respectability *qua* respectability. Focusing both on the 5-item measure of the RPS and its two separate factors, we observe in Chapter 3 that respectability appears to be more than some fringe belief set among Blacks. Instead, there appears to be much agreement among

members of the group that Blacks ought to behave well in public and carry themselves in ways that others will respect. And to a lesser degree, but still at levels that may surprise some, many also agree with the notion that Blacks would fare better if members of the group behaved better. Beyond assessing the distribution of respectability, I also examined the demographic, social, and psychological predictors of the concept, providing the first analysis that provides insight into who embraces and rejects the politics of respectability.

Beyond a historical rendering of respectability that notes the role of subjugation in manifesting the politics of respectability more broadly, the analyses of Chapter 3 allow us to think even more carefully about the origins of respectability as it takes hold among individual members of the Black community. Though it is difficult, without long-run panel data, to pinpoint precisely the necessary or sufficient conditions that give rise to respectability, the findings of this chapter are instructive as we seek to understand the particular aspects of one's socialization that might matter in structuring one's views about respectability. We observe, for example, strong relationships between the Respectability Politics Scale and authoritarianism, religiosity, and group-based shame.

This measure of authoritarianism is a composite score of individuals' responses to several questions that ask about the importance of various traits for children—pitting more authoritarian traits against ones that stress characteristics like independence and curiosity. Insofar as one's weighing of authoritarian traits is a function of one's own upbringing, we can imagine that the politics of respectability likewise reflects the teachings of one's own parents or community members. Though no measure exists in the data that adequately proxies for the potential role of parental socialization, the tenets of respectability, like many of the beliefs that individuals hold,

are likely informed by their early experiences in the world, the beliefs of their parents, and the makeup of their social networks.

The relationship between religiosity and scores on the Respectability Politics Scale provides some suggestive evidence, at least, that this kind of broader socialization matters. Because the survey question only asks respondents how important religion is to one's life, it is challenging to disentangle precisely what this relationship tells us about the roots of respectability in the lives of individual Black people. Two potential explanations emerge, however. It could be the case that more religious Blacks embrace respectability because the tenets of respectability more closely align with the doctrinal teachings of one's faith. It could also be the case that the Black church acts as a particular kind of social organization that provides for its members a unique social experience that conservatizes individuals' preferences and beliefs, making it more likely that one would come to embrace a worldview like respectability. Regardless of the particular mechanism at work, the empirical finding here suggests a need to consider further the role that indigenous institutions like the Black church and other civic organizations (e.g. fraternities and sororities; Jack and Jill, Inc., etc.) play in socializing some Black people toward the politics of respectability. A deeper engagement with the role of these indigenous institutions will likely prove fruitful as I think further about individual-level differences in the embrace of respectability.

And finally, it is important to consider how socialization affects individuals' emotional responses to negative, stereotype-confirming behavior from within the group. As I note at other points in the dissertation, shame is a complex social emotion—it requires that one understands what the norms and expectations are and that one understands when such a norm has been violated. It is not inevitable, however, that individuals respond negatively to what some may

regard as bad or stereotypic behavior. It is wholly reasonable that two Black people can observe the same behavior from an in-group member and have vastly different reactions. Variation in individuals' responses to the question of how often they feel ashamed or embarrassed when they think about how the racial group is viewed by others suggests that this is in fact the case. Moving forward, it will be important to consider more directly what explains variation in these emotional responses. Insofar as these reactions are themselves a result of different experiences and socialization processes, we should explore the role that exposure to information about the distinctiveness of one's racial group has on individuals' beliefs about respectability. To the extent that various aspects of one's own socialization conditions how one responds to stereotypic behavior, we should endeavor to understand more about the factors that make it more or less likely that one responds negatively when an in-group member engages in that kind of behavior. Again, it is likely that a range of experiences and various aspects of individuals' social networks matter in shaping these reactions.

On this point about the role of shame in affecting individuals' views about respectability, I find support for both the role of emotions and instrumental considerations in structuring attitudes about respectability. Findings suggest, however, a need to further refine the measure, as the predictors of items related to the first factor (i.e. items about importance of good behavior in public) lead me to suspect that respondents were calling to mind different considerations than I anticipated in answering these questions. In particular, it appears that in thinking about those items, respondents were considering the unequal social landscape in which Blacks find themselves. My intention in developing this set of items was to capture concerns about image threat, but it appears, based on the data, that responses to these items were less about emotions, and more about an understanding that in a society stratified by race, the subordinate group *has to*

behave well, lest they face a set of negative consequences. I will return to this point in my final comments about future directions, but this is an iterative measurement process and there are more iterations of the scale to come.

Chapter 4 of the dissertation puts respectability and the Respectability Politics Scale to the test. Included in models that control for standard concepts in the discipline like partisanship and ideology and concepts particular to the study of Black politics like linked fate and identity centrality, the RPS explains variance in the outcomes of interest above and beyond existing measures. On questions such as support for sagging pants ordinances, harsher drug sentencing, and stricter welfare policies, we observe that the RPS contributes uniquely to our understanding of Black attitudes on these questions. Importantly, these results hold even in the presence of authoritarianism, a close confound of respectability present in each model. Again, based on extensive analyses that pit the two factors of the RPS against one another, there is reason to believe that this second factor, which concerns itself more with the instrumental nature of respectability, is a more powerful force in affecting how Blacks come to think about in-group punishment. Moreover, the results from the experiment presented in the chapter that manipulates the race of the target group further suggests a need to refine either the measure of respectability or the expectations about how the concept itself should be understood as it relates to individuals' judgments of those outside the group.

