Forged in the Fire:
Racially-Targeted Violence and Implications for Political Behavior in the United States

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
2022

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Dedication

To 18-year-old Kiela – who was very lost, very brave, and had no idea of the journey yet to come.

Acknowledgements

I am incredibly fortunate that this is a long section, though also lucky that it has come together piece-by-piece over a number of years. Often, it has been the document that I turn to when I find myself at a loss for academic words or particularly touched by the one of the folks I mention below.

One day during my first year of graduate school, Rob Mickey gave me a copy of his book to keep. It was not a big deal to him. But it is an enormous book, and it was an enormous gesture to me. I am so grateful to Rob for his guidance through the past seven years. I came to Michigan with no sense of what to expect or how to navigate the new world for which I had signed myself up. There was an incredibly steep learning curve. I appreciate Rob's patience and wisdom over the years and the space he has always given me to talk through the challenges and triumphs.

On another occasion, I distinctly remember how nervous I was wandering the halls of the Center for Political Studies trying to find Vince Hutchings' office as a student during graduate recruitment. I was familiar with Vince's work from several of my undergraduate classes and was anxious to meet the man behind this scholarship. Immediately, I felt that I could be candid with Vince about my concerns and fears about coming to Michigan. Vince is not one to mince his words, and he did not do so on this occasion. It was not going to be easy, but if I did not have anything to learn then I would have no reason to be at Michigan. I have held onto this tightly during my time there, and I have continued to hold Vince's advice in the highest regard. I am incredibly grateful to have had his guidance during this journey

I had no idea who Christian Davenport was when I came to Michigan. In my first year, I only heard the stories – more like legends – that preceded him. I certainly had no idea that Christian would come to be my mentor and my dissertation chair. I am grateful for the time and effort that Christian has invested in me. Christian sees the bigger picture, and he tries to share that vision with me. Even if I stubbornly refuse to see it at times. Without his not-so-gentle nudging, I would not have seen the broader implications of my work and the wider audience to whom I have the ability to speak. As a dissertation chair, he has given me room to explore and to discover my own voice. Without his urging, I certainly would not have had as many opportunities to explore the world as I have had. Without his

mentorship. I would not have been able to gain the confidence that I have now in myself and in the work that I do. While I did not come to Michigan to work with Christian, I cannot imagine my journey there without him.

Many other faculty and colleagues at Michigan have comprised an incredible support system for me, and I am also thankful to Chris Farris, Mai Hassan, John Jackson, Matthew Lassiter, Mara Ostfeld, Nick Valentino, as well as the members of the Interdisciplinary Workshop on American Politics and Conflict Peace Research and Development workshop for their feedback and encouragement on many projects.

I owe a great deal of gratitude to the faculty at my alma mater, Sewanee: the University of the South. Attending Sewanee was a practical choice, and I was less than enthusiastic at the outset. In retrospect, it was one of the best decisions I could have made for myself. I am deeply indebted to a number of faculty at Sewanee for putting me on the path to the University of Michigan and certainly toward a life I could not have dreamed of for myself ten years ago when I started there.

I walked into my first full semester at Sewanee intent on taking one final Latin class on Caesar to fulfill my general education requirement. I walked out three years later with a minor in Latin and exposure to a range of people, ideas, art, and philosophies that I had never before encountered. Christopher McDonough made those seminars incredibly fun and engaging, often the highlights of the week. I believe that my patience with and deference for the archives was developed, in part, through a lot of time spent with Cicero and Livy, among others.

Sewanee also introduced me to the discipline of political science. Until I left for Michigan, I assumed that women made up the majority of political scientists. Professors Melody Crowder-Meyer, Andrea Hatcher, Amy Patterson, and Paige Schneider were more instrumental than I can say in encouraging me to apply for graduate school and to see my potential to be successful there. Had these professors not broached the topic of graduate school and a doctorate with me, I doubt I would be writing this today. Had they not offered me opportunities to engage in research and mentored me in that process, I would have not found the joy and the magic in not only consuming research, but conducting it as well. Had I not seen these professors excelling in their roles, I would not have believed that I could do it as well. As I start on this new tenure-track journey, I will strive to live up to their example. They have set a high bar, and I hope to meet it.

I had a very long job market season. While I am grateful for it, there were many days during this period, particularly after my father's passing, when it was struggle to sit in front of my computer – in an unending purgatory of zoom calls and emails – and pretend that the work at hand was the

most important thing on my mind. But a silver lining of such a season, was the number of amazing colleagues and friends I gained along the way. There are several people in particular to whom I express my gratitude, whose feedback has been incorporated into this work and whose support for me during this tough period has not gone unnoticed nor unappreciated. For this, I would like to thank Nadia Brown, Bernard Fraga, Megan Francis, Andra Gillespie, Christian Hosam, Jane Junn, Irfan Nooruddin, Nita Rudra, Sofia Jordán Wallace, Cara Wong, and Sherry Zaks.

I am an only child, which often elicits a strange reaction from people when you tell them, and that has also allowed me to pick some wonderful people as my surrogate siblings. I am fortunate to have incredible friends in my life – they have inspired me to dream big.

Hajar Sakhi has been my closest and dearest friend for almost two decades. She has always helped me to see the larger journey, and we remind each other just how far we have come. Her moral compass never strays, and often I look to her as an example of how to remain true to my own convictions.

Amy Hewell met me during a very difficult period of my life, and she – for some reason – wanted to be my friend. I am grateful to her for her friendship, and I am grateful for the sanctuary that she, Tripp Hewell, Lola, Oscar, and Basil have always offered me.

I was terrified of Christina Kinane when I first walked into her – soon to be our – office on the seventh floor of Haven Hall. Little did I know, Christina would become one of my dearest friends. And our little closet at the end of the seventh-floor hallway would become a refuge. I know no one with a bigger heart than Christina – she has always been the first to congratulate me, to warn me, to urge me to slow down, or to encourage me to be bolder. I am thankful to her for the love and support that she (and Cory, Ellie, and Ethan!) has given to me – even when I did not know that I needed it.

One of the more pleasant discoveries in graduate school was the freedom to travel. I have had no better travel companion than Jessica Sun. Some of my most memorable moments over the past seven years have been with Jessica – visiting Niagara Falls, kissing the Blarney Stone, getting caught in torrential rainfall in Cleveland or – as the COVID-19 Pandemic limited our abilities to travel – spending Saturday mornings sitting under the trees at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in Atlanta.

Simonelli, Roya Talibova, Zoe Walker, Princess Williams, and Erin Winter.

I would be nowhere today if not for my mother, Lauryn.[1] My mother is an educator through and through — every moment is something from which we can learn and grow. She has taught me to see the value in each lesson that life has given me. She has taught me, by her own example, to be strong and independent. I see more and more of her in myself each day. That makes me happy. I am also immensely grateful to my aunt, Shirley, for her unwavering support and belief in me, even when I could not see it. I am particularly appreciative that Shirley keeps me abreast of political news when I no longer have the patience to keep up with it.

Patrick Saikas joined me once my journey took me to Atlanta. As someone with little knowledge of (or interest in, I'm sure) political violence, the space he has given me to discuss my ideas, theories, and far-flung research designs is much appreciated. He never seems to tire of my discussions of violence and terrorism, as uncomfortable and unpleasant as they may be at times. For that, I am grateful. I am even more so grateful, though, that Patrick has given me the ability to see my life beyond academia. Specifically, Patrick has introduced me to the nuances of OutKast, Three 6 Mafia, and UGK, as well as the value of time spent away from work. Even when random plants appear where they should not be in our garden, I am thankful for all the adventures that Patrick has brought into my life. I am also incredibly thankful to Jan, John, and Max Saikas, as well as Jody Loper and June Shiver, for making Georgia feel like home.

My family have offered me something that is truly invaluable – their unconditional pride. I am devastated that two of the people who always made it known that they were unconditionally proud of me were not able to see me reach this point. As I have reflected more on my orientation towards politics and political science, I have come to realize just how much the stories and voices of my father, Matthew, and grandmother, Dede, inspire the work that I do. It is their recollections, their narratives, their lived experiences, our conversations to and from school as a child, and later over the phone when I moved away for college and graduate school, that have shown me the beauty of a very complex politics of race and identity in the United States. They also taught me the importance of history – knowing where you come from and how you got to where you are. I try to keep this in mind always

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[1] For full disclosure, she bargained herself a full paragraph in these acknowledgements in exchange for giving me a ride home from the airport in 2018.

in the work that I do. I recognize that even though I am unable to share the culmination of this accomplishment with them, they were proud of me at each step of the way. I will carry that with me always.

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Abstract

How do individuals in the United States respond politically to racially-targeted violence? While literature in comparative politics and international relations has considered the impact of diverse forms of violence on diverse forms of political behavior, the subfield of American politics has failed to thoroughly consider the political implications of violence directed against racial minorities. To address this significant limitation in scholarship, *Forged in the Fire* focuses explicitly on the connection between racial violence, responses to those incidents, and how those responses vary across ethno-racial identity groups. I develop framework for explaining political behavior in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence. Experiences with violence and histories of violence are not uniformly distributed across the American population, particularly when comparing between Black and white Americans. These distinctions have shaped the formation of racial categories and the collective memories of racial groups, and I argue that these histories are drawn forth in the aftermath of violence. Therefore, I contend that racially-targeted violence should evoke distinctly elevated responses among Black and brown Americans in comparison to White Americans. I pursue this framework using a multi-method approach that combines survey experiments and observational data. Chapter 4 highlights individual-level reactions to racially-targeted violence using a series of survey experiments. Histories of violence and racial identity are inextricably intertwined in the United States, and this chapter tests if this is apparent when studying reactions to racially-targeted violence in the present day. The findings in this chapter substantiate my argument that responses to racially-targeted violence are not uniform across racial groups. I find that Black respondents express greater anger when presented with news of racially-targeted violence against other Black people and greater sympathy when shown news of violence

against Hispanic people. Yet, such anger and sympathy are not evoked among Hispanic and white respondents. In Chapter 5, I extend these findings further. I show that, even when accounting for other attributes of violence (e.g., tactic or magnitude), shared racial identity with the targeted group remains a crucial factor for the degree of anger and punitiveness that Black respondents express about the violence. But again, shared race with the targeted group does not impact how white respondents felt about an incident. Chapter 6 measures the impact of racially-targeted violence on electoral behavior. I use several mass shooting events and election data to understand if and how several mass shootings across the United States influenced local-level voter registration and voter turnout. I do not find evidence of racially-selective electoral mobilization among Black voters, in the aftermath of a mass shooting in Charleston, South Carolina, nor among Hispanic voters, in the aftermath of a mass shooting in El Paso, Texas. However, I do find evidence in Las Vegas, Nevada that even when violence is not clearly targeted against a racial group, local organizations may influence outcomes that fall along racial lines. In the concluding chapter, I discuss the wider implications of this work and its contributions. *Forged in the Fire* expands the literature on conflict and violence in the United States, at the same time contributing to a better understanding of how violence matters politically as well as when.

Chapter 1

Introduction

"Violence is a defining facet of American democracy."

I typed this sentence as the start of one of many drafts of a job market paper. It makes a clear statement. It draws the reader in, as some like to say is important in writing. At some point in the drafting, it became the opening sentence of a paper for a conference panel. It was simply a sentence to keep the two people who might actually look at the paper reading beyond that first paragraph. This sentence seemed obvious to me. But, at that poorly attended, virtual American Political Science Association panel in 2020, a discussant made the point to highlight it in his comments, decorated with many question marks behind it.[2] It was not so obvious to him. I was taken aback. I recognized the next day, however, that perhaps this sentence also has other classic hallmarks of a strong opening statement: it is debatable.

Violence is a defining facet of American democracy. Perhaps, like a gem, perspective matters when considering this statement. How you turn it in the light highlights its imperfections or accentuates its clarity. Where you are situated, the shoes in which you stand, the identities you embody – these facets define how you view politics, how you interact with the political system, how you are treated within American society, and whether or not you have a say in the American political system. Perhaps from where you stand other features are more remarkable. But, if you stand where I stand, you can see the plethora of ways that violence has determined outcomes in my life – most certainly in the lives of my ancestors. From here, you can see that violence is an undeniable undercurrent of the Black and brown experience in the United States.

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[2] I sincerely thank that discussant for the comments on the paper and for pushing me in this regard. It is often hard to recognize the depth of one's knowledge and not throw others into these depths unacclimated. This discussant's feedback was helpful for reorienting my work for a broader audience.

Though this dissertation focuses predominantly on one form of violence and, moreover, predominantly on violence targeted against Black Americans, I hope that every piece of it ties back to support this thesis. It is my intention that this dissertation will make that opening statement less debatable. Even without an in-depth history of violence against African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Indigenous people, and all of those whose identities transcend the socially-constructed and institutionally-enforced boxes of racial identity in the United States. Even without speaking at length about the violence of intersectionalities – where women of color are left unseen and unheard; even without featuring those whose sexuality, gender identity, age, ability, shape, or housing status may leave them more vulnerable than others, it is my hope that this work resonates through all of these dimensions. By focusing on many specifics of the Black experience, this work contributes to a broader, more honest, more research-driven conversation about violence as a political entity in the United States, while also challenging the isolation of the American case from work in Comparative Politics and International Relations.

Violence and American Politics

Why is violence important to study in American politics? In the time prior to the 2020 murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota that question may have been a reasonable one. It would have also been a reasonable one prior to the storming of the United States Capitol building on January 6, 2021. The years 2020, 2021, and now 2022, arguably have made violence, and its place in American politics, more salient than in the past, particularly violence of a racial nature. Even before explicating the use of violence as a means of establishing and maintaining dominance over historically-marginalized racial groups (as I do in Chapter 2), it must be acknowledged that American democracy was borne out of violence and the Union has been preserved through the use of violence as well. A (seemingly) stable democracy is maintained by acts of violence which uphold its order. That is, order is achieved through violence, just as violence is a means of upending the status quo (Wrong 1994).

Now that violence perpetrated by domestic actors has emphasized the ways that violence permeates American society and politics, perhaps there is room to expand our study of political violence in the American context – eliminating a false binary, as I have heard it described, between the United States and the rest of the world. To this point, there are three places that I identify for deeper inquiry and which I address in the chapters that follow.

First, our current understanding of violence in American politics often assumes a similar baseline of response among all people. With the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework,

which I introduce in Chapter 3, I challenge this assumption by suggesting that individuals of different racial groups come to violence with distinct historical predispositions toward it. If these historical predispositions are different, then we should not expect that responses to violence will be equivalent across racial groups. Exposed to the same stimuli, racial identity and historical predispositions should impact if and how individuals react to violence.

A second place for greater inquiry is the scale of events. To study violence in the United States, scholars have often turned to the largest act of terrorism on American soil as a subject of interest: the September 11, 2001 terror attacks. Literature in American politics has emphasized the potential for national-scale terror attacks, such as this, to act as a unifying force, encouraging community and political participation, particularly among those who have been directly affected. This research has found that the September 11 attacks distinctly shifted the ways in which Americans regarded their government, immigrants, Muslims, and their own safety (D. W. Davis and Silver 2004; Gadarian 2010; Hersh 2013; Huddy et al. 2002; Huddy and Feldman 2011; Traugott et al. 2002). To the first point, though, there is greater discernment needed in these considerations. Davis and Silver (2004), for example, find that Black Americans are less willing to cede civil liberties in response to threat than white Americans.

Yet, this focus on national-scale violence has overlooked those more localized incidents that occurred long before September 2001. This violence, which some might contend are terrorist attacks themselves, have localized and intensely specific targets, and thus their localized effects should be a place for consideration. For example, a growing body of scholarship finds that the effects of mass shootings on voter registration are negligible (Hassell, Holbein, and Baldwin 2020), and their effects on public opinion debatable (Barney and Schaffner 2019; Newman and Hartman 2017). Enos and colleagues (2019) finds that not only did the Rodney King riots of 1992 have a measurable impact on voter turnout in Los Angeles, California, but that those effects were substantially more prominent among African-Americans. Not all localities are equivalent when it comes to violence, nor are all racial groups equivalent when reflecting on their histories of violence. They must not be considered as such; therefore, greater attention can be paid to the local and individual context. I attempt to do so in this dissertation by considering the community-level implications of acts of racial violence that occur in those places.

Third, and more specific to the study of racial violence, there is need for greater consideration of outcomes as opposed to onset (Davenport et al. 2019). This dissertation moves our consideration of violence to a completely different portion of the conflict cycle, asking not what brings about these

events, which focuses on perpetrators, but instead what are the implications of these acts of violence for those that are directly targeted and share identity with the targeted.[3] Further, I center people of color and their responses to violence in this work. People of color, and Black people in particular, are not threat-invoking, shapeless phantoms lurking in the minds of white subjects, as they are portrayed in much of the existing research on racial threat and public opinion.

This dissertation provides a through interrogation of how violence interacts with race in American politics. By looking to the role of racial identity from several perspectives – e.g., the audience and the target of violence – I provide a foundation from which to build a more robust understanding of the implications of racial violence in the United States. However, while the studies within this project are focused on the American context, they draw extensively from research in the comparative politics and international relations subfields. It is my hope that as I have drawn on the literatures on political violence to bring the United States into this robust literature, this work will also contribute to greater regard for racial and ethnic violence in contexts outside of the United States.

Racially-Targeted Violence as a Political Entity in the U.S.

In this dissertation, I ask the questions: how do individuals and communities in the United States respond politically to racially-targeted violence? Additionally, what conditions facilitate those responses? I advance our understanding of racially-targeted violence as an influence on political behavior, while also theorizing about it as a form of political behavior itself. While literature in comparative politics and international relations has considered the impact of diverse forms of violence on diverse forms of political behavior, the subfield of American politics has failed to thoroughly consider the political implications of violence directed against racial minorities. Similar to a great deal of social science literature on the topic, this line of inquiry has focused instead on the conditions, like racial and economic threat, that lead to onset. This oversight has been revealed in the current moment – as we have seen the rise of violence against historically-marginalized groups in the United States[4] – and is especially problematic because it limits the ability to understand how violence in our midst impacts politics in the present and the future. To address this significant limitation in

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[3] This should not be interpreted as privileging identity over other connections. But my research interests lay in better understanding identity in violence contexts.
[4] "Hate crime reports in US surge to highest level in 12-years, FBI says." Christina Carrega and Priya Krishnakumar. October 26, 2021. CNN.

conceptualization, theorization, scholarship, and policy, I focus explicitly on the connection between racial violence and its political responses. Investigating this topic, I take a multi-method approach that builds upon insights derived from foundational theoretical scholarship as well as detailed archival work. The guiding theoretical framework that I lay out in Chapter 3 argues that acts of racially-targeted violence are influential on political behavior, particularly the behavior of those who share racial identity with the targeted, mediated by history, racial identity, and organizational capacity. That is, we can understand when, where, and why individuals who are impacted by racially-targeted violence are activated to political activity in its aftermath when we consider the interaction of histories of violence that have contributed to race formation as well as the context of the communities in which those individuals find themselves.

Methods and Data

Racially-targeted violence is a new construct, as is the theory which informs the hypotheses and expectations that I lay out in Chapter 3. The dependent variables of interest – aspects of political behavior, broadly speaking – have been studied thoroughly and robustly in the American Politics subfield. Thus, as I re-conceptualize racial violence, I generally rely on existing definitions of political participation as gauges of political impact. Voter registration and voter turnout – engagement with government through what I will call traditional or institutionalized channels – are the focal point of Chapter 6. Chapters 4 and 5 also considers the potential for traditional political action by interrogating the psychological underpinnings of engagement – threat and emotion.

Violence, and gun violence in particular, is salient to the American public right now. These incidents have revived, once again, long fought debates over gun control and the second amendment. My research interests, however, lay with understanding how acts of violence like these – though all perpetrated with similar weapons – are conceptually different and may lead to different political outcomes. Given this prominence of this tactic, my empirical analyses will focus predominantly on how this tactic influences political outcomes.

Methodologically, I engage a mixed-method approach which draws on survey experiments, observational data, and qualitative sources to compose a multi-faceted portrait of the consequences of racially-targeted violence in the United States. These different methods complement one another – where qualitative data and voter information are unable to identify out the micro-foundations of political responses to violence, I use survey experiments to make up the difference. Similarly, where experiments are unable to measure political outcomes outside of their contexts, I draw on

observational information to understand responses to violence in real time. This means that each empirical chapter has its own research design, sources of data, and methodological approach. Therefore, rather than outlining all these specifics at once in a comprehensive methods chapter or section, I describe them in detail in each chapter for the sake of clarity. Briefly, however, Chapters 4 and 5 use original survey experiments to measure emotion and threat perception in response to a fictional mass shooting incident. Chapter 6 uses voter files from three different states and a difference-in-differences design to gauge changes in voter registration and voter turnout in the aftermath of several mass shootings.

Outline of Dissertation

To develop a conceptual foundation from which to build, I begin in Chapter 2 with an in-depth discussion of racially-targeted violence. I define the concept, review literature related to it, outline several concerns of measurement, and discuss it within the sphere of American politics – both historically and contemporaneous. I also walk through the unique contribution this concept brings to scholarship on race and violence. In Chapter 3, I lay out a novel framework – the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework – for understanding the impact that racially-targeted violence has on the communities in which these events occur. I make the argument that how individuals respond to racially-targeted violence is dependent on several factors, including racial identity, historical predispositions toward violence, and also organizing structures within their community. Together, these aspects can influence community-level outcomes.

Chapter 4, "Violence in Color," features a series of original survey experiments, and it considers how racially-targeted violence is perceived differently across racial groups. While research has considered how the public reacts to news of a police shooting targeted against different victims, very little has been done to understand how reactions to violence vary across racial groups, and even less attention has been paid to reactions to violence committed by non-state actors. In these experiments fielded to a nation-wide sample, I alter the racial identity of the target of a mass shooting, while holding all other characteristics constant. I hypothesize that there should be distinct emotional responses to violence, as well as perceptions of threat, when comparing between racial groups. Further, I expect that the addition of a racialized target should heighten responses for those of a shared racial group. Indeed, I do find that baseline perceptions of violence are distinctly different when comparing white, Black, and Hispanic Americans. I also find that Black Americans respond to violence

directed against their own racial group with heightened anger. This is not the case for white and Hispanic respondents, who do not express greater anger, or any emotion, when reading about violence against their racial group. Together, these findings suggest that racially-targeted violence is more evocative among African-Americans and it could be a point of potential political mobilization among that group.

"Deconstructing Racially-Targeted Violence," Chapter 5, replicates these findings in a different experimental context. Using a conjoint experiment, I again measure anger among Black and white participants. This time, however, I alternate several other characteristics of violence – including perpetrator race, tactic, and location, among other attributes – to isolate further the impact of the target's racial identity. Again, I find that Black respondents are most angry when reading about violence targeted against other Black people, even when taking into account other attributes.

Chapter 6, "Fear and Participation: Electoral Mobilization in the Aftermath of Mass Shootings," investigates the consequences of violence within a set of specific city-level cases – Charleston, South Carolina, El Paso, Texas, and Las Vegas, Nevada. Using three mass shootings as exogenous shocks to their respective communities, I measure changes in voter registration and voter turnout in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence. The findings of this chapter shed light on the important connection between the individual and the fabric of community organizations in their lives. First, I conclude that racial identity alone is not a clear channel to the political system in the aftermath of racial violence. However, when organizations, and racialized organizations, emphasize traditional means of political participation in the aftermath of violence, the time immediately after a mass act of violence can be a critical time for political mobilization. Altogether, this chapter's findings suggest that there is power in racial identity in conjunction with organizing structures. Their absence leaves potential political energy untapped.

I pull together the findings of these studies in the concluding chapter, discussing the ways in which *Forged in the Fire* extends our knowledge of racial violence in the United States, as well as its impact on the American Politics literature. I describe the future directions that this research will take, in addition to the implications that it has for policy making beyond academia.

Additional Notes

Before concluding this chapter, there are several additional points to address. I hope that they give greater context to choices made in the design, execution, and presentation of the research.

Walking the line between "witness and spectator"

I have grappled at length with a concern that is poignantly expressed by Saidiya Hartman in *Scenes of Subjection,* what she describes as "the uncertain line between witness and spectator" (1997, 4). She goes on to write: "Only more obscene than the brutality unleashed at the whipping post is the demand that this suffering be materialized and evidenced by the display of the tortured body or endless recitations of the ghastly and terrible. In light of this, how does one give expression to these outrages without exacerbating the indifference to suffering that is the consequences of the benumbing spectacle or contend with the narcissistic identification that obliterates the other or the prurience that too often in the response to such displays?" (1997, 4). She makes an intentional decision in her work to turn away from the acts of terror which are rampant within the institution of slavery – whippings, rape, death – and to instead uncover the terror within rather ordinary moments of the depicted lives of the enslaved. Other have also emphasized the role that this "racial abjection" has in perpetuating the dehumanization of people of color (Davis 2022).

I have heard many times in the year since the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police a similar sentiment in many workshops and conversations: "Who hasn't seen the death of George Floyd? Who hasn't watched that video?" I have not. I have not been compelled to take part in spectating Floyd's death. I have also recognized that my role as a witness bears little, if any, impact on the matter itself. My eyes viewing that video have no power to change the past. I say this to emphasize that have deeply considered the degree to which I draw upon depictions of death and violence in my work, as well as the ways in which I may stand to profit, or have already profited from, the study of this topic. Depicting Black bodies swinging from trees or white-hooded silhouettes around burning crosses accurately represent the actuality of the subject I study. They have a shock factor, and, more so than any description I give, they communicate the terror – and therefore, perhaps, the importance – of the subject matter. These images hit with a sense of terror, especially for those of us who might have found ourselves on the wrong side of such events. That was the intention of the acts depicted in those images. It is not my intention to replicate nor incite such feelings here.

Therefore, I make every effort to minimize the depictions, photographs, and descriptions of death, violence, and terror that I feature. Survey experiments in Chapter 4 ask respondents to read a news article about a fictional mass shooting. For these exercises, I included no graphic or gratuitous depictions or descriptions of violence and respondents were immediately informed after the experiment that what they read about was a fictional event. In other places, I have been precise in my writing and editing to include only those details needed to achieve the goals of this research. My work

is significantly influenced by the scholarship of historians, like Monica Munoz Martinez (2018) and Kidada Williams (2012), whose research on the communities left in the wake of violence has created room for me to further theorize about the implications of violence in political science. I draw on their example to make my best effort at centering those who have experienced violence in my work, rather than those who perpetrate it.

Inclusivity and Generalizability

In the process of conceiving, beginning, and finishing this dissertation, a number of incidents of violence have targeted communities of color across the United States. As I initially drafted this introduction in 2021, my newly adopted community of Atlanta, Georgia was grappling with the murder of eight Asian and Hispanic individuals, six of whom were women, in a mass shooting. My ideal dissertation – had I unlimited time, resources, and energy – would have been inclusive of as many racial groups and ethnic identities as possible; it would have tackled identities that stretch beyond the phenotypical. But, the limitations of reality have kept me to a tight focus on violence against Black people, with limited considerations of other ethno-racial groups. Therefore, the massacre in Atlanta is only given anecdotal consideration. I want to emphasize, and I do so again as I conclude the dissertation: my focus on Black people should not in any way minimize the importance of violence against other racial groups, nor should it be taken as unconcerned of their collective trauma, nor dismissive of white supremacy's domination over other racial groups.

The collective trauma and memory that links Black people in the United States is, in part, my own and that of my family. It is also where my own interest in the subject is rooted. It is, therefore, the natural space for me to begin what I hope is a long career dedicated to this area of study. The present work and framework will inform future study of the widespread implications of violence against people of color and historically marginalized groups in the United States.

Intersection of Race and Gender

The massacre in Atlanta has also highlighted another aspect of identity violence – gender. In this dissertation I will speak at different moments about gender as an additional dimension in racially-targeted violence, one that often subsumes violence against women of color. Acts of terror committed against women, of all racial identities, brings into discussion theories of intersectionality and the role of violence in reinforcing interlocking hierarchies of oppression (Bennett 2018; Crenshaw 1990). The

acts of violence that I consider here range in their tactics and their level of visibility. Sexual violence against women is covert, often unreported because of the nature of the crime, and its general omission from the record creates a gaping hole in this area of research that may never entirely be filled. When communities do rally around the victims of sexual violence, we have record of this collective action and the violence that spurred it.[5] But, where acts go unreported or victims go un-championed, the record of violence has been lost. Again, my intent is not to further silence these victims or suppress the importance of the interaction of race and violence. Instead, I hope that this work can be the foundation for a more nuanced study of gender and racially-targeted violence, as well as racially-targeted violence in conjunction with other identities.

Forged in the Fire

The title of this dissertation emphasizes fire for two reasons. First, in a very factual sense, the predominant tactic that I consider in this project is triggered by fire and combustion. The mass shootings that you encounter in the following chapters were initiated by sparks that changed the lives of tens of thousands of people. From these sparks came events that drastically altered the paths of the individuals and communities in which they took place.

Second, fire also refers metaphorically to the pressure and intensity of these incidents, the struggle that comes in the wake of tragedy. For those more recent events – in Charleston, South Carolina, Las Vegas, Nevada, and El Paso, Texas – the communities deemed themselves "Strong" in the aftermath of mass shootings. For that reason, these communities are in many ways "forged in the fire." Each community displayed resilience in the aftermath of the tragedy. The fires which instigated tragedy in these communities, therefore, also brought forth the resilience and resistant spirits within these places. The events undoubtedly changed the people within these communities, regardless of the variables that I focus on here.

They have been placed under conditions of extreme pressure, instigated through fire, and have come through on the other side. This dissertation considers only a small sliver of the ways in which these people and communities have endured. At the heart of this is the puzzle I seek to address in the chapters that follow: When and why do people engage political mobilization, even in the face of credible threats to their lives and their communities?

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[5] See McGuire (2010) for the example of Recy Taylor in Abbeville, Alabama.

Chapter 2

What is Racially-Targeted Violence?

Hatred and animus undergird our understandings of racial and racialized violence, yet what does it mean to hate someone or some group enough to the point of physical and pre-meditated violence? Does hatred truly matter to measure and understand the consequences of such violence?

As I originally drafted this chapter, the murderers of Ahmaud Arbery stood on trial for federal hate crime charges. To convict these men, federal prosecutors needed to prove that the perpetrators' actions were motivated by racial bias. They were ultimately able to do this. Arbery's murderers were sentenced to life in federal prison. There are many ways that Arbery's murder has been described. "Hate crime" and "lynching" are only two examples. In Buffalo, the May 14, 2022 mass shooting has been described as a "massacre" and "domestic terrorism." To these terms, I add that those incidents can also be described as acts of "racially-targeted violence," a term which conceptually circumvents issues of labeling and the fragmentation the study of racial violence has experienced over time. This chapter describes racially-targeted violence, explains it as a political concept, and then considers why it should have implications for American politics. The subsequent chapters focus predominantly on the implications of racially-targeted violence – i.e., how this violence shifts political behavior. Thus, this chapter's purpose is to provide parameters for the concept that lays the foundation for the chapters to come. I draw on literatures in criminology, political science, and sociology to understand what racially-targeted violence is, how it has been defined, and to consider theories of why this violence occurs.

To accomplish these goals, first, I define racially-targeted violence and outline several of the challenges of measuring it as well as its aftereffects. I move away from the labels that have segmented the study of racial violence (e.g., "hate crime," "lynching"). In doing so, I introduce the concept of "racially-targeted violence" as a new means of examining racial violence. I take care to clearly distinguish its parameters in relation to other forms of violence. From a conceptual standpoint, I walk through what racially-targeted violence is, what it is not, and how it fits into the existing literature on racial violence. I also introduce literature on inter-group competition, racial hierarchy, group position,

and racial threat that shapes the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework that I develop in Chapter 3. This section briefly describes competition and contention between racial groups that is an effort to reinforce or dismantle racial hierarchy. This conflict between racial groups, in response to physical and social threats, is essential to understanding the onset and consequences of racially-targeted violence.

Next, I consider racially-targeted violence as a political concept – why might acts of violence that often fall outside of the political realm have implications for political outcomes? This includes a deeper dive into the work which has been done on the topic of lynching, as well as several existing theories of hate crime and "hate-driven" violence. I discuss the ways in which racially-targeted violence has been used as a tool of political coercion, a means of social control, and as an act of white supremacy. Altogether, this chapter establishes racially-targeted violence as a viable concept in the discipline of political science and lays the foundation for the theory I develop in Chapter 3 and the analyses that follow.

My theoretical framework views acts of racially-targeted violence as tools of communication – whether or not there is intentionality behind that communication. They can communicate warnings to targeted groups about what behavior is or is not acceptable. They can signal collective-identity to those who share identity with the perpetrator. But how should we understand and conceptualize these actions? And further, how can we begin to put such a variation of tactics and labels in conversation with one another? In the next section, I provide an in-depth description of racially-targeted violence.

What is Racially-Targeted Violence?

At first glance, the racial violence that is the focus of this dissertation may seem obvious: incidents where it is possible to discern where people have been victimized on account of their racial identity. These incidents are often recalled by the names of their victims: Emmett Till, James Byrd Jr., Trayvon Martin, Ahmaud Arbery. Like obscenity, it may appear that we know racially-targeted violence when we see it.[6] What we see is not a constant, though. I emphasize this throughout this research and in the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework – what we see and how we respond is highly filtered by racial identity, predispositions toward violence, and community networks.

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[6] *Jacobellis v. Ohio.*

Even though the impression of whether or not something is racially-motivated violence or racial violence may change based on who is perceiving it, there are fundamental commonalities of *racially-targeted violence* that are key to my theoretical framework. This consistency of the concept itself is an important contribution of this research.

First, I walk through the roots of inter-group conflict and racial threat in the United States. This serves to underscore that racial groups in the United States are arranged in a hierarchical fashion and are often in competition with one another to perpetuate or overturn that hierarchy. Racially-targeted violence can be a physical manifestation of this conflict. To conceptualize racially-targeted violence, I differentiate it from non-violent forms of contention, as well as from forms of violence which are not physical.[7] This conceptualization separates racially-targeted violence from other legal definitions and terms that have hindered the study of the underlying concept. Therefore, I have taken great pains to differentiate racially-targeted violence from labels like "hate crime," "racially-motivated," or "bias-motivated."

This section also speaks to several other factors that influence my conceptualization of racially-targeted violence. My conceptualization of racially-targeted violence focuses predominantly on violence committed by non-state actors. I outline the rationale for this and the relationship between racially-targeted violence and state violence/repression. Next, I discuss the role of motivation and how it <u>should not</u> be a guiding criterion for inclusion, though it is a characteristic that I consider to be central to racially-targeted violence. I also consider whether these incidents should be thought of as "random" or "senseless" as the language of some would imply . Finally, I differentiate racially-targeted violence from other forms of violence that may include a violent component but are not included under the definition of racially-targeted violence. Altogether this section paints a more complete picture of racially-targeted violence while outlining the limitations of current conceptualizations and labels.

Group Conflict and Racial Threat

Group Conflict – Groups – racial or of other identities – do not form arbitrarily. Key to

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[7] My conceptualization of violence and racially-targeted violence is a physical one, but this is not to diminish the importance of structural and institutionalized violence. Over the course of this dissertation, there will be many points at which physical violence is only a small indication of much larger systems of institutional and structural violence. I take care to identify those whenever possible.

group formation is the internalization of an ascribed identity (Huddy 2001; Tajfel et al. 1979). While conflict occurs with an out-group, an individual must consider himself a member of the in-group to have any attachment to that conflict. Tajfel and Turner (1979) draw attention to this intra-group attachment which develops. Value is attached to social groups and social identity and the value of those groups is determined in reference to other groups. Differentiation between these groups is an effort to "maintain or achieve superiority over an out-group on some dimensions" (Tajfel and Turner 1979, 17). This superiority arises in two domains: realistic and social conflict. Realistic conflict comes about from scarce resources, and thus competition for these resources leads to out-group ostracization and greater within-group attachment. In contrast, social conflict is derived from relative group value, whereby the social value or mores of one group may be threatened by another (Tajfel and Turner 1979). Social and realistic conflict are conceptually different, but still intricately linked.

Social Identity Theory (SIT) explores the ways in which in-groups may come to form and why preference for an in-group, rather than an out-group, forms. I speak to SIT as well as how it informs the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework in Chapter 3. For now, though, note that it does not expressly place these groups in a hierarchical position relative to one another, though others theorizing in this area do. For example, in Social Dominance Theory group hierarchy develops as the result of societal stratification: by age, gender, and an "arbitrary" set of characteristics, of which race may be a component. This theory of social hierarchy focuses on what defines and facilitates the creation of an in-group relative to an out-group arguing that society is structured based on group hierarchies and the value those groups hold (Sidanius and Pratto 2001). Force and terror must be used to keep the hierarchical structure as it is, and with greater hierarchy comes more resistance from subordinate groups. More force is needed to uphold hierarchy and "therefore, the greater the degree of group-based hierarchy, the more terror one should find" (Sidanius and Pratto 2001, 219-220). Thus, perceived power, in conjunction with place in the hierarchy and connection to a powerful identity, are important for the manifestation of violence and aggression. Other experimental work in social psychology also supports this assertion. Aggressive actions (like arguing) are more common when an individual perceives their in-group as more powerful than an out-group — this is mediated by feeling anger towards the out-group. Similarly, feelings of fear are more likely when the out-group is perceived as more powerful, which diminishes attempts to retaliate (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000). Together, these findings indicate that where there is social hierarchy – and individuals with a vested interest in maintaining their group's position in that hierarchy – acts of aggression and violence are likely.

The concept of racially-targeted violence and the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework are both premised upon the existence of distinct racial groups in American society, the arrangement of these groups in a hierarchical fashion, and that this white-dominated hierarchy, in conjunction with ascription to these groups, lends itself to the development of inter-group conflict (Blumer 1958). Blumer argues that prejudice does not stem from individual-level animus or wrong-doing, but from "challenge to group position" (1958, 5). While he does not specifically outline the process of racialization, he argues that the development of a characterization of other racial groups leads to the distinguishing of them from one's own. So too, identity formation and the attachment of racial identity to one's self and ownership of that identity are important for the development of prejudice to occur. Racial prejudice is the result of feelings of superiority, differentiation of inferior groups from one's own, beliefs that benefits and privileges are due to one's superior group, and fear that inferior groups are in pursuit of the privileges held by the superior group. The racial prejudice which develops from these circumstances is hostile and aggressive, and it is in service of a greater goal. It is a defensive act used to reinforce superior position in the racial hierarchy and to communicate that position to inferior groups. This communication is crucial – whether intentional or not[8] – and will be an important aspect of conceptualizing racially-targeted violence.

Racial Threat – The concepts of "threat," competition, and prejudice are central to the study of interracial conflict in the United States. If we question, at the heart of the matter, why groups come into conflict with one another, the answers will have us take into account factors like population demographics (Blalock 1967; Key Jr 1949; Stolzenberg, D'Alessio, and Eitle 2004), economics (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2018; Olzak 1992), politics (Hagen, Makovi, and Bearman 2013; Hopkins 2010; Jacobs and Wood 1999; Strong 2015; Tolnay and Beck 1995), among other issues.

Prominent among these is Blalock's (1967) power-threat hypothesis, which derived from the concentration of Black population in a location. He argues, as does V.O. Key (1949), that a high concentration of Black people in a location provokes both economic and political threat in whites – a sense of racial threat.[9] There is additional evidence both to support and refute this power-threat

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[8] Some perpetrators use slurs when they commit a hate crime or burn a cross or shoot up a church. Some write manifestos ahead of time. While the form of communication differs, these acts of violence themselves are also forms of communication and messaging.

[9] Blalock and Key have slightly different expectations but, in both cases, racial threat leads to discrimination. Blalock, for instance, proposes that under politically threatening circumstances, the association between discrimination and concentration of minority population will grow stronger, with greater discrimination occurring as political threat increases in the presence of a larger Black population. Meanwhile, under conditions of economic threat that association will

hypothesis in many different contexts. For example, arguing that group placement is relative, Quillian (1995) finds support for Blalock's theory but writes that racial threat alone is not enough to trigger prejudice. While threat is perceived, its magnitude is determined relative to other groups. Others take a step away from population size, looking instead to change in population as a means of re-conceptualizing threat (Hopkins 2010). With this approach, stark demographic changes, in conjunction with salient political frames, impact public opinion regarding immigration, in a negative fashion (Hopkins 2010). More closely related to the topic of racial violence, Howell and colleagues (2018) find that threat measured by perceived population change is, in-part, predictive of African-American church burnings in the 1990s.

These theories of racial threat, however, are one-sided, depicting threat as an emotion only felt by white Americans, and in response to people of color. These theories poise Black people as a material threat to white people. This omits the threats felt by people of color, and it supposes that they cannot be anything but threatening. This has had significant consequences for the development and development of political science literature (Pérez 2021). A developing body of work, however, has begun to explore the ways in which people of color experience threat – from policing, to rhetoric, to immigration – and how these threats shape political outcomes (Carter 2019; Jackson 2019; Pérez 2015). Moreover, while the work I have described above has focused on realistic conflict – senses of threat that stem from the competition between groups over resources – there is an underlying dimension of social conflict. Changing population demographics might not only see increasing competition for jobs, but it might also be a sign of changing culture and norms in a community. Such threats might be evoked by the presence of out-group members in a community where they had not been present before, but it might also be signaled, as Jardina (2019) argues, by bigger events like the election of the nation's first Black president. It is events like these – big and small – that Jardina (2019, 41) and Blumer (1958, 6) argue "awaken strong feeling of identification about one's racial group." In the next section, I probe the ways in which racial group threat can exist beyond realistic conflict, considering how the intangible threats may be met with physical acts of violence.

Conceptualizing Racially-Targeted Violence

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eventually grow weaker, and a larger Black population will gradually lead to decreasing discriminatory actions taken by whites.

The idea underlying "racially-targeted violence" is not a new one, but I clearly outline it as a new concept to better incorporate and aggregate violent acts with racial characteristics over time (e.g. see Davenport et al. 2019) Such a concept makes a considerable contribution to research in the area of racial violence, because it allows for an uninterrupted consideration of violence across time. Thus, if directed against members of a specific racial group, "lynchings," "bombings," "rollings," "mass shootings," and "terrorism," all fall under "racially-targeted violence," regardless of the label they have been previously ascribed.[10]

The connection between lynchings, terrorism, outrages, and any other number of offenses in the past is obscured by the individual labels given to these acts of violence. For example, what is considered a "hate crime" varies widely – from acts of graffiti, to intimidation, to arson, to murder. The term itself has little specificity when it comes to tactic and action. Its parameters vary from state-to-state and locality-to-locality in the United States. And, further, the basic understanding of what is "hateful" or "bias-motivated" has its own variants and inconsistencies across time and place.

Relying on hate crime definitions or data as a point of reference presents a number of empirical complications. The law regarding hate crime, as well as its legal definition, have evolved over time. Notably, the concept itself was not recognized in United States law until the passage of the Hate Crime Statistics Act in 1990. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) began to collect incident-level information on these crimes from states and local-level agencies in 1992 (Jenness and Grattet 2001). Reporting to the FBI was (and still is) voluntary on part of states and local-level agencies, and reported incidents become a part of the annual FBI Uniform Crime Report (UCR) on hate crime. Beginning in 1994, the Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act, enacted as a part of the Violent Crime and Law Enforcement Act, created punitive sentencing measures for crimes committed on account of a victim's religion, race, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, gender or ability, and if those crimes were committed on federal property or while engaging in interstate commerce (Jenness and Grattet 2001). The federal law remained unchanged until 2009, when it was expanded to include bias on the basis of gender identity in a law memorializing the murders of Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. In 2022, the

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[10] I speak more to these labels in Chapter 5. Though they are not the chapter's focus, I do find that the language and labels used to describe violence have implications for respondent anger and punitiveness.

Emmett Till Antilynching Act became law and added lynching to the list of offenses prosecuted as a federal hate crime.[11]

Hate crime data is also notoriously poor in quality and generally assumed inaccurate in its reflection of reality. There is also vast conceptual inconsistency within the data. This concept – "hate crime" – is segmented from historical violence when it is in fact a direct descendent, legally, in tactic, and in intention. The creation of the term "hate crime" effectively wipes clean the slate of the past, impeding continuous study of violence over time in the United States. There are concerns regarding the voluntary nature of providing data to the FBI. States and local-level agencies are not required to provide information regarding hate crimes to the Federal government nor are there any sanctions to those who fail to provide data.[12]

States that do not manage hate crime data collection and synthesis internally raise questions about the accuracy and veracity of the information which is reported to the FBI. A November 27, 2018 example of state-level variation comes from Utah, where a violent beating of two men for their perceived Mexican nationality, cannot be prosecuted as a hate crime because Utah's hate crime enhancement only applies to misdemeanor crimes. The accused attacker in this case, who expressed his desire "to kill a Mexican" during the attack, was charged with felony aggravated assault.[13] This one "hate crime" example demonstrates the issues with studying a concept that has been poorly defined and constructed in the past. It also highlights the need for a new, overarching concept – particularly one that allows room for multiple interpretations.

There must be a common groundwork of "hate crime," "lynching," or "racially-targeted violence" in order to measure it accurately. My own work shows that there is not necessarily one interpretation (Crabtree and Simonelli n.d.). Beyond information collected and aggregated by the federal government, scholars and activists rely on the efforts of non-profit organization and media sources to create datasets tracking these events historically and today. Ultimately, these are flawed by placing a subjective concept against objective criteria. While I advocate for finding a middle ground between these two approaches, there is also a need to interrogate the positivist approach to this sort

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[11] Though, by the nature of being racially-targeted violence, lynchings, which fall under federal jurisdiction would be prosecuted as hate crimes as the existing law stands. An anti-lynching bill never passed Congress during the height of lynchings in the American South (Francis 2014).

[12] Hate Crimes Statistics Act. 34 U.S.C. Statute 41305.

[13] Antonia Noori Farzan. "'I'm here to kill a Mexican,' a Utah man allegedly said before a brutal attack. He's not being charged with a hate crime." December 3, 2018. *Washington Post.*

of violence with a more critical eye. While this measurement challenge is the subject of other work of mine, it is not the predominate puzzle for this work – all the real-world incidents I consider in this dissertation are clearly forms of racially-targeted violence.

Therefore, I set forth a straight-forward understanding of racially-targeted violence that is inclusive enough to subsume multiple labels, tactics, and setting for violence. Ultimately, these acts hold in common several details that place them under the concept of racially-targeted violence, which I define as: acts of physical violence that target victims of a perceived or actual racial identity. They are committed[14] by a member(s) of a different racial group who are non-state actors. These acts can be brutal in their manifestation and are actions against the human body or the destruction of property believed to belong to targets. Unlike prominent definitions of civil war (e.g., Small and Singer 1982), there is no minimum number of victims, and, unlike definitions of lynching, there is no minimum threshold of perpetrators involved for an incident to qualify as racially-targeted violence.

Where's the State?

It is an intentional decision to not include acts of violence committed by or against police officers or other agents of the state in my analyses of racially-targeted violence here. This is because racially-targeted violence can play a supporting role alongside state violence. Understanding that these are related, but distinct, concepts is critical point.

As Davenport (2007) highlights, state repression has not, until recently, been considered outside of conflict studies, world politics, and comparative politics. In American politics, this work has considered policing (Streeter 2019; Weaver, Prowse, and Piston 2020), police violence (Crabtree and Yadon, N.d.; Jefferson, Neuner, and Pasek 2020; McGowen and Wylie 2020; Mummolo 2018), protest policing (Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong 2011), and interactions with the carceral state (Burch 2013; H. L. Walker 2020; A. White 2019) influence political behavior and politics. Through this work, and the work of others, it is possible to see how interactions with police, the carceral state, and acts of police violence influence the political lives of those who are proximate to these entities and even those who are not directly impacted.

Davenport (2007) notes that "when challenges to the status quo take place, authorities generally employ some form of repressive action to counter or eliminate behavioral threat; in short,

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[14] Or perceived to be committed.

there appears to be a "Law of Coercive Responsiveness."(7). Yet, attempts to eliminate behavioral threats are not limited to authorities and agents of the state. Challenges to the status quo are not only challenges to state power but can also be challenges to social hierarchy and societal equilibrium. I extend Davenport's understanding of a "Law of Coercive Responsiveness" to also consider the role of private citizens. When facing threats to a status quo favorable to their position in society, non-state actors may also undertake repressive actions to eliminate such threats. Thus, violence becomes a tool for restoring order (Wrong 1994).

While racially-targeted violence is certainly interconnected with violence committed by agents of the state, like law-enforcement officers, the acts of violence that I consider here are committed by non-state actors and private citizens. Here, I differentiate my work from the scholarship of those who study the ramifications of police violence and the carceral state on civilians (Streeter 2019; H. L. Walker 2020; Weaver, Prowse, and Piston 2020). The murders of individuals, Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd to name only a few, at the hands of police are tragic and have had lasting effects on the American political landscape. These acts of violence were committed by agents of the state and such acts have distinctly different outcomes and create distinctly different perceptions among the public than violence committed by non-state actors.

How the state does, or does not, respond to violence is an indication of endorsement of or complicity in the action – these perceptions are important for how the victimized and perpetrators act in response. As Mickey (2015, 347) contends that authoritarian enclaves existed in the South until the late-20th century, he also points out that rampant violence, not necessarily carried out by the state, was crucial to maintaining the equilibrium in these enclaves (Belknap 1995; Mickey 2015). Thus, the absence of state intervention, *state complicity*, was essential to maintaining order, state power, and white supremacy.

The theory and empirics in this dissertation consist primarily of non-state racially-targeted violence and responses to those incidents. This concentration does not mean that I am making an argument that the state or state violence is irrelevant to the work at hand. I am suggesting, however, that violence perpetrated by non-state actors is deserving of a similar in-depth consideration as we have seen emerge around the topic of police and state violence in political science. Just as police violence is upheld by wider institutions and organizations of policing, non-state violence is

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undergirded by broader networks and ideologies. For the racially-targeted violence I describe, that often means ideological networks of white supremacy.[15]

Removing Motivation

Intertwined with the above section is the idea of motivation. The factors motivating an act of racially-targeted violence can be used to dismiss or emphasize its impact. Motivation cannot be fully comprehended or measured, and so I exclude it as a criterion for inclusion in racially-targeted violence.[16] The language I use to describe and conceptualize racially-targeted violence is intentional in its omission of motivation. While terms like "bias-motivated" or "racially-motivated" violence are used often in the media to describe these incidents, this motivation is malleable and subject to interpretation. Even when a clear "motivation" has not been established, other characteristics of an act of violence, namely its victim(s), the identity of its perpetrator(s), the tactic used, and the location, can all send signals about what drove the action and to whom it is directed. These interpretations are a function of both racial identity (and all the components comprised within it) as well as the framing or narratives created around the violence by others.

Neither Random nor Senseless

> "The entire nation is horrified by today's *senseless* violence in El Paso. Elaine's and my prayers go out to the victims of this terrible violence, their families and friends, and the brave first responders who charged into harm's way." [Emphasis added]

> – Mitch McConnell, (then) Senate Majority Leader
> @senatemajdr
> August 4, 2019. 12:59 A.M.

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[15] For example, "Lone Wolves Connected Online: A Modern History of White Supremacy." *New York Times*. May 16, 2022.

[16] This presents challenges like those of defining and classifying genocide (e.g.,Valentino 2005).

"What happened in El Paso wasn't a *random* act of violence. It was planned to terrorize a safe, border communities that Latino families call home.

We must fight white supremacist domestic terrorism, before another community suffers a tragedy like this one." [Emphasis added]

– Congressional Hispanic Caucus
@HispanicCaucus
August 10, 2019

While this project does not concentrate on the factors that lead to onset, the broader context around onset influences how acts of violence are perceived. Such perceptions are central to the framework I provide. One way that these perceptions are molded is through the rhetoric of politicians and political elites. Yet, these actions are neither random nor senseless acts of violence, as political rhetoric would often imply. These sentiments, such as the one expressed via Twitter by Senator and then Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) in the aftermath of a 2019 mass shooting in El Paso, Texas, are perhaps intended to convey the difficulty of contemplating why someone would commit such an act. They might also emphasize that a mass shooting like this one has violated the social and democratic norms of society. These statements are attempts to create distance between the perpetrator and the politician while tacitly condemning the actions that have transpired.[17] Regardless of how unfathomable their occurrence may be, these actions are not senseless. Whether that be with a very specific goal in mind (e.g., deterring voters from turning up at a polling place), or, whether that purpose is signaling to others where they can and cannot live; what they can or cannot do, or more broadly signaling threat and danger to those who share identity with the victimized.[18]

These incidents are also not random – though the people they target may appear to be indiscriminate. There are two ways that this can be understood. First, the victim of an act of racially-targeted violence was likely to be of a certain race. Literature on the topic of hate crime speaks to the idea of an "antecedent event" which serves as a trigger for hate crime. It elicits a reaction and people are targeted as a part of a collective liability for a wrong-doing committed by another member of their group (King and Sutton 2013; Lickel et al. 2006). The psychological term to describe this type of

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[17] In this case, there were ties between the perpetrator's stated intent and conservative political stances. The shooting occurred in a town on the U.S.-Mexico border, with the perpetrator stating that he was explicitly targeting Mexicans. This occurred amid on-going discussions about immigration from Mexico and building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.
[18] As an aside, I test the role of this language in Chapter 5, and I find that violence described as "senseless" decreases the anger and punitiveness expressed about it.

aggression is "vicarious retribution" (Lickel et al. 2006). Subjects who construed an event as an attack on their in-group, in conjunction with strong in-group ties and feelings of group pride, as well as the attribution of the attack to an out-group (either directly or by a failure to prevent) were more willing to engage in vicarious retribution, acts of aggression in response to events which directly involve neither the victim nor the perpetrator beyond a shared group identity (Lickel et al. 2006). Furthermore, groups with more power will be more likely to engage in vicarious retribution (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000; Sidanius and Pratto 2001). Within the United States' racial hierarchy, white people should be more so threatened and willing to undertake acts of vicarious retribution to maintain their position at the top of the racial hierarchy. The connection between the perpetrator and the victim is not a personal one, but it is one of identity. These actions are not intention to eliminate specific people, but instead they are about impact on future behaviors (Fujii 2013; Holmes 2020; Kalyvas 2006).

In Chapter 3, I suggest that those of the shared racial group can sense this increased threat and I test this expectation in Chapter 4. This greater sense of threat is also something that members of historically-marginalized racial groups – in subordinate positions on the racial hierarchy – live with on a day-to-day basis.[19] Second, a substantial body of research that I review in the sections that follow shows that multiple contextual factors – e.g., population change, economic prospects, and institutional strength – are associated with the onset of various forms of racially-targeted violence. This body of research reemphasizes that these events are not randomly distributed throughout the country.

As I describe in the next section, racially-targeted violence can serve to maintain or break social divisions, perpetuate racial hierarchy, and police racial borders when other tactics have not worked or when it appears that the state will not act to maintain racial divisions. Even when it is difficult to comprehend the brutality of these actions, to deem these events either random or senseless is to ignore their political origins and diminish their political impact on those who are directly impacted and those who share identity with the targeted.

Racially-Targeted Violence as a Political Concept

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[19] Speaking to the wider implications of structural violence and the additional burdens shouldered by those impacted, see Mujahid et al. (2021) for the impact of historical red-lining on contemporary cardiovascular outcomes.

In order to understand why I expect to find an impact of racially-targeted violence on political behavior in the next chapter, I must explore why it is of a political nature. In this section, I consider several theories regarding the coercive use of extra-judicial violence to regulate behavior. These include theories of social control, identity formation, and border policing, in addition to violence as a means of eliminating political threats. All these perspectives engage with violence that has been or is used to control the economic, political, or social behaviors of historically marginalized racial groups. On the surface, the political underpinnings of these theories may not be apparent or may not seem to fall under a strict definition of "political" (e.g., physically preventing individuals from engaging in a political activity).

At its core, though, this violence is concerned with the establishment and maintenance of order and systems of power. It is therefore inherently political (Wrong 1994). I begin by considering several bodies of literature that examine how racially-targeted violence – lynchings, hate crimes, among other forms – has been used to control the behavior of racial minorities throughout United States history. Then, I dig deeper into theories which consider the more symbolic, though just as important, purposes of racially-targeted violence, like administering punishment and delineating physical and intangible borders. Reviewing this literature serves a dual purpose. First, it emphasizes that racially-targeted violence is political violence. These incidents are not random. They are not senseless. They are reflections of struggles for power and dominance; an abundance of literature supports this assertion. Second, even if motivation is not established, the compounding of these incidents in the past shapes present-day predispositions that I speak more to in Chapter 3.

In an 1899 novel that considered the possibility of *Imperium in Imperio* – a state within a state for Black Americans – Sutton Griggs narrated the journeys of two Black men as they sought to find their places in a society which had no tolerance for educated Black people with revolutionary ideas. This piece of literature is remarkable in several regards, including its depictions of colorism and its reflections of deep divides with the Black community regarding Black-White relations. Its themes reflect divisions that remained the focus of the likes of W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Kwame Ture. Pertinent to the topic at hand are Griggs' portrayals of contemporary anti-Black violence that were increasingly frequent in the southern United States at the time the novel was written. There were 82 recorded lynchings in the year the book was published and 1,035 in that decade spanning from 1890 and 1900 (Hines and Steelwater n.d.). It is with a degree of levity that Griggs describes the near-lynching of the novel's central character, Belton. This tone reflects the way in which the conditions for lynching might materialize

from impalpable elements, like violations of social norms and slight transgressions across racial borders:

> "During the opening exercises a young white lady who sat by his [Belton's] side experienced some trouble in finding the hymn. Belton had remembered the number given out and kindly took the book to find it. In an instant the whole church was in an uproar. A cord of men gathered around Belton and led him out of doors. A few leaders went off to one side and held a short consultation. They decided that as it was Sunday, they would not lynch him."

> - *Imperium in Imperio* (1899, 103)
> Sutton Griggs

While there is motivation for an author's choice of language, a plot's development, and a narrative's creative components, texts are interpreted from different perspectives. Acts of racially-targeted violence can be approached with a similar method. Just as there are theories though which we interpret text (e.g., psychoanalytic, feminist), there are theories through which we can view racially-targeted violence. These are different perspectives from which scholars have considered the topic. Together, they have established that, regardless of the theory or lens, this violence does correlate with political origins. The true "motivation" of the perpetrator may never be known, but we are able to "read" the contextual clues of an incident to better understand why an act of violence was committed. Rather than simply tragic, but random or meaningless events, we can understand these acts of violence as holding deeper meaning and purpose than may appear at first glance. Much of the framework I build in Chapter 3 emerges from this idea. Racial cues are a crucial part or violence because they connect racial identity to larger racial project or racial schema from which other knowledge is deduced. Knowing the race of the victims lets us take several leaps, even in the absence of other knowledge.

In the passage above, Belton's near-lynching is not just driven by mindless racism, but it is an effort to punish his physical and social disregard for white supremacy. Informed by several theories of crime and violence, I describe several such theories – realistic conflict, social control, and border policing – that inform racially-targeted violence as a political concept.

Political, Economic, and Racial Threat

Threat derived from political and economic competition, as well as minority group population size, drives much of the existing empirical work on lynchings, hate crimes, and racial violence (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2018; Green, Gerber, and Nickerson 2003; Hagen, Makovi, and Bearman 2013; Jacobs and Wood 1999; Olzak 1992; Strong 2015; Tolnay and Beck 1995; J. A. Williams, Logan,

and Hardy 2021). The explicit connection between racial violence and political threat has been developed extensively in the work of Tolnay and Beck (1995). Using a data set of lynchings between 1880 and 1930, these authors test a political threat model of lynchings, asking whether the frequency and geographical locations of lynchings could be the result of political threat in the form of Black suffrage. The authors find no evidence for this model, but acknowledge that individual accounts of lynchings, at least anecdotally, support the political threat model (Wells-Barnett 1895). It is undeniable that racial violence occurred in the face of threats to political power and as an effort to deter political engagement. The more specific circumstances under which social scientists can predict when and where this violence occurs and has occurred are less clear.

Others have found convincing relationships between measures political threat and interracial violence, including murder (Jacobs and Wood 1999) and hate crimes (Strong 2015). Jacob and Wood (1999) find that a locality having a Black mayor was associated with a higher proportion of white-on-Black homicides. Strong (2015), in work bias crimes, does not find evidence that a Black mayor impacts the occurrence of anti-white or anti-Black hate crimes, though she does find that anti-white crimes decrease in politically-competitive counties. Those findings regarding political competition are reinforced by Hagen et. al. (2013), in a study of attempted and successful lynchings, who observe that lynchings were more frequent in areas with limited political competition, suggesting that political competition could be an outlet for inter-racial aggression that might otherwise be channeled into physical violence.

Apart from the political threat model of lynching, Tolnay and Beck (1995) also hypothesize and test the relationship between economic threat and the occurrences of lynchings. This is similar to subsequent work done by Achraya et. al. (2018), as well as Olzak (1992), all of which emphasizes the role of economic threat in interracial conflict. Using more recent data, Strong (2015) finds that anti-black violence decreases as white economic disadvantage also decreases, lending support to the relationship between economic threat and interracial violence. Others, though, push back on these economic arguments with the criticism that these results are not robust, are easily broken with slight changes to the models used, or are equally if not less persuasive than other arguments (Green, Glaser, and Rich 1998).

Threat is localized, Green, Strolovitch, and Wong (1998) argue, and they test Blalock's power-threat hypothesis in a study of racially-motivated crime at a neighborhood-level. Their findings, and the findings of others (Grattet 2009; Green, Glaser, and Rich 1998; Hopkins 2010; Howell et al. 2018; King and Wheelock 2007; Lyons 2008), run in opposition to work by Tolnay and Beck (1995), Achraya

et. al. (2018), Olzak (1990, 1992) who argue that economic competition is the primary root of racial violence. There is no significant impact of economic conditions (e.g., unemployment) on the occurrence of racially-motivated crime. Instead, these attacks are more frequent in predominantly white neighborhoods which have experienced recent influxes of non-whites. These acts, they theorize, are attempts to defend neighborhoods (Green, Strolovitch, and Wong 1998; Lyons 2008).

This thesis is also supported regarding African-American church burnings, where the percent of white population was negatively associated with the likelihood of a church burning. Change in Black population, though, in conjunction with a local culture of hatred, increased the likelihood (Howell et al. 2018). This "turf defense," as Green et al. (1998) deem it, is an attempt by white perpetrators to keep their neighborhoods as their own. Work by Lynch (2008) complements this with her findings that hate crimes are more prevalent in cities which are more starkly segregated. In this body of research, the discussion of defending what belongs to one's racial group is limited to a sense of physical and spatial preservation. In the next section, I push this discussion beyond the tangible to consider racial hierarchy and symbolic racial boundaries. Whereby, racially-targeted violence is not just defending turf in the face of racial threat but also defending the integrity of identity, racial hierarchy, and the social mores connected to race in the United States.

Social Control

> "In considering the third reason assigned by the Southern white people for the butchery of blacks, the question must be asked, what the white man means when he charges the black man with rape. Does he mean the crime which the statutes of the civilized states describe as such? Not by any means. With the Southern white man, any misalliance existing between a white woman and a colored man is a sufficient foundation for the charge of rape."

> - *The Red Record* (1895, Chapter 1)
> Ida B. Wells

Committing an act of violence can be viewed as a means of social control, of policing society, particularly in regard to moral offenses which are: not criminalized in the absence of a police or state apparatus or would not be punished to an extent deemed fitting. Black (1983) writes that "Hobbesian theory would lead us to expect more violence and other crimes of self-help in those contemporary settings where law — government social control — is least developed" (41). Thus, taking punishment into one's own hands – vigilante violence – should happen more frequently in places where there is low state capacity for punishment (Black 1983) or high levels of social disorganization (Groff 2015). Evidence of this can be seen in the formation of vigilance committees in the 19th century, which took

on the role of enforcer in the absence of state policing (Obert and Mattiacci 2018).

Black (1983) also argues that social control actions occur when there is an expectation that offenses would not be punished or would not be punished harshly enough. Consider that the maintenance of justice and order is not limited to punishing criminal acts, nor is it limited to those who have done the wrongdoing. Take, for example, a hypothetical situation in which grievances directed against a social inferior are not resolved through existing legal systems. The superior, aggrieved by the inferior, might choose between engaging the law in his grievance or taking matters into their own hands. They would choose the latter option because the offense committed against them would not be punishable by law or because the punishment accessed by the law would not be severe enough to atone for the grievance (Black 1983). Similarly, a member of a superior group might take it upon themselves to punish a member of an inferior group for a violation of a social norm that is not also a violation of legal statue. While still operating as a form of social control, racially-targeted violence operates in this space as well. It can be reactionary and retributive without targeting anyone who has been directly offensive to the perpetrator (King and Sutton 2013; Levin and McDevitt 2002). People turn to racially-targeted violence, hate crimes, and the like because they cannot turn to the law; for instance, we see this come to pass in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks, when hate crimes against Arab-Americans spiked in their immediate aftermath (Disha, Cavendish, and King 2011). However racially-targeted violence might also occur where there is sufficient state capacity to punish, but the acts of violence run concurrent with goals of the state.

As I consider vigilantism as a form of social control to maintain and restore order, I predominantly rely on the example of lynching. Generally, lynching is considered "the practice of punishing men or crime by private, unauthorized persons, without a legal trial," an alternative to punishments endorsed and carried out by the state (Cutler 1905).[20] While lynching comes to be strongly associated with the brutal and disproportionate targeting of Black people in the post-bellum South, its origins in the United States can be traced to use as an extra-legal substitute to fill the gaps within the legal and judicial system. In its earlier periods in the United States, prior to 1830, lynchings, or lynch-law, were a tool used in frontier territories and unsettled land to maintain order — it was thus a supplement to the law, not a perversion of it (Cutler 1905). The frontiers of the United States,

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[20] Multiple definitions exist and the definition has changed over time. It is also not without bias. See Waldrep (2000) for a particularly compelling discussion of the evolution of "lynching" as a positivist construct.

areas west of the Mississippi, were especially in need of a social control mechanism like lynching. As Cutler (1905) writes, "At the settlement of California, and before society had time to establish regular tribunals, or to give due efficacy to the law, life and property would not have been safe for a moment, unless a Vigilance Committee had charged itself with the duty of lynching." The judicial and legal structures needed to create order in a new territory took time to establish, cement, and enforce; lynching provided a means to fulfill the needs of nascent frontier communities while these structures took root (Cutler 1905; Obert and Mattiacci 2018).

Thus, in this context, the early history of lynching in the United States describes a form of punishment imposed on white people as it was to other racial groups. This was punishment not only for white people on the frontiers who broke community rules or escaped just punishment from the legal system, but it was also for those who upset social norms (Cutler 1905). This is an important historical transition to note. Prior to the Civil War, lynchings victimized abolitionists, whites who were vocally opposed to slavery, as well as those who spoke on behalf of equality for the country's Black people. For example, Cutler (1905) describes an instance in which, "A [white] Mr. Robinson was lashed on the bare back at Petersburg, Virginia, for saying 'that black men have, in the abstract, a right to freedom.' After a scourging he was told to leave Petersburg and never return or he would be treated 'worser'" (Cutler 1905, 92). Mr. Robinson was not punished for a crime but for an action that violated the social norms and hierarchy of the time.

Lynchings, from this interpretation of history, are not a form of violence driven by race alone. They are the result of the state's inability to hand down punishment or its inability to do so efficiently – acts of social control. This understanding of lynching as compensation for a lack or absence of state power and state capacity is supported, apart from anecdotal evidence, by the study of lynchings in respect to legal executions. Data on lynchings in comparison to data on state-conducted executions shows that as lynchings declined from their peak in the 1890s, capital punishment begins to rise. The lynching of Black people reached its lowest point in the 1930s and 1940s, as their executions by the state were at their highest (Clarke 1998).

Another historical example of social control can be seen in the formation of vigilance committees. The creation of vigilance committees was not limited to solely lawless frontiers, but could also be seen along "social frontiers," areas with racial or ethnic heterogeneity and institutional instability (Obert and Mattiacci 2018). This explanation for the vigilance committee, and the steps taken by vigilance committees, rests on cultural and institutional ambiguity — there is no set of shared, enforceable cultural or institutional practices to draw the community together. The vigilance

committee becomes one means by which the community can solve the collective action problems which arise in the absence of a state structure (Obert and Mattiacci 2018). Thus, the occurrence of "social control" violence – racially-targeted violence, accepting that it is such – should be negatively associated with measures of state capacity and the punishment of criminal activity. But why might we still see this violence occurring in locations where there is sufficient state capacity to punish?

The act of lynching is a clear example of such social control. Different from Cutler (1905), a key aspect of a lynching, as established by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP 1919), is its use "in the service of justice or tradition" which the law and state fail to uphold.[21] Violence of these mores takes on the offense of a crime. To speak to a more concrete example of social control, Wells (1895) writes about the rape of white women as a motivating factor for lynching – such framing was common in the white press at the time. Her work vehemently challenged this notion, and the question she asks in the passage above probes deeper – touching directly on the connection between social control. Were Black men accused of rape because they had engaged in acts of aggressive sexual violation against white women? Or was even the hint of miscegenation – the defilement of whiteness – a sufficient violation of racial hierarchy and social mores to warrant death? This form of informal social control emphasizes that the police and law are not the only means of restoring a sense of order and expectation of adherence to norms in a community. Private citizens will take the job of policing into their own hands when state is unwilling or unable to do so.

Policing Racial Borders

While I rely on Black (1983) as a principal resource for developing an understanding of racially-targeted violence as a form of social control, others also argue that racial violence can be used as a means of policing. Those who theorize in this area consider these acts of violence not only as attempts to control behavior, but also as a way of monitoring physical and social borders in society.[22] Take for example, violence against Native American women in the American Southwest. Border towns, where

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[21] Note, however, as I discuss in my own conceptualization below, that definitions of lynchings vary. I use this one here, but also recognize that this is not the only definition. See Waldrep (2000) for discussion of these changes over time.
[22] It is important to note that my work looks to the policing of borders between groups. A fascinating body of work is dedicated to examining the ways in which members of subordinate groups often police their own behavior (Lee and Hicken 2016) and police the behavior of other group members (Jefferson 2019).

there is reluctant acceptance of Native Americans who live and do business in these communities around nearby reservations, are described in a manner similar to social frontiers. These are places where ethnic heterogeneity and the intentional (or unintentional) limitations of the state (e.g. jurisdictional limitations or the unwillingness to pursue changes against perpetrators) combine to create a unique context where violence against Native Americans, and Native women in particular, is not uncommon (Bennett 2018). The location and perpetration of this violence, including in Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico, is not random. Violence is a deliberate tool of subjugation and continued colonialism by both state and non-state actors (Bennett 2018).

Similar violence happens in locations that are not literally at the borders of nation-states; in these places, the idea of border delineation and "border patrolling" can be expanded to consider immigrants and racial minorities anywhere in the United States (Chen 2000). From this perspective, actions, like hate crimes, are not only means of keeping groups physically separate, but they also defend and emphasize a symbolic border of white nationalism and white supremacy in the United States (Christina Beltran 2021; Chen 2000). Violence is a means of reaffirming roles in society, some would argue a performance of roles (Perry 2002), while also putting inferiors into their proper place.

Both Fujii (2013) and Perry (2002) consider the performative aspects of violence, extra-lethal and hate violence respectively. Their overlap is crucial, and they hold in common the consideration that violence can be a means to impress, display strength, or project dedication to an ideology. These acts of violence can also serve as a warning, I contend. These forms of violence are impactful because they are targeted to spectators; they set a stage that communicates a message to an audience. Sometimes, multiple audiences (Fujii 2013).

For instance, the Charleston Church massacre at the Mother Emmanuel AME Church, which I speak more to in Chapter 3, had several performative aspects to it. Perhaps most notable is that the scene was set in one of the country's oldest African-American churches, a place of which remains of symbol of Black defiance.[23] This event, and others that I describe, meets the qualifying criteria of the performative acts that Fujii theorizes around. Considering the Emanuel AME shooting further, there are several audiences there to whom we can see this attack directed. Black people, white people, and other white supremacists. Therefore, tying down these acts to one motivation is likely impossible to

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[23] I speak more about this in Chapter 6.

do and it is limiting. This concept is fluid in many ways, similar to the idea of terrorism as has been further explicated in the critical terrorism studies literature (Meier 2020; Rapoport 2013).

While the vigilance committee was a community institution to promote the rule of law and a common set of practices, Obert and Mattiacci (2018) also argue that it is a mechanism to build identity within a community at a social frontier. There are other ways in which violence itself can be tied to identity, identity creation, and the reinforcement of identity. Take lynchings as an example -- they can be classified by their private or public nature; private lynchings occurring in covert manners and locations away from crowds, and public lynchings taking on a festival like atmosphere, drawing spectators to watch and partake in the action (Smångs 2016). These lynchings plausibly take on two very different roles in the process of identity-building. Public lynchings were communicative acts of violence, in which the broader community could participate. They also drew a clear color line between white and Black people in a community and reinforced the white in-group boundaries, as well as their dominant place in the social hierarchy. In the next chapter, I discuss the role of violence in racial formation and the reinforcement of racial projects (Omi and Winant 2014a), joining these theories of identity to the measurement of political outcomes.

Summary & Conclusion

What is racially-targeted violence and why does it persist in the United States? The chapter has served to set the foundation for the framework and analyses that are presented in the subsequent chapters. It introduces the concept of "racially-targeted violence," which I define as acts of physical violence that target victims of a perceived or actual racial identity. They are committed by a member(s) of a different racial group who are non-state actors. Racially-targeted violence is borne out of inter-group power struggles. The review of literature above draws on several distinct academic disciplines and fields to support the assertion that American society is arranged in a hierarchical fashion that privileges white people and white supremacy. Violence is a tool that is used to reinforce this hierarchy. In particular, racially-targeted violence can be interpreted as a means through which this racial hierarchy is perpetuated, and political, social, and economic threats are minimized. I have drawn on several examples of violence and theories of racial violence to substantiate the assertion that racially-targeted violence is used to maintain social control and delineate racial borders.

Though the dependent variables and circumstances I examine change, racially-targeted violence is the central concept of this dissertation. The common understanding of racially-targeted

violence that I provide in this chapter is the foundation for the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework that I build in the next. The complicated relationship between race and the onset of violence is apparent from the research I have referenced in this chapter. In the next chapter, however, I move to consider a different portion of the conflict cycle and the overarching question that guides this dissertation – how do individuals respond politically to racially-targeted violence and why?

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Chapter 3

A Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework

This dissertation delves into the political ramifications of racially-targeted violence. While other authors have considered how specific forms of violence, racial and otherwise, may influence politics,[24] to-date there is no established theoretical framework to consider how and why racially-targeted violence affects political behavior, if at all. In taking on the task of developing a framework, I depart from, though still draw upon, literature in American politics that considers the consequences of national-scale violence, like the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. When it comes to violence, political scientists in American politics have tended to turn to threats external to the country, rather than examining those that reside within it. Instead, I take the approach of comparative politics scholars, focusing on sub-national violence which explores variation within nation-states. Moreover, the literature on violence in the United States often assumes that all Americans have a similar baseline conception of violence, as well as shared perceptions of threat and safety. Political scientists have accepted, with little challenge, that Americans respond to violence in a uniform manner, even as they begin to recognize the long histories of violence that have shaped the collective memory held by some racial groups. I challenge this assumption, and the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework argues otherwise.

When and why do individuals engage in political participation in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence? In this chapter, I lay out an argument for why I expect members of different racial groups to respond distinctly to violence. Specifically, I argue that these responses are not identical and the impact of racially-targeted violence should be seen most prominently among those who share

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[24] E.g., Tolnay and Beck (1995) on lynchings; Enos, Kaufman, and Sands (2019) on riots/uprisings; Hassell, Holbein, and Baldwin (2020) and Newman and Hartman (2017) on mass shootings; Williamson, Trump, and Einstein (2018) on police shootings; Davis and Silver (2004), Gadarian (2010), Huddy, Feldman, Capelos, and Provost (2002), and Huddy, Feldman, Taber, and Lahav (2005) on public opinion in regards to terrorism.

racial identity with the targeted. Throughout this dissertation, I consider violence through a lens of racial identity, looking to the racial identity of those who are targeted as well as the political responses of those who are of shared racial identity.

The Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework conceives of violence as an alteration of the cost-benefit calculus that informs political participation. Violence makes one change to the political calculus, and, as I lay out in this chapter, race makes another. The interaction of these two further changes the perceived costs or benefits – the risks and rewards – of participation. This is the case because "race" is not an empty placeholder. The effects are not necessarily uniform for several reasons, including collective histories of violence shared among some racial and ethnic groups, but not others. This variation is even the case when there is no clear racialized target, as I show in several instances. These changes in risk and reward are particularly prominent among those who share racial identity with a targeted group. They are even more prominent among racial groups – like African-Americans – who have a distinct and collective memory of racial violence and discrimination. But, given threat, how do individual responses aggregate into collective action? I also theorize how race can translate individual threat into collective threat.

Over the course of this chapter, I theorize at the intersection of political violence, racial identity, and political behavior I explicate the relationship between violence, race, the American public, and American politics, in a way that has not yet been done. In the process, I develop a novel framework and theory of racially-targeted violence – the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework – that integrates the study of identity violence from around the world. To that end, I synthesize several streams of research from the American politics, comparative politics, international relations literatures that inform the framework. Specifically, I discuss the ways in which literature on political participation, racial formation, social movements, and political repression have informed the framework's development. I provide initial observational evidence to support the framework's assertation that white and non-white Americans come to the topic of violence with distinct positionalities. This suggests that prior work, which has assumed a similar baseline response to violence among all Americans, is misguided. I conclude the chapter by outlining the expectations I derive from the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework and address how these expectations will be tested in the remainder of the dissertation.

The Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework asks scholars of American politics and race and ethnicity politics to contemplate familiar terms, like racial threat and racial cues, in new contexts, outside of the realm of campaigns, elections, and similar forms of institutionalized politics.

It asks those scholars to think about violence as a political entity in the American context, perhaps a painful reality to confront. Similarly, it will ask scholars of international relations and comparative politics to engage with the topic of race, the importance of which may be another uncomfortable reality to face.[25]

Altering the Political Calculus

Traditional Models of Political Participation

Political participation – activities like voting, donating to campaigns, and engaging in protest activity – in the United States is dependent on power, resources, and access. These factors encourage or thwart a citizen's engagement with their government (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995; Putnam 2000; Rosenstone, Hansen, and Reeves 1993; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Power in a political system is determined by those who participate, their ability to determine interests and set the political agenda, as well as their capacity to shape issues of concern (Gaventa 1982; Polsby 1960). If power is determined by access, participation, and agenda control, then it is also a function of resources.[26] For example, an individual's socio-economic status (SES), viewed through a resource model, is impactful on whether and how that individual participates in politics (Rosenstone, Hansen, and Reeves 1993). This means that greater financial resources and higher levels of education are associated with more engaged citizens and citizens who engage in a wider variety of institutionalized ways — from voting to making campaign donations to contacting elected officials (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). These citizens also participate at higher rates than their poorer and less-educated counterparts (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995).

Economic and educational resources do not magically result in greater political participation, but instead they enable high-SES individuals to overcome barriers – costs, such as time away from work, child-care, and transportation and also reap benefits such as opportunities for socialization

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[25] For example, see Freeman, Kim, and Lake (2022) for an extended discussion of race in international relations and international law.

[26] But, some forms of political participation are the result of limited resources, particularly forms which are untraditional and un-institutionalized. Take for example, acts of violence or looting. However, the impact of political participation from those in such disadvantaged positions can sometimes be more influential than similar participation from more advantaged groups (Gause 2022).

(Rosenstone, Hansen, and Reeves 1993). Socialization, which is facilitated through voluntary organizations and social associations, also increases the likelihood of political participation (Putnam 2000; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Power, resources, and access also create pressure to participate in politics when others are doing so, generating opportunities to learn how political processes work while also facilitating communication (Putnam 2000; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). The value which citizens derive from these interactions – social capital – is thus important for initially engaging citizens in politics, keeping them engaged, and shaping their behaviors and attitudes (Putnam 2000).

Yet, political activity is not just a response to activities that are intended to be mobilizing or inherently social. Violence is also a force for political mobilization or repression, by altering political behavior. Studies of comparative politics, in particular, have demonstrated that exposure to violent, traumatic events shift public opinion and proclivity for political engagement (Balcells 2012; Bateson 2012; Berrebi and Klor 2008; Blattman 2009; Getmansky and Zeitoff 2014; Hadzic and Tavits 2019; Hersh 2013; Ley 2017; Rojo-Mendoza 2013; Rozenas, Schutte, and Zhukov 2017; Vasilopoulos 2018; Zhukov and Talibova 2018). A robust literature across political science and sociology notes the impact, around the world, that civil war (Balcells 2012; Blattman 2009), terrorism (Berrebi and Klor 2008; Getmansky and Zeitoff 2014; Hersh 2013; Legewie 2016; Vasilopoulos 2018; Wayne n.d.), violent crime (Bateson 2012; Ley 2017; Rojo-Mendoza 2013), and state-sanctioned violence (Davenport 2015; Desmond, Papachristos, and Kirk 2016; Wasow 2020; Weaver, Prowse, and Piston 2020), have on the ways in which citizens engage (or do not engage) with their governments, as well as its influence on the opinions and attitudes they hold. The same socialization that can stimulate social pressure to engage in political action is also important, as I and other contents, for overcoming collective action problems in the aftermath of violence.

The Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework

These conventional perspectives of political participation regard it as a trade-off between the costs and benefits of engagement, with consideration for how resources and political context alter the calculation. While I build from the idea of a political calculus, using it as a foundation for the framework I describe, I do not maintain that individual actors are engaging in strictly rational behavior. In fact, I will begin to explore the rationality of risk and threat in response to violence in the next chapter. I maintain that violence changes the individual-level political calculus; subsequently, the

choices the individual makes have implications for mobilization and demobilization at the community-level.

The Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework is an alteration – a reinterpretation, if you will – of the traditional model of political participation. We can conceive of the individual's decision to engage in an act of political participation as a strategic calculation. Even acts of participation which are seemingly individual and are intended to convey the opinion of a single person — like voting — are subject to a cost-benefit analysis (Downs 1957; Riker and Ordeshook 1968). The Downsian Calculus of Voting, for example, proposes that the likelihood of voting is a function of the *benefit* of an individual's preferred candidate winning multiplied by the likelihood of that vote being a *deciding factor* in the election, subtracting the *cost* of performing the action of voting. Adding considerations of civic concern to this equation increases the likelihood of voting (Riker and Ordeshook 1968). These three elements – benefit, cost, one's own influence over the outcome – form the basis of our understanding of when and why individuals engage in political behavior.

Others have built on this model to consider additional factors that may alter the underlying decision to vote or engage in other political activities. These factors include repressive institutional restrictions on voting (Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson 2017; Keele, Cubbison, and White 2021), candidate gender (Broockman 2014; Mendelberg, Karpowitz, and Goedert 2014), candidate race and racial networks (Barreto 2007; Bobo and Gilliam 1990; B. L. Fraga 2016a; Gay 2001; Ocampo 2018), racial threat (Enos 2017; Reny and Newman 2018), racial norms surrounding politics (Anoll 2018, 2022), and interactions with the carceral system (Burch 2013; H. L. Walker 2020; A. White 2019), among others. I am certainly not wholly novel in suggesting an addition to the traditional model. My addition, though, is unique for its attempts to make violence central.

A substantial body of research specifically considers why people of color and members of historically-marginalized groups, undertake costly behavior when they are already at a resource disadvantage. For example, Anoll (2018, 2022) adds to the costs and benefits model to incorporate the norms that might influence political behavior. Specifically, her Racialized Norms Model emphasizes the ways in which residential segregation and distinct racial group histories combine to shape political norms which influence if and how individuals engage in political activities (Anoll 2022). Gause (2022) also outlines an important reconception of the cost-benefit calculus, by recognizing that high costs to political participation – specifically protesting – may actually have a greater pay-off for those "disadvantaged" groups that are able to engage in behavior. Members of these groups are often

disadvantaged in the resources that they must devote to politics (e.g., time, money), a deficit of which, in turn, incurs greater participatory costs.

But how are these costs measured? The Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework asks us to understand costs differently than others in the American political behavior have conceptualized it, though it is perhaps not too far flung to scholars of social movements and political violence. Costs of political participation entails not only the resources that it may take to actively engage, but also the *risk* involved to undertake those actions. This is especially the case when there is violence involved. My understanding of "costs" takes into account that members of targeted or victimized groups might incur greater risks when engaging in political activity in the aftermath of violence. This risk, perhaps more so than required effort or finances – perceived or real – could be an indicator of whether or not an individual will engage in political activity in the aftermath of violence. Risks may also be perceived as a benefit rather than a cost. Individuals may calculate that undertaking high-risk activities may result in higher pay-offs from elected officials and fellow citizens (Gause 2022; Gillion 2013, 2020), from peers by signaling commitment (Zwerman and Steinhoff 2005), or more personal reasons (McAdam 1986) . I do not suppose that this risk is a relevant term for every individual in the United States, but I do contend that it is a relevant point of consideration for some, particularly within localities and communities that have been subject to violence or where there is a credible threat of violence. This is the specific context which I will consider in this dissertation, though I will discuss other ways the framework might be extended in the concluding chapter.

The Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework brings risk, threat, and violence into the calculus of political participation in the United States. For the most part, violence has been ignored as a point of discussion for scholars of contemporary American political behavior. Within contexts in which violence has occurred or there is a credible threat that violence will occur, risk is a function of several interlocking factors. I present these pieces of the framework as follows: (1) the racial identity of those targeted by the violence as well as the identity of the individual contemplating political engagement; (2) the historical predispositions/experiences which are a collective component of racial identity; and (3) the organizational and community structures in place and available to the individual. I walk through each of these components, as well as how I expect that they will impact risk and threat, below. Each of these factors, sketched out in Figure 1, alters the costs of participation and ultimately determines political outcomes.
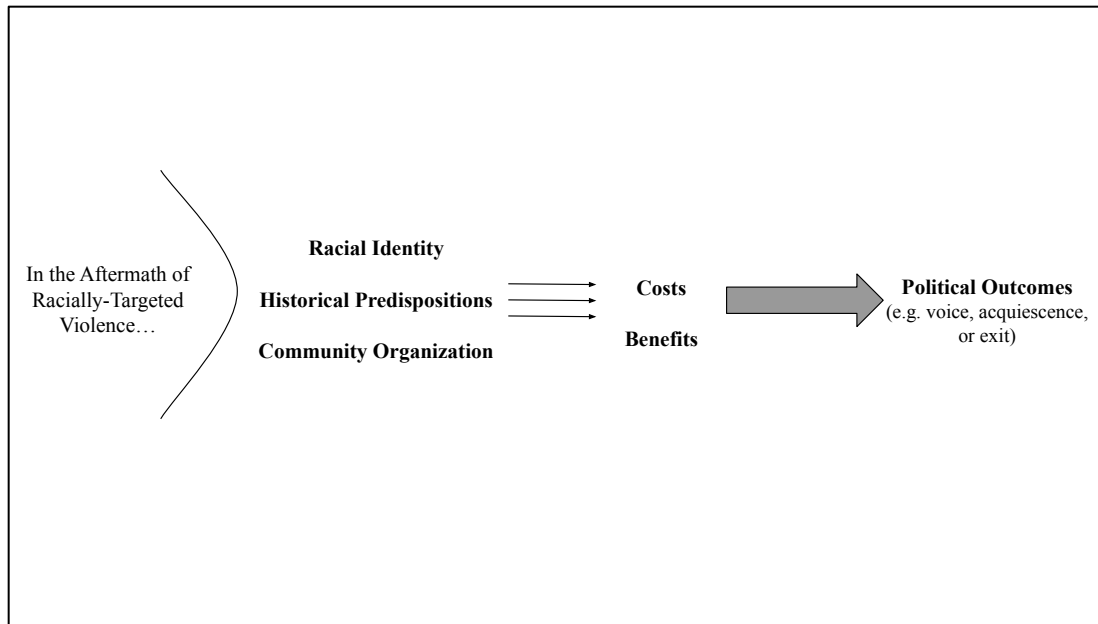
Figure 1: Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework.

However, not all "risky" behavior is considered as such to the individual who undertakes it. As I noted above, there can be reward in risk. The risks, and potential costs, can also be benefits. And so, any perception of what is "rational" or the types of behavior that should be exhibited by a "rational actor" – who would seek to avoid risk – are dismissed entirely. Zwerman and Steinhoff (2005) highlight this in their study of New Left militants in Japan and the United States. They write that "It is assumed that the rational social movement actor simply does his or her best to stay out of harm's way: to change course in order to avoid repression, to develop strategies that modulate repression, or to retreat when repression is severe" (Zwerman and Steinhoff 2005, 86). Some who engage in risky behavior do not perceive it as costly – they derive benefit from it, personally or politically. Take for example, McAdam's 1986 study of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer. Analyzing the applications of college students who took part in the Freedom Summer, McAdam highlights several themes that are common amongst their applications. Their rationales for engaging in this dangerous activity included: "personal witness," "personal growth," educating themselves," and "expiating guilt." In their applications, students emphasized the potential benefits that they could receive from engaging in high-risk behavior. The activism may have been classified as high-risk and high-cost, but there was clearly some benefit to be derived from it. Yet, McAdam (1986) also finds that students' attitudes about potential risk are complemented by their involvement in activist networks.

Racial Identity

Race has been and remains a central point of political organization, interest, and life in the United States.[27] It is difficult to define in succinct language, and so I will not attempt to redefine what has already been outlined. Omi and Winant (2014b), for example, define race as "a concept that signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies… it is strategic; race does ideological and political work" (110-111). As a part of this political work, race influences the decision to participate and the ways in which people engage (if at all). Racial threat and fear generated by the presence of racial out-group members is the subject of a considerable amount of research, including how the composition of a neighborhood can impact the decision to vote (Enos 2016) or how racial threat and resentment affect aspects of public opinion (Hopkins 2010; Kinder and Sanders 1996). Shared racial identity is also a notable force. For example, the ethno-racial identity of candidates encourages (Barreto 2007; Bobo and Gilliam 1990; Tate 2003) or discourages co-ethnic voting (B. L. Fraga 2016a). Co-ethnic candidates also spur political contributions (Grumbach and Sahn 2020). While political participation may be a product of racialized norms (Anoll 2018), engagement is also a function of repression and barriers to entry (Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson 2017). We know, for example, that Black people are disproportionately affected by the criminal justice system (M. Alexander 2010), which ultimately limits their access to participate in electoral politics in some states. Other studies find that these initial contacts with the criminal justice system have direct and proximate effects that reverberate through families, neighborhoods, and communities (Burch 2013; H. L. Walker 2020; A. White 2019).

The racial cue is a familiar idea to scholars of American Politics, particularly in the realm of campaigns and elections. In low-information environments, individuals make decisions based on heuristics and cues that include partisanship, gender, and race (Crowder-Meyer et al. 2020; Lupia 1994; Tate 2003). Thus, while individuals take many factors into account when considering engaging in political activity or contemplating their own political preferences, these decisions are not necessarily the result of a strictly rational calculation. Again, while I will build my framework from the political calculus, I do not argue that political actors are always rational. Cues alter perceptions of reality and what the individual believes is best for themselves and those who are like them.

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[27] The list of literature to cite here is far too long. As just a few examples, see Myrdal (1944), Omi and Winant (Omi and Winant 2014b), Kinder and Sanders (1996), and Hutchings and Valentino (2004).

Race is one such heuristic, and an extensive literature has explored how racial cues – particularly negative stereotypes about members of a racial group – are deployed by candidates for elected office to signal their stances on racial issues. These cues can be explicit, including visuals for example (Stephens-Dougan 2016), or implicit, whereby politicians use language that is not explicitly racial but has strong associations with particular racial groups (Gilens 1996, 2009; Mendelberg, Karpowitz, and Goedert 2014; N. A. Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002). Often, these cues are the strategic attempts of both Black and white candidates to distance themselves from racial liberalism, in the process appealing to moderate and conservative white voters (Stephens-Dougan 2020). The racial cue is an idea that I engage with in the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework. An act of violence is comprised of multiple components that influence what it is called and how it is perceived (Crabtree and Simonelli n.d.; Dolliver and Kearns 2019; Huff and Kertzer 2017). Racial cues taken from violence -- who perpetrates violence, who is victimized, and who is the third-party observing violence, can alter perceptions of violence (e.g., its motivation), in the process changing threat perceptions, emotional responses, and ultimately political behavior. Just as racial cues in political campaigns can prime voters to think about race and to make implicit connections between candidates and racial issues, racial cues in violence can prompt the public to view incidents and their own positionality to those incidents differently.

For now, I reiterate that we set aside what a perpetrator's intentionality or motivation may be in selecting a target.[28] I direct attention to the perspectives of the targeted individuals and the targeted group. When a racial cue is sent through violence – e.g., the targeting of victims of a particular racial identity/ies – these cues are interpreted by the public. They are used to deduce motivation or intention, particularly when little other information exists. When there is not much known about an incident of violence, assumptions are made about what has happened and why. What little information is available – racial identities of the victim and perpetrator, for instance – become cues, just as we use racial heuristics, schema, and cues in electoral politics. These cues shape assumptions and reactions in different ways, depending on racial identity – who is targeted, who is the perpetrator, and who is perceiving the violence. Even before more complex deductions form, these racial cues are a first impression of who is at risk, who is threatened, and why. They allow individuals to form immediate

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[28] As I discuss in Chapter 2 and will later discuss in other chapters, there is important information derived from attempting to comprehend what may have motivated violence, but it is not something that can ever be captured fully. The selection of places, targets, and people all hold symbolic, and very often strategic, purposes.

impressions of a situation. These impressions are complicated further by the role of historical predispositions and community organization, which also shape, contextualize, and accentuate these cues.

Historical Predispositions

It becomes evident that identity, and race specifically, gives meaning to violence. These are cues and heuristics that indicate proximity to the acts of violence (Avdan and Webb 2018; Fearon and Laitin 2000). Who is targeted, who is victimized, who perpetrates an act, where an act is committed, among other characteristics, all inform how violence is perceived. These are shortcuts – heuristics – that allow the public to gauge the threat posed to themselves. I consider an act of violence as a multi-layered event comprised of many components. My focus here the interaction between violence and race. Racial heuristics influence emotional responses, they influence what violence is called, they influence how the public responds to violence, and they also influence the potential for non-violent activities (d)evolve into violence (Crabtree and Simonelli n.d.; Huff and Kertzer 2017; Manekin and Mitts 2022; Peay and Camarillo 2021). In later chapters, I test whether in the absence of such heuristics and cues, we see that there is no distinction in response or mobilization along racial lines. But why does race hold so much power in the context of violence?

There are two ways that I consider this question which are complementary to one another and not mutually exclusive. First, I turn to Social Identity Theory (SIT) to supplement the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework by emphasizing that racial groups and racial group attachment have a powerful pull for members of both in-groups and out-groups. SIT lays a foundation from which to theorize why individuals may respond to some acts of violence differently than other acts of violence (e.g., random versus racially-targeted violence). Second, I also rely on theories of racial formation and collective memory, and the interaction of violence in those processes, to explain those responses themselves. That is, why it is that members of some racial groups respond differently to violence than others.

Social Identity Theory

One answer to the question of why race remains salient in the context of violence comes from Social Identity Theory (SIT). Key to this is the internalization of an ascribed racial identity (Huddy 2001; Tajfel and Turner 1979). When conflict occurs with an out-group, an individual can consider

themselves a member of the in-group to have any attachment to that conflict. Tajfel and Turner (1979) draw attention to this intra-group attachment which develops. This is an argument for the desire for positive value of self — that value is attached to social groups and social identity — and then the value of those groups is determined in reference to other groups. Ultimately, the aim of differentiation is to "maintain or achieve superiority over an out-group on some dimensions." If these groups and attachments to these groups are meaningful, then threats to these groups or their status should have implications for those who ascribe to the group identity, per SIT (Huddy 2001). Others theorize about the relationship between in-group identity and out-groups that are contrary to SIT (e.g. Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos 2021). I discuss these theories and their implications in Chapter 4.

Distinct Histories, Distinct Responses

Yet, race, as Sen and Wasow (2016) contend, is not a single entity. It is comprised of many facets – a "bundle of sticks," they argue. One of these "sticks," I assert, is the violence and the threat of violence that has shadowed Black and brown people in the United States for centuries. Not only has it shadowed people of color in the United States, but it has been an integral part of racial formation.

Racial formation is defined by Omi and Winant as "the process of race making, and its reverberations throughout the social order…. We define racial formation as *the sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed.* [emphasis original]" (2014, 109). This process is an iterative one, happening continuously and without end. We can understand racially-targeted violence as a *racial project* within this unending process of race formation. Racial projects are "*simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial identities and meanings, and an effort to organize and distribute resources (economic, political, cultural) along racial lines*" (Omi and Winant 2014, 125). There are other terms used for racial projects and other ways of describing what is a similar underlying understanding of the role of violence in the creation and maintenance of racial identity and hierarchy from scholars in comparative politics, international relations, and criminology (e.g. Fujii 2013; Perry 2002). I describe several of these in Chapter 2. These racial projects can be individual, institutional, and state-enacted.

Therefore, this violence stick, in the bundle described by Sen and Wasow (2016), can be punishment for the violation of social norms that uphold a white supremacist hierarchy. As such, violence is a particularly prominent component within racial identity; a racial project which continues to enact it. Race is not just phenotypical perception, but also the individual experiences and the

collective memories of those who embody the racial identity. Race is not only a symbol, but it is a lived experience – and lived experiences of conflict – that are both historical and on-going.

The enslaved were beaten into submission; fire consumed towns that were centers of Black culture. Those Black people who dared to toe the racial line, to stand above their station – and often times those who did not dare to do so – were subject to lynching. There have been (and continue to be) bombs for Black people who move into segregated neighborhoods; bullets for people of color who threaten white dominance. Such experiences are certainly not limited to Black people, nor are these tactics. Long histories of violence have shaped Asian, Hispanic, and indigenous communities across the country as well (Bennett 2018; Chen 2000; Martinez 2018).[29] Given these histories, one of the latent components of race is violence. When targeted against Black Americans, violence often holds a different meaning and invokes a long tradition of extra-legal violence as a tool of oppression (socio-economic objectives), repression (political objectives), and coercion/force (psychological objectives). Therefore, I expect that violence holds a different weight and such elicit different responses among people of color. Moreover, acts of racially-targeted violence should evoke particularly unique responses among the racial (minority) group targeted in comparison to those who are not, further driven by a history of terroristic violence that has distinctly been targeted at racial minorities in the United States.

Political differences among white-Americans, Black-Americans, and Americans of other racial groups are noted thoroughly in the public opinion literature. How white and Black Americans perceive social welfare programs (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Kinder and Winter 2001), civil liberties and security (D. W. Davis and Silver 2004), healthcare (Tesler 2012), and criminal justice (Peffley and Hurwitz 2010), policing (Burge and Johnson 2018; Jefferson, Neuner, and Pasek 2020), and political engagement itself (Anoll 2018, 2022), among other topics, vary widely. Notable gaps in political engagement and voter turnout also exist between white and Black voters (B. L. Fraga 2018), as well as remarkable distinctions in emotions related to politics and their mobilizing effects (Albertson 2020; Banks, White, and McKenzie 2019; Phoenix 2019).

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[29] Violence against people of color is also perpetrated along dimensions of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation. The limits of this study and its focus on race rather than gender, or any other dimension of identity, is not meant to obscure or minimize violence perpetrated against women of color nor those in the LGBTQ+ community. Many of the pieces I draw on to speak specifically to violence against women and intersectionality (Bennett 2018; McGuire 2010). This is a direction I hope to pursue further in the book project.

Violence is emotional and evocative, but how violence is experienced and perceived may vary based on a number of characteristics. These include the manner in which the violence was committed (e.g., the tactic), the number of casualties, the scope of damage, or the words used to describe the violence (e.g., label). If violence elicits distinct emotional reactions or perceptions of threat across racial groups, then how people respond politically to it may not be uniform, just as the ways in which politics evokes anger among Americans is not uniform (Banks 2014; Phoenix 2019). Thus, there is reason to expect that among members of different racial groups gaps exist in perceptions of threat and emotional reactions to violence, just as they exist in other domains. Further, racial attributes of violence (e.g., a "racist" motivation) are not entirely responsible for any differentiation in responses among racial groups. Some of this, I argue, is attributable to differences in collective ethno-racial history. And observationally, there is evidence to that these differences in public opinion about violence exist between white Americans and those of other racial identities. Before engaging with racially-targeted violence, I measure if baseline perceptions of violence in the United States differ across racial groups.

Distinct Baselines: Observational Evidence

To show preliminary evidence of the distinct baselines that I propose exist, I turn to the 2018 and 2020 American National Election Studies (ANES), which asked respondents about the degree to which they believed violence is justified in politics. The ANES asks questions about perceptions of threat, violence, and fear of terrorism in several of its iterations.[30] Among 255 Black respondents, 247 Hispanic respondents, and 1,854 white respondents, there is a clear distinction in justification for the use of political violence. ANES participants in both years were asked, "How much do you feel it is justified for people to use violence to pursue their political goals in this country?" The question was asked on a five-point Likert scale and has been rescaled from zero to one. While acknowledging that there was little justification overall for the use of political violence in 2018 (mean = 0.12), Black respondents believed violence was seven percentage points more justifiable than white respondents did ($p < 0.01$). This was a difference of five percentage points among Hispanic respondents ($p < 0.05$). A clear distinction between whites and non-whites also emerges on the 2020 ANES. This iteration of

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[30] However, while the inclusion of these types of questions has been consistent over the last decade, the questions themselves and their wording have not been consistent over time. Therefore, I am unable to look at these longitudinally.

the survey asked 5,962 white respondents, 726 Black respondents, and 763 Hispanic respondents about the degree to which they believe political violence was justified (mean = 0.07). Again, I find statistically significant differences between white respondents and Black and Hispanic respondents – a difference of approximately 5 percentage points ($p < 0.01$). These predicted probabilities by ethno-racial group, when using weights and controlling for gender age, education, partisanship, ideology, and income, are displayed in Figure 2.

Figure 3 shows that these differences are replicated when using my own survey data collected in June 2021. The distinction is even more striking here. The main premise of this survey was to engage participants in a conjoint experiment exercise that I describe in more detail in Chapter 5. The sample is comprised of 495 Black respondents and 464 white respondents, all of whom were asked a series of questions before they began the experimental conjoint exercise. One of those questions was identical to the ANES, asking to what degree respondents believed violence was justified to pursue political goals in the United States. Just as with the 2018 and 2020 iterations of the ANES, the mean justification for violence is low (mean = 0.13), but a significant difference of five percentage points emerges when comparing white and Black respondents, even when controlling for age, education, gender identity, ideology, attention paid to the media, and partisan affiliation ($p < 0.01$). This gap grows even larger when taking gender identity into account as well – Black men report believing violence is justified by ten more percentage points than white women ($p < 0.01$).
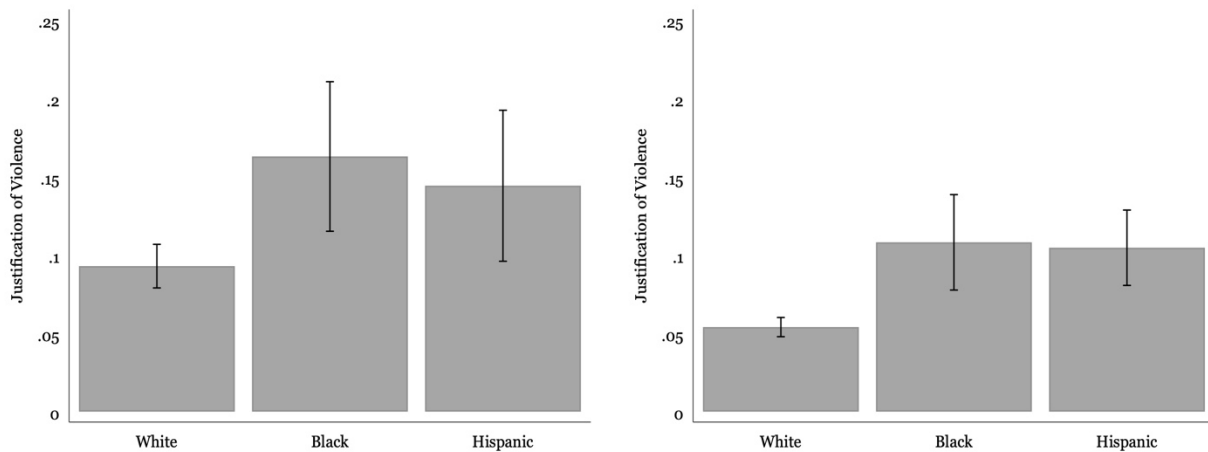
Figure 2: Justification for Violence in the 2018 ANES (left) and 2020 ANES (right).
Predicted probabilities from a multi-variate model using survey weighting and controlling for gender, education, age, income, ideology, and partisanship. Shown with 95% confidence intervals.
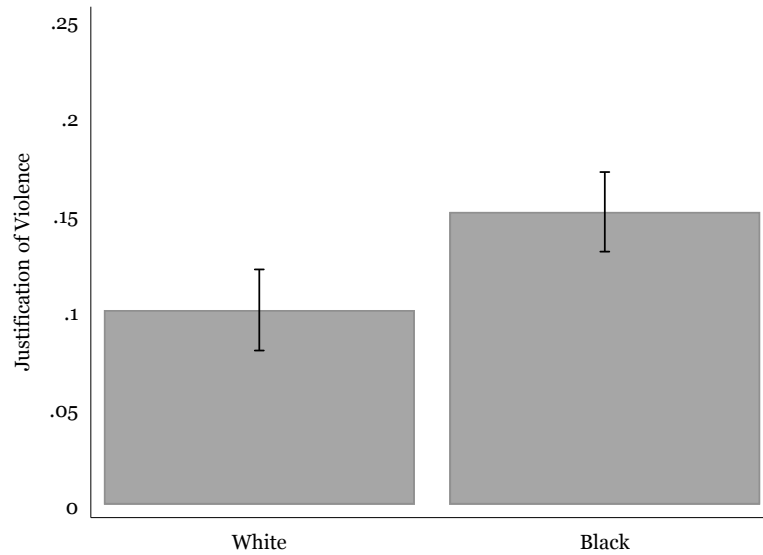
Figure 3: Justification for Violence in June 2021 Conjoint Experiment.
Predicted probabilities from a multi-variate model controlling for gender, education, age, attention paid to media, ideology, and partisanship. Shown with 95% confidence intervals.

The questions from the ANES leave the conception and description of political violence undefined, and so the inferences I can make from these findings are limited. In the next chapter, I move to consider a better-defined scenario of violence, wherein I manipulate the target of the violence while also controlling details of the event itself. With that experimental design, I test if baseline perceptions of random violence vary across racial groups and if a clearly stated racial target may change how members of those groups respond. In light of even these findings, though, there is evidence that white and non-white Americans have very different viewpoints of violence in the United States.

Conclusion

In summary, I have argued that racial identity and racial cues operate through racially-targeted violence in two ways. Through the power of in-group identity, as posited by Social Identity Theory (SIT), and by dredging up collective memories of the past – e.g., past violence perpetrated against racial – regardless of if an individual experienced that violence directly themselves. Violence may also drastically shift one's understanding of what behaviors are threatening to others, and therefore risky to themselves. The targeting of a racial group in an act of violence may therefore increase the risk – and the costs – of a political act that, previously, would not have seemed inflammatory at all. Yet, the

individual's behavior is changed in the aftermath of the incident, regardless of if they were truly at an increased risk of danger or personally threatened.

It is here that I expect the "stick" of violence in the racial bundle to become apparent. I expect to see that violence against one's own racial group should be particularly provocative for those who share the same racial identity. This should be particularly true among Black Americans. For this group, violence, and particularly violence perpetrated by white people, is a salient part of collective memory (Hill 2015). Even without directly referencing or prompting this history, I suggest that it can be seen in how Black people respond to violence targeted against their racial group.

Building from this, I derive the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework's overarching expectations and hypotheses. These are noted in Table 1. First, given the different nature of racial formation and its interaction with violence in the United States, I expect that members of different racial groups should exhibit distinct responses to violence. More specifically, members of historically marginalized groups (i.e., Black and Hispanic Americans in the context of this dissertation) should have perceptions of violence (in the absence of a racial cue) that are divergent from white Americans (Hypothesis 1).

Second, I expect that racially-targeted violence further changes the cost-benefit calculus for individuals who share racial identification with the victimized. In this way, political participation can become more costly due to perceived threat and its interaction with additional risk to those of shared (in-group) racial identity. Violence which clearly targets Black people would increase the perceived costs or benefits of political participation for Black people, but less so, I hypothesize, – if at all – for members of other racial groups, particularly if those people are white. Similarly, violence which clearly targets Hispanic-Americans or Asian-Americans should change the calculus for political participation for Hispanic Americans or Asian-Americans, respectively, but should have a limited impact for the political behavior of other racial groups. Therefore, I expect that racially-targeted violence directed against the shared racial group prompts distinct reactions among members of that racial group (Hypothesis 2).

Within the framework presented in this chapter, I argue that we can think of racially-targeted violence as an entity with the ability to shift patterns of political behavior by altering a cost-benefit analysis of participation. Violence generally increases the costs of political participation, but racial identity can further shape these costs and benefits by emphasizing who is at risk and for what reason. When considered in conjunction with the strength of racial identity, distinctive histories of violence within those identities, and the social networks and organizations that comprise a community, it is

possible to understand how violence can prompt heightened threat perceptions, dampening emotion or serving as a crucial moment for political action. In the next chapter, I consider the micro-foundations of responses to racially-targeted violence, using a series of survey experiments to measure emotional reactions and threat perceptions in response to racially-targeted violence.

Table 1: Hypotheses derived from the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework.

Chapter 4 – Violence in Color	
Hypothesis 1	Black and Hispanic respondents have elevated emotional responses and perceptions of threat in response to a random mass shooting in comparison to white respondents.
Hypothesis 2A	Emotion and threat perception are heightened when respondents are exposed to a description of violence targeting their own racial group.
Hypothesis 2B	African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans may show greater feelings of anger, anxiety, fear, sadness, and worry in response to news of violence against the other group
Hypothesis 2C	Stronger emotions and perceptions of threat after reading the shared race condition are associated, within racial group, with a stronger sense of racial importance.

Chapter 5 – Deconstructing Violence	
Hypothesis 1	Incidents that describe violence targeting Black people evoke greater anger and greater punitiveness among Black respondents.
Hypothesis 2	Incidents that describe violence targeting white people do not evoke greater anger or punitiveness from white respondents.
Hypothesis 3	Violence committed by non-white perpetrators evokes greater anger and greater punitiveness from white respondents.
Hypothesis 4	Violence committed by white perpetrators evokes greater anger and greater punitiveness from Black respondents.
Hypothesis 5	Violence committed by a white perpetrator against a Black target evokes the greatest anger and punitiveness among Black respondents. Violence committed by a Black perpetrator against a white target evokes the greatest anger and punitiveness among Black respondents.
Chapter 6 – Fear and Participation: Electoral Mobilization in the Aftermath of Mass Shootings	
Hypothesis 1	In the aftermath of a mass shooting explicitly targeting a racialized group of people, any measurable changes in voter registration should be seen among members of that ethno-racial group in the incident's vicinity.
Hypothesis 2	Members of that targeted ethno-racial group registering to vote in the weeks and month following the incident have a higher likelihood of voter turnout in subsequent elections when compared to those ethno-racial group members who registered in the time prior.
Hypothesis 3	In the aftermath of a mass shooting without a racialized target, there are no measurable changes in voter registration when comparing among members of different ethno-racial groups.
Hypothesis 4	In the aftermath of a mass shooting without a racialized target, there are no measurable changes in voter registration when comparing among members of different ethno-racial groups.

Chapter 4

Violence in Color: Experimental Studies of Racially-Targeted Violence

Note: In the process of reframing and editing this chapter, an unfortunately and tragically familiar occurrence took place in Buffalo, New York – a racially-targeted mass shooting directed at that city's Black community. It is familiar because it has happened with similar regularity over the past few years. It is also familiar because it is precisely the type of situation upon this chapter and the next have been framed. I speak below to the academic literature that informs this research and underscores its contribution to the discipline of political science. I hope, though, that the relevance and urgency of this work, which comes from simply looking to current events, is not lost.

It is increasingly evident that racial violence not only has meaningful implications for political behavior in the United States, but that those consequences vary across racial groups, just as those groups' own histories of interpersonal (Bennett 2018; Chen 2000; Wells-Barnett 1895; W. White 1927), structural (Rothstein 2017; Taylor 2019), and state-sanctioned (Belknap 1995; Martinez 2018) violence vary. To-date, though, this research in the domain of American political violence has predominantly concentrated on acts of terrorism committed by foreign actors (Gadarian 2010; Huddy et al. 2005, 2005; Huddy and Feldman 2011; Huff and Kertzer 2017), and police use of (often fatal) force against civilians (Jefferson, Neuner, and Pasek 2020; Weaver, Prowse, and Piston 2020). With its focus on racially-targeted violence, this work fills a hole in the political violence literature, specifically within the American politics subfield. In the previous chapters, I have outlined the concept of racially-targeted violence and its distinctions and similarities with other forms of political violence. I have also outlined the Violence, Identity, Mobilization Framework and set forth overarching expectations for the project, predicting that responses to racially-targeted violence are a function of racial identity. In this chapter, I not only provide evidence that distinct differences exist in perceptions of violence across racial groups, but, in support of my theoretical framework, I also show that Americans of

different racial groups have distinct emotional responses to acts of racially-targeted violence. Further, I find that those responses vary when racially-targeted violence is directed against a self-identified racial group.

This chapter focuses on two psychological foundations of political participation – emotion and threat. Early scholarship on the topic considered participation in collective group behaviors like protest to be an irrational and emotionally driven endeavor (Schwartz 1976). Later scholarship understands it as a series of rational decisions undertaken by participants who have a sense of the resources available to them and the expected value they will derive from participation (Klandermans 1984). I draw on this juxtaposition of arguments to connect violence (or news of violence) to political outcomes. Meaning that the emotion or threat that are evoked form violence may have implications for if and how individuals engage in political activity. Theoretically, I draw in the role of racial identity in shaping responses to violence – identities that, as I have described, cannot be extricated fully from the historical violence that have shaped and reinforced those racial categories. Because I posit that violence and race can add risk to our cost-benefit analysis, I want to understand where that risk might come from – is it heightened because of an increased sense of threat? A rational response to threat. Or is that cost perhaps altered because of heightened emotional responses? Something that could be deemed a less rational response but is no less important for political behavior. By understanding the potential source(s) of risk, I believe we can better understand what engages and what deters individuals from political participation in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence. These questions direct my focus to two dependent variables of interest – threat perception and emotional affect.

To accomplish this goal, I use a series of original survey experiments to measure threat perceptions and emotional responses in reaction to news of violence – either random or racially-targeted – among samples of white, Black, and Hispanic-Americans. I establish several points in this chapter. First, I reaffirm that distinct baseline perceptions of violence exist when comparing between white and non-white Americans. Second, I find that how individuals respond to news of racially-targeted violence is distinct from reactions to random violence, and that these reactions are not uniform when comparing white, Black, and Hispanic respondents. For example, while white respondents appear most anxious at the news of Black-targeted violence, but not at White-targeted violence, Black respondents report heightened anger when reading about violence against their shared racial group. Meanwhile, Hispanic respondents show little distinction between conditions. Third, I highlight the ways in which racial identity and racial importance serve to moderate these outcomes. I

conclude this chapter with a discussion of these findings and broader thoughts about their implications for the study of violence in American politics. Together, these findings give support to the hypotheses set forth in Chapter 3, namely that responses to violence –racially-targeted and otherwise – vary widely across different racial groups.

Theoretical Expectations

The Violence, Identity, Mobilization Framework sets out that political responses to violence are dependent on racial identity, historical predispositions, and community structures. I also argue that, within the context of violence, we should be able to reconceptualize "costs" in a rational cost-benefit analysis as more than just time or effort to engage in political action. We should also understand that cost may be the equivalent of risk – the risk that individuals may undertake (or feel they undertake) to engage in political behaviors. This risk is dependent on an individual's racial identity, historical predispositions, and the organizational structures within their community.

The central dependent variables of interest in this paper, however, regard self-reported emotion and threat perception, both pathways through which individuals can gauge the risk that violence poses to them. These micro-foundations are crucial for understanding the how individual experiences translate into collective political behavior (Collins 2009; Dorff 2017). Below, I explore these two variables in greater detail, including their integration into the Violence, Identity, Mobilization Framework.

Emotion and Political Behavior

Violence is emotional subject matter, but why are the emotional responses that we, as individuals, feel about violence important for political participation? A robust political psychology literature has developed political scientists' understanding about the role of emotion in political behavior. While access to resources and barriers to entry are determinants are predictors are of political engagement, emotions also alter these decisions to participate, perhaps weighting the impact of these factors differently than in the absence of emotional stimuli. Thus, the emotions that are elicited by acts of violence are potentially mobilizing or demobilizing factors. For example, the number of casualties and perceived randomness of the attack, multiplied by its lack of explanation or target can inspire fear, anger, or anxiety in the population (Taylor 2019; Wayne 2019). Anxiety sends people in search of additional information under threatening conditions (Albertson and Gadarian 2015; Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000; Valentino, Gregorowicz and Groenendyk 2009). Fear causes people to

retreat from engagement (Weber 2013), while anger may spur them to participate in a variety of forms of politics (Gutierrez et al. 2019; Valentino et al. 2011; Valentino, Gregorowicz and Groenendyk 2009).

Recent work has established that these emotional pathways are not uniform across racial group, specifically when it comes to the political behavior of African-Americans (Albertson 2020; Banks, White, and McKenzie 2019; Phoenix 2019; Phoenix and Arora 2018). Phoenix (2019) underscores an important point in this literature: Black people are not as easily moved to anger regarding politics and are not emotionally-driven to political engagement in similar ways as white people. Further, among Black people, anger contributes to acts of political participation which are race-related, but not those which are seemingly not related to the racial group (Banks, White, and McKenzie 2019). While fear is a noted demobilizing political force for many, among Asian-Americans, it is shown to increase the reported likelihood of engaging in political behaviors like contacting an elected official and protesting (Phoenix and Arora 2018). Such distinctions between racial groups further emphasize the need to interrogate baseline and directional responses to violence in the absence of racial heuristics in an effort to more fully measure and comprehend the impact on events which target specific racial groups. This research, therefore, contributes to understanding how it is that racially-targeted violence can be an influential factor on political behavior and, further, how its impact may be counterintuitive. If racially-targeted violence inspires anger, rather than fear, it may prompt individuals to political action rather than deter them. This is a counterintuitive outcome for those who may perpetrate these attacks with the hope of generating fear, and therefore, if it is true, it is a finding of great consequence.

Threat Perception

In addition to measuring emotional reactions to news of racially-targeted violence in this chapter's studies, I also measure the personal threat that individuals reported feeling in respect to their own likelihood of being the victim of several forms of violence. Why might these threat perceptions be important for the Violence, Identity, Mobilization Framework and for understanding the tendency for mobilization or demobilization in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence? Generally speaking,

though there are exceptions to this,[31] it is the nature of humans to reduce their risk in the face of threat, engaging in less risky behavior or avoiding behaviors that could be perceived as risky (Huddy et al. 2005). Threat can be a source of ethnocentrism and intolerance, retaliation, and punitiveness as well (Huddy et al. 2005) – so prompting threat among people in the aftermath of violence could set them on edge and make them more likely to be hostile towards an out-group. Specifically, violence targeted towards members of a racial group may provoke threat within other members of that in-group. This, in turn, could provoke strong desires to punish or retaliate against out-groups, particularly the perpetrator's group. In fact, this is the stated intention of some perpetrators who hope to enflame conflict between racial groups. The implications here are also important, particularly if they are counterintuitive – violence intended to spark more violence might instead fizzle.

Additionally, exposure to violence, regardless of the target, motivation, or any other number of characteristics, may simply alter perceptions of violence and one's own likelihood of victimization. Racial identity may also alter the sense of threat one feels for their own physical safety or the safety of those around them. That is, reading about a mass shooting targeting one's own racial group could increase the perceived likelihood an individual feels a similar act of violence will victimize them. These factors – exposure to violence, racial identity, and importance of that identity – can be interactive, altering perceptions of risk and cost among those who share racial identity with the victimized. Thus, not only are individuals concerned with their own physical safety, but they are more so concerned because others like them have been victimized. They may be further concerned because of the closeness with which they hold their racial identity.

The theoretical implications of this are that racial cues in violence could translate a sense of personal threat into a collective group threat. It is these collective threats that have significant implications for larger acts of mobilization (Kreft 2019; Shesterinina 2016; Tilly 1977). An act of violence need not victimize someone directly, but the power of racial identity can make violence personal.

Expectations

The Violence, Identity, Mobilization Framework asserts that racial identity is an important facet of violence for several reasons; racial identity can make violence meaningful, giving it greater political

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[31] For political examples of the engaging in risky behaviors, see McAdam (1986), Morris (1986), or Zwerman and Steinhoff (2005).

context. Racial identity may allow individuals to deduce meaning from a seemingly senseless or unfathomable offense. Racial identity can also signal to individuals whether they are personally threatened or whether they may be facing a larger collective threat directed toward their racial group. While perceptions of violence can be the result of other characteristics of the violence itself (Huff and Kertzer 2017), in this chapter, I focus on the race of the targeted victim. This racial dimension has several implications, and I will outline these as four hypotheses for this chapter.

Before examining the racial cues contained within an act of violence, first, I look to the racial identity of those who are exposed to violence – in this case, respondents who read a news story about a fictional act of violence. I expect that Black and Hispanic respondents should have elevated emotional responses and perceptions of threat in response to a random mass shooting in comparison to white respondents (Hypothesis 1).

A clearly described racial target prompts the explicit cuing of race. As a second hypothesis, I expect that this racial dimension activates in-group allegiances and should prompt distinct reactions depending on the race of the target. This premise draws upon Social Identity Theory (SIT) to substantiate it. As I describe in Chapter 3, SIT explores the ways in which in-groups may come to form and why preference for an in-group, rather than an out-group, forms (Huddy 2001). Respondents of shared racial in-group identification with the victimized should therefore have stronger responses than those who do not share racial identity with the victimized. Derived from this, I expect that violence explicitly targeting African-Americans should have implications for the public option and political participation of African-Americans more widely. Similarly, violence against white-Americans should have distinct implications for other white-Americans or violence against Hispanic-Americans should have distinct implications for self-identified Hispanic-Americans. Here, I expect to find that emotion and threat perception are heightened when respondents are exposed to a description of violence targeting their own racial group (Hypothesis 2A).

As an alternative, though, rather than high in-group identification being a predictor of lower levels of out-group empathy among racial minorities, Group Empathy Theory (GET) expects that high in-group identification should be related to higher levels of out-group empathy among non-white people. Empathy among non-white racial groups is conditioned by racial hierarchy (Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos 2021). For example, Sirin, Valentino, Villalobos (2021) find evidence that Black Americans have high levels of support for undocumented immigrants, including Hispanic immigrants. Therefore, I also expect that African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans may show greater feelings of anger,

anxiety, fear, sadness, and worry in response to news of violence against the other group (Hypothesis 2B).

Some might wonder, as I have, if these effects are uniform across racial groups. Or, as SIT and GET would predict, are they moderated by the strength of racial in-group identity? Just as we have come to understand that emotional mechanisms do not operate uniformly across racial groups (Phoenix 2019), we should not assume that perceptions of and responses to violence are homogenous within racial groups. Therefore, I also test whether the effects of violence are both "selective" and "discriminate." "Selective" refers to a selective racial effect, whereby I expect to find that there are discernible differences in response between different racial groups. The "discriminate" premise refers this uniformity (or lack thereof) within racial group. That is, are treatment effects, after exposure to violence directed at the shared racial group, a function of high in-group identification? To answer this question, I use a measure of racial importance to test the hypothesis that treatment effects are "indiscriminate" across members of the same self-identified racial group. In regard to this variable, I expect that stronger emotions and perceptions of threat after reading the shared race condition are associated, within racial group, with a stronger sense of racial importance (Hypothesis 2C).

There are several other reasons why I test for this selective and discriminate effect. Any treatment effects could be a factor of racial identity and racial group attachment or importance. Within these identities are components of symbolism, shared history, and collective trauma, a so-called bundle-of-sticks as Sen and Wasow (2016) describe and as I discuss in Chapter 3. Scholars have long challenged the perception of a monolithic Black community and Black experience and criticized scholarship that has considered the diversity of issue prevalence among Black people, but at the same time taken for granted that a concern for racial inequality or discrimination is most salient among African-Americans (Reed 2004). The same can certainly be said for Hispanic-Americans, which is a category that contains people of numerous nationalities and backgrounds (Cristina Beltran 2010).[32] Even when individuals self-identify as members of a racial group, it should not be taken for granted that ascription is the equivalent of strong identification. Some people, for example, may respond to violence targeted against their own racial group in a manner distinct from other racial groups due to a sense of racial attachment or emotional affect. Others might also respond in such a way because of a heightened

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[32] I speak more to the label of "Hispanic," its use in this chapter, and the implications of that use in the discussion section below.

sense of risk, with no strong attachment to the racial group. Hence, I consider that elevated individual threat perception or emotional affect could simply be the result of shared identity or even the mention of violence, not on account of any greater concern for those of shared racial identity or attachment to the racial group.

Responses to Racially-Targeted Violence in an Experimental Setting

On May 5, 2020, a cell phone video went viral across the internet that documented the murder of 25-year-old Ahmaud Arbery. Arbery, a Black citizen of Glynn County, Georgia, was pursued down a residential street by three white men who saw his presence in their neighborhood as a threat. Arbery's murder, which happened on February 23, 2020, represented a prototypical case of racially-targeted violence. To some, it was reminiscent of a lynching, with a racial dynamic clearly emphasized by the white perpetrators' use of derogative slurs, three or more perpetrators, and it resulted in the death of the Black victim.[33] At the same time, the family of Breonna Taylor, a Black woman killed, as she slept in her home, by Louisville, Kentucky police officers on March 13, 2020, continued to wait for the city to take action against her killers. Several weeks after the release of the Arbery video, on May 25, 2020, the public murder of George Floyd by five Minneapolis police officers would ignite a surge of protests across the country, united around the cry that "Black Lives Matter." May of 2020 saw sparks of racial consciousness within a nation left restless and frozen by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was in the midst of this, the week following the release of the Ahmaud Arbery video, but prior to the murder of George Floyd, that I fielded the first of a series of survey experiments to understand responses to racially-targeted violence. This experiment focused on the reactions of white Americans to acts of violence targeted against white people, Black people, or against a random target.

This initial experiment's non-white sample size limits the amount of inference that can be done regarding non-white racial groups. Therefore, in November 2020, I also fielded a survey experiment balanced in its number of Black and Hispanic respondents to allow for robust inter and intra-racial group comparisons. This allows me to detect the effects of shared race with the target of an act of violence, which I cannot do with a nationally-representative sample due to lack of statistical

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[33] "Judge advances murder trial for all three white men charged in death of Ahmaud Arbery." June 4, 2020. *Washington Post*. Note that all of these characteristics fit the NAACP's historical definition of a lynching (NAACP 1919).

power. Evidence from the ANES, as well as the historical record I have described in previous chapters, suggests that how Black or Hispanic-Americans will respond to violence – and to violence directed at their own racial group – are distinctly different from the responses of white Americans.

Research Design

The two survey experiments I have conducted to test my expectations include similar dependent variables of interest, and so I present their findings side-by-side for the purpose of clear comparisons and discussion. In these experiments, I manipulated the description of a violent incident – i.e., characterized as racially-targeted or random – in order to understand whether these different contexts have an effect on measures of threat perception and emotional affect. In each case, this involved a three-condition design that manipulated the description of a fictional mass shooting. The treatments in the first experiment took the form of a *USA Today* article, with one describing the incident as an act intentionally targeting Black people and another describing it as an act intentionally targeting white people. The third treatment condition made no mention of racially-targeted violence, only describing the same mass shooting as an act of "random" violence. The second experiment also included three conditions in which subjects read about an act of violence targeted at random people, targeted at Black people, or targeted at Hispanic people. Each article featured a single image that was constant across all conditions. This image depicted flowers and candles left at a make-shift memorial site. Aside from altering the description of the target, the articles' language, presentation, and accompanying image was similar across conditions and across the two experiments. I provide an example of the Black-targeted violence treatment's text in Figure 1 and full versions of all treatments are shown in the Appendix that accompanies this chapter.

Prior to treatment, I ask respondents about several potential moderators, including racial-group importance, partisanship, and attention paid to the media. In both experiments, after reading the treatment, respondents were asked a factual manipulation check about the topic of the article immediately after reading it.[34] Eighty-seven percent of white respondents in the first experiment and 95 percent of all respondents in the second experiment answered this question correctly.[35] Post-

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[34] Question text: "*What was the topic of the article you read?*" Answer choices (presented in random order): "*An act of violence,*" "*Pay for college athletes,*" "*Greenhouse gas emissions,*" "*An art exhibit.*"
[35] When looking across conditions, there are no significant differences in the rate that respondents passed the manipulation check in either study.

treatment measures gauged respondents' emotional responses to the randomly-assigned article, as well as their perceived likelihood of victimization, which I use as a measure of threat perception. I describe each of these measures briefly in the text but include the full text of questions and answer choices in the chapter's Appendix. All effects of treatment conditions on dependent variables are estimated using an OLS linear regression model and are noted with 95% confidence intervals. For all models, respondents in the random violence condition are used as the baseline. All dependent variables have been rescaled between zero and one.

On May 12, 2020, I fielded the first online survey experiment to 615 subjects through the recruitment platform Lucid Theorem. I use this initial experiment to test whether characteristics of an act of violence elicit distinct responses among white respondents.[36] The sample consisted of 422 white subjects, 79 Black subjects, and 114 who identified with another racial group. The sample is balanced across the three conditions in the age, education, household income, gender, political ideology, and partisanship of subjects.[37]

A second survey experiment was fielded online to 865 subjects[38] between November 12, 2020 and November 24, 2020 using the survey firm Qualtrics. The sample included 434 subjects who self-identified as non-Hispanic Black and 431 subjects who self-identified as Hispanic.[39] Respondents were block-randomized to ensure equivalent numbers of each racial group across conditions. There is balance across these three conditions in the age, education, gender, political ideology, and partisanship of subjects.[40] Full demographics of both experiments' samples, power calculations, and distributions of respondents across conditions are provided in this chapter's Appendix.

My analyses of the data collected from the two survey experiments proceeds in three parts in order to unpack several distinctive portions of the Violence, Identity, Mobilization Framework. First, (1) I will show how emotional responses and threat perceptions differ among Black, Hispanic, and

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[36] The number of subjects who identified as Black or with another ethno-racial group does not allow for a more nuanced analysis of non-white participants. Therefore, from this sample, I present findings that consider only the reactions of white respondents.

[37] Using a two-tailed t-test to determine difference-in-means between each of the three conditions in dyads.

[38] This originally totaled 882 respondents. 17 respondents were dropped who incorrectly answered the manipulation check *AND* provided an incoherent answer to the instrument's open-ended question. Note that not all respondents who failed the manipulation check were dropped from the study and my findings are robust to their inclusion.

[39] This sample was intentionally recruited to be mutually-exclusive. There were no respondents who identified as both Black and Hispanic.

[40] Using a two-tailed t-test to determine difference-in-means between each of the three conditions in dyads.

white respondents in the random violence condition. The differences between these groups substantiate my argument that perceptions of violence are distinct for Americans across racial groups (H1). It also serves to contextualize the second set of findings I present, (2) whereby I see that news of racially-targeted violence does prompt a variety of responses dependent on who the respondent is and whether or not they are reacting to violence targeted against their own racial group (H2A-B). Finally, (3) I turn to a measure of racial importance to understand whether treatment effects are associated with the strength of racial identity (H2C).

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Police: Shooting suspect said he targeted **black** people in attack

*"It seems to be **racial**. What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of **black** people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."*

USA TODAY – A gunman opened fire Thursday night at a community center outside of Chicago, killing six people before briefly fleeing, police said.

The suspect surrendered to police several blocks away. He was arrested and transported to the Chicago Police Department's headquarters, where he agreed to speak about the incident. It was there that the suspect confessed that he planned the rampage ahead of time with the intention of targeting **black** people.

During a Thursday night press conference, a police spokesman noted that the suspect entered the building earlier in the evening and then ultimately killed six people. Four others were wounded but survived. No identifying information about the suspect was given.

Several hours afterward, a group of local leaders gathered a few blocks from where the shooting occurred and held an impromptu news conference. A member of the City Council said she believed the suspect had targeted the victims **because of their race**.

"It seems to be **racial**," she said. "What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of **black** people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

City officials did not release information about the victims and did not say how many people were in the building during the shooting. Hospital officials declined to comment.
This story is still developing.

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Figure 4: Text of Black Victim Treatment Condition.[41]

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[41] I make the intentional choice *not* to use terms like "anti-Black" or "anti-Hispanic" in the treatments, because the parallel designation of "anti-white" is not a commonly used, though anti-white violence certainly does happen. It is a recognized category of hate crime. Avoiding the designation of "anti" also allows me to focus on the race of the victims, rather than an underlying motivation for the attack. As I explain in Chapter 2, even without a clearly stated motivation, the target of an attack (and its other characteristics) allows an individual to infer its motivation.

Responding to Random Violence

To begin, I compare responses to the random violence condition across all three racial groups. This exercise will allow us to understand how members of different racial groups respond to news of violence in the absence of any racial cue. The random condition also serves as the baseline from which the racially-targeted violence conditions in both studies are compared. Before attempting to gauge how the addition of a racial target may influence responses to an act of violence, however, first I show how responses to a random mass shooting vary when comparing Black, Hispanic, and white respondents. My theoretical framework expects that even in the absence of a racial cue, the weight of historical predispositions toward violence should result in greater perceptions of threat and greater emotional affect among members of historically-marginalized groups – here, both African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans.

Emotional Responses to Random Violence

How do participants react emotionally to news of a random mass shooting? After being assigned to a treatment condition, respondents were asked how much *anger, anxiety, fear, sadness, and worry* they felt about the article they read. These variables are measured on a five-point scale ranging from "none at all" to "a great deal" of each emotion.

White respondents report anger and sadness of a similar degree to Black and Hispanic respondents – there are no statistical differences between respondents of any racial group on these dependent variables. However, as indicated in Figure 2, white respondents express less anxiety, fear, and worry than Black and Hispanic respondents in response to the same condition. On average, white respondents' anxiety is about seven percentage points less than the fear felt by Black and Hispanic respondents after reading the random mass shooting article ($p < 0.12$ and $p < 0.09$, respectively). The fear reported by Hispanic respondents is 12 percentage points more than that expressed by white respondents ($p < 0.01$). Among Black respondents, fear was ten percentage points greater than that expressed by white respondents ($p < 0.01$). A sizeable difference also emerges when considering worry – white respondents reported worry that is, on average, 14 percentage points less than Hispanic respondents ($p < 0.01$) and 13 percentage points less than Black respondents ($p < 0.01$).
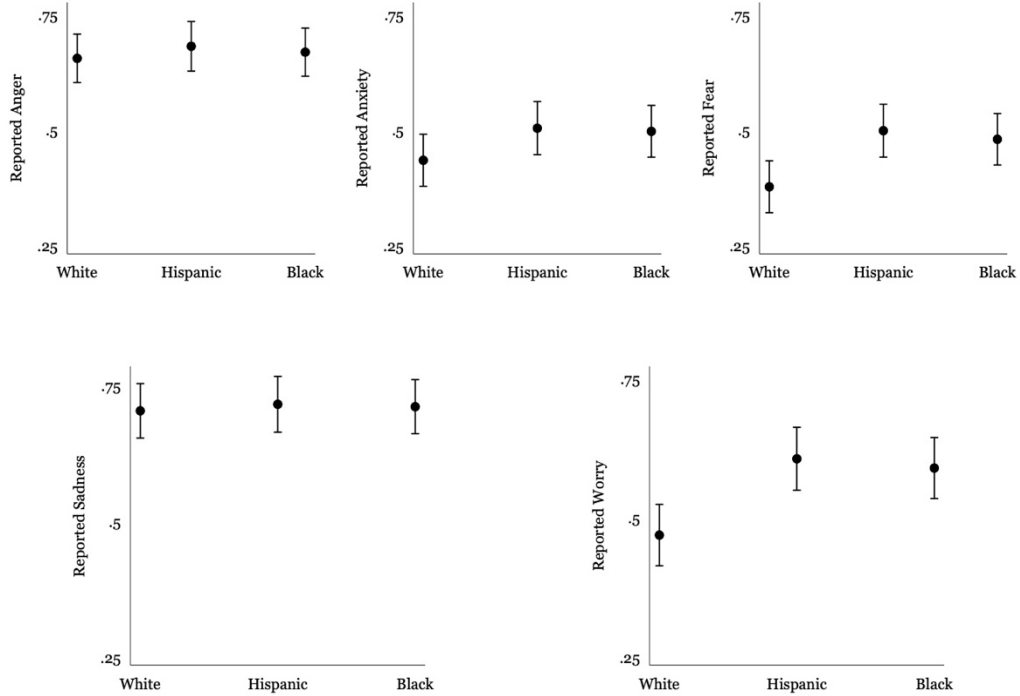
Figure 5: Reported Emotion in response to the Random Violence Condition.
Respondent ethno-racial identities are listed across the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals.

Black and Hispanic respondents are statistically indistinguishable in their reactions to random violence across the entire battery of emotions. Full models can be found in the Appendix.

Perceived Victimization in Response to Random Violence

Do we see similar patterns when looking to respondents' threat perception? Next, respondents were asked how likely it was that they, a friend, or a family member would be victimized by several forms of violence. On a five-point scale that ranged from "not at all likely" to "extremely likely," they noted this likelihood for a *mass shooting, hate crime, terror attack, robbery, act of domestic violence, and act of police brutality.* Several forms of violence are included to account for forms which are more (i.e., hate crime, terrorism, and police brutality) or less racialized (i.e., mass shooting).[42]

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[42] For example, Crabtree and Simonelli (n.d.) find that the term "hate crime" has a strong association with white perpetrators and victims of color, even though that term can be used to describe violence committed by people of color

Figure 3 shows Black and Hispanic respondents in the random violence condition have distinctly different perceptions regarding their own likelihoods of victimization in comparison to white respondents. Hispanic respondents report a likelihood of mass shooting victimization that is nine percentage points higher than white respondents ($p < 0.02$); Black respondents' likelihood of mass shooting victimization is 12 percentage points higher than white respondents ($p < 0.01$). A similar gap emerges between white and Black and Hispanic respondents when considering hate crime victimization. Black respondents' likelihood of victimization is 14 percentage points higher than white respondents in the random violence condition ($p < 0.01$). Hispanics reported a likelihood that is 11 percentage points higher ($p < 0.01$).

This pattern continues with other forms of violence. Both Black and Hispanic respondents on average express higher likelihoods of terror attack and robbery victimization, though these differences only reach statistical significance when comparing Black and white respondents in the random violence condition. For example, Black respondents express a likelihood of terror attack and robbery victimization that is seven percentage points higher than white respondents ($p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.06$, respectively). While Black and Hispanic respondents do express higher likelihoods of domestic violence victimization than white respondents do in the random violence condition, a difference of about six percentage points, this difference is not statistically discernible. This gap is most notable for respondents' likelihood of police brutality victimization, where Black respondents' likelihood of victimization sits 22 percentage points higher than white respondents ($p < 0.01$). Hispanic respondents' likelihood of victimization is also significantly higher than white respondents' – a difference of 12 percentage points ($p < 0.01$). Full details of these models are shown in the Appendix.

Combined with the findings from the 2018 and 2020 ANES in Chapter 3, these baseline findings – comparing responses to a news story about random violence by racial group – further demonstrate the difference in perceptions of violence that exist across racial groups. Without making any mention of race, respondents have clearly distinct emotional responses and perceptions of their own victimization in several instances. It is also notable that emotional responses to the random violence condition among Black and Hispanic responses, as well as their perceptions of threat, are

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against white victims. The work of Dolliver and Kearns (2019) and Huff and Kertzer (2017) emphasizes that a perpetrator associated with an Arab or Muslim identity increases the likelihood of violence being deemed terrorism. See Jefferson, Neuner, and Pasek (2020) for an elucidation of the ways in which Black and white Americans distinctly process information about police-involved shootings.

always higher than the estimates for white respondents. There is never an instance, in the random violence condition, where Black and Hispanic respondents express lower emotional responses or perceptions of threat. This supports the first hypothesis I put forth, but how do these responses differ, if at all, when adding a racial target? And, what happens when that target is of the same racial group as the respondent?
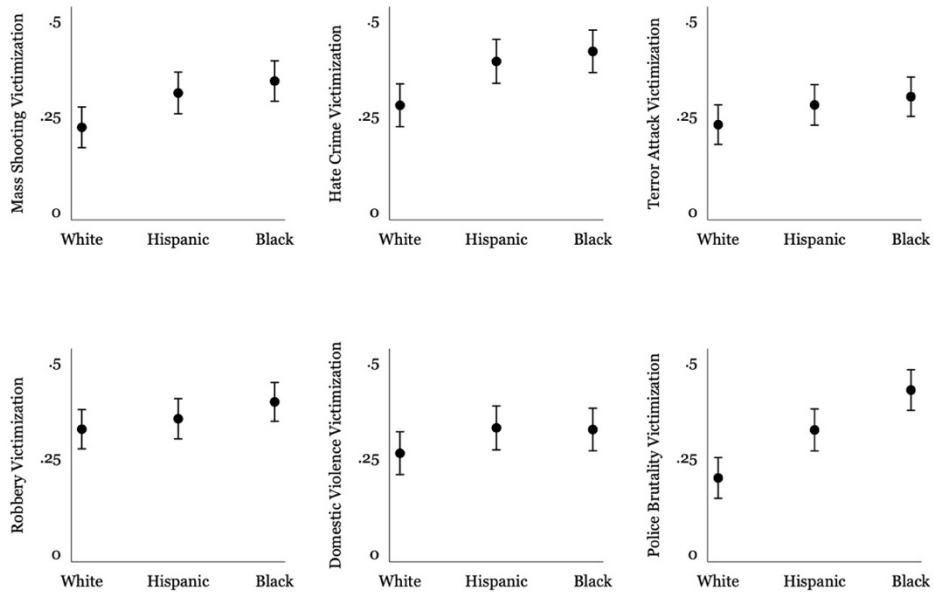
Figure 6: Reported Likelihoods of Victimization in response to the Random Violence Condition.
Respondent ethno-racial identities are listed across the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals.

Emotional Responses to Racially-Targeted Violence

At the outset, I expect that reading about an act of racially-targeted violence should evoke heightened emotional responses in respondents when compared to reading about an act of random violence (H1). I find evidence of this. Moreover, I also expect that these emotional responses should be especially heightened when a respondent is exposed to information about violence directed at people who share their own racial identity (H2A) or when Black or Hispanic respondents are exposed to violence targeted at other historically-marginalized groups (H2B) Recall that to gauge emotion, respondents were asked how much they felt each of the following emotions about the treatment

article: anxiety, worry, sadness, fear, and anger. I begin by looking to the reactions of white participants.

White Respondents

Among white respondents in the first experiment, there is again no statistically discernible impact of treatment condition on reported emotion. For instance, I do not find that reading about violence targeted against other white people has any impact on the amount of anger white respondents report feeling about the article's content. Moreover, while not statistically significant from the random violence condition, white subjects express their lowest average level of anger in the white-targeted violence condition ($p < 0.10$). That these two estimates –from the random and white-targeted violence conditions – are statistically indistinguishable suggests that white respondents do not perceive the white-targeted violence as an attack on their group. An alternative interpretation suggests that random violence is presumed to be targeted against white people, and so the two estimates remain similar. This finding is aligned with other work that has highlighted the normalization of white identity, and particularly its association with American identity (Devos and Banaji 2005). When it comes to reported anxiety, fear, sadness, and worry, there are no significant changes among white respondents across treatment conditions. Crucially, there is no evidence to suggest that a distinct effect exists among white participants when reading about violence directed against other white people (*H2A*). Are others similarly apathetic about racially-targeted violence? Next, I explore parallel comparisons among Black and Hispanic people.

Black and Hispanic Respondents

Just as in the first experiment, Black and Hispanic respondents in the second experiment were asked how much anxiety, anger, fear, sadness, and worry they felt after reading the treatment article. For each of these emotions, I expected that significant differences should emerge between respondents who saw violence directed against their own racial group when compared to the other treatments (H2A-B). I conduct separate analyses with respondents of either Black or Hispanic identity, using reactions to the random violence condition among each group as a baseline. Refuting my expectations, among Hispanic respondents, I find no significant differences in response to any of the treatment conditions. Exposure to either of the racially-targeted violence conditions does not result in heightened emotional responses in comparison to the random violence condition nor does exposure

to the Hispanic treatment condition (H2A-B). There are no statistically discernible changes in any reported emotion among the entire Hispanic sample in any treatment condition.[43]

Black respondents, however, show several clear responses to both racially-targeted violence conditions that are shown in Figure 4. Distinctly, reported anger is ten percentage points higher among Black respondents who read about violence targeted against Black people when compared to random violence ($p < 0.01$). Contrary to my expectations, I also find that reported worry is eleven percentage points higher ($p < 0.01$), sadness is 12 percentage points higher ($p < 0.01$), and anxiety is eight percentage points higher ($p < 0.06$) among Black respondents who read about violence targeting Hispanic people. Among Black respondents, these findings support the hypothesis that violence targeted against one's own racial group should provoke distinct reactions when compared to violence with other targets (H2A). They also support the expectation that racially-targeted violence against other racial groups may elicit sympathetic feelings (H2B). These findings also clearly suggest (at least) two difference processes at work, by which Black people react with anger toward the news of their own racial group's victimization and with expressions of sympathy (anxiety, sadness, and worry) toward news of another racial group's victimization.

These findings are perhaps puzzling at first – why would Black respondents express greater worry, sadness, and anxiety at news of violence against *another* racial group? This finding sits in contradiction to SIT, which would predict that emotional affect should be greatest when encountering news of the targeting of one's own racial group. But, it does align with the predictions of GET, whereby African-Americans, whose shared history of oppression and discrimination on the basis of race should lend greater empathy to members of other minority groups (Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos 2021). Group Empathy Theory also predicts that these sympathetic feelings should be strongest among Black people with higher degrees of in-group identification. I test this premise (H2C) later in this chapter.

The relationship between identity and violence is similarly complex for Hispanics. There is not necessarily a shared history when taking into account the plethora of nationalities encompassed by the label. Nor is ascription to the label of "Hispanic" uniform.[44] Thus, violence targeted against "Hispanic-Americans" may not necessarily be threatening to those who identify as "Mexican-American" and vice

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[43] Respondents were able to identify as Hispanic and other racial-ethnic identities (with the exception of Black), and these findings hold when considering only those participants who identified themselves as solely Hispanic (N = 266).
[44] I discuss this at length below.

versa. I speak to this point at greater length below in the cumulative discussion of the chapter. For now, these findings further unpack the complexities of identity and violence, presenting evidence of both SIT and GET at work. I have found support for Hypotheses 2A and 2B, whereby emotional responses to violence vary across racial group. Perhaps surprisingly, though, Hispanics respondents are more similar to white respondents in their emotional responses to racially-targeted violence. Facially, this implies that racially-targeted violence may not be the same crucible for political mobilization among those groups that it is for Black people. Their heightened anger suggests a potential political energy; their sympathy for others impacted suggests