I finish the dissertation with a study that examines more closely the considerations that are brought to bear in individuals' judgments about the behavior of in-group members versus out-group members. This study, which I refer to as the Theater Study, manipulates the race of teenagers engaged in disruptive behavior in a movie theater with a mostly White audience. Findings from this study demonstrate that Black respondents experience more embarrassment

and shame when the teenagers are described as Black than when they are described as White, and that negative emotions correlate more highly when the teenagers are described as in-group members. Moreover, Black respondents also perceive that the Black teenagers' behavior will have greater and more negative implications for their group than the White teenagers' behavior will have for people like the White teenagers. Importantly, these instrumental concerns relate to Black respondents' willingness to punish the Black teenagers, but are unrelated to their support for punishing the White teenagers. These findings are important, as they highlight once more the role that instrumental considerations play in affecting individuals' willingness to punish in-group members.

Where Do We Go from Here?

This dissertation represents the first step in understanding how Black Americans come to think about punishment that implicates members of their racial group. In thinking about next steps, I want to discuss first what I see as the important tasks that remain to move this work forward. Let me describe first the theoretical work that remains. Thus far, my argument about the roots of respectability and in-group policing are chiefly about avoiding negative emotions and about individuals' concerns about the consequences bad behavior may have for the racial group. Though I allude to it at various points in the project, I do not think the work takes seriously enough the possibility that respectability reflects concerns about safety and security. Over the course of working on this dissertation, I have read several open-ended responses from study participants that focus on individuals' concerns that a misstep from a group member may lead to the individual getting harmed by an agent of the state (e.g. the police) or by some White person who feels empowered to respond negatively to some seemingly innocuous behavior. As a theoretical quandary, it seems odd to think about this motivation—a concern for the in-group

member's safety—as being related to support for punitive policies that, by design, lead to negative outcomes for the individual. There are, however, ways one may reconcile this apparent paradox. Perhaps those who embrace respectability and support punitive policies do so, at least in part, because they think these policies deter engagement in bad behavior that could lead to outcomes even worse than the ones these policies present.

Relatedly, it is clear that the measure of respectability needs to be refined and validated further. The current measure does correspond with a host of predictors that suggest that the measure is capturing something that is fairly close to respectability, but more work needs to be done to test different items that may more cleanly capture the construct. And though the RPS explains variation across a range of outcomes, the fact that it appears to work similarly for Black and non-Black targets in the experiment gives me some pause as I think about the validity of the full measure. I am more encouraged by the results using the second factor of the model that pertains to the instrumental arm of respectability, but I am not yet convinced that in-group punishment is unrelated to concerns about image threat, which appears to be poorly captured by the first three items of the RPS.

Beyond the measurement work that remains, however, the Theater Study shows great promise in providing a foundation for thinking about in-group punishment that accounts for the theoretical framework of respectability without relying so heavily on the measure of respectability, itself. In this study, I demonstrate that Black respondents who perceive that the behavior of the teenagers will have negative consequences for people like the teens—ostensibly people like the Black respondents—are more likely to support punishing the teenagers. On-going work focuses on priming the emotional and instrumental considerations examined in this study. Other experimental work in progress seeks to manipulate other features of the environment to

test the conditionality of in-group punishment. For example, if I find that Black respondents are more likely to punish in-group members when the behavior is witnessed by Whites relative to the case when the behavior is witnessed by other Blacks, this would provide additional evidence that the kinds of considerations highlighted in this dissertation matter for how Blacks come to think about in-group punishment. In Jewish culture, a Yiddish phrase, *shonda for the goyim*, characterizes the phenomenon of one being pained by having a member of the group engage in stereotype-consistent behavior that is witnessed by non-Jews. Moreover, based on the observational data that shows a strong relationship between perceptions of discrimination and an embrace of respectability, I am also interested in examining whether providing information about the status of the group is causally related to concerns about in-group behavior. That is, do we find strong causal evidence that an increased sense of discrimination or bias toward one's group makes individuals more concerned about the behavior of their group and, thus, more likely to punish in-group members who violate some set of social norms? These sorts of experiments do not depend on the measure of respectability, but will go a long way in helping us better understand the conditions under which individuals are more or less likely to support punishing in-group members.

This work is exciting, not only because of what it can tell us about Black attitudes toward punitive social policies that bear on the lives of other Black people, but also because of the framework it provides for scholars interested in understanding similar processes within other stigmatized social groups. The theoretical arguments put forth in the dissertation can be used, for example, to help understand variation in Latino attitudes toward policies related to immigration. To what extent do some members of the group support restrictive immigration policies as a means of distancing themselves from or punishing those who threaten the image and status of

Latinos already living in the United States? Likewise, do we observe similar processes among Muslim Americans who may be motivated to support harsh punishment for group members who engage in terroristic behavior for reasons that differ from those that structure the attitudes of non-Muslims? We can wonder about how these processes manifest for a variety of social groups, including women and members of the LGBTQ community who may support policies that are seemingly bad for other members of the group. What this dissertation makes clear, however, is that future work on punishment must take seriously heterogeneity in opinion among members of the target group, while examining carefully the factors that may explain that heterogeneity. In taking up this task, future scholarship will add further nuance to our understanding of identity in American politics and will re-center in our conversations those too often treated as mere objects of some dominant groups' disdain.

To be sure, one may reasonably wonder whether those concerned with the consequences of punishment in the United States should concern themselves with the attitudes of those who belong to the group targeted by the punishment. Admittedly, this criticism has dogged me throughout the writing of this dissertation and will, in all likelihood, remain a part of my thinking as I continue to pursue this work. For scholars and advocates interested in reform, however, it is not enough to understand the attitudes of those who belong to dominant social groups. We must commit ourselves to understanding, too, the attitudes and predilections of those most affected by the very policies that sustain and manifest from America's unequal social hierarchy. The scholarly efforts of this dissertation have been put forth in that spirit.

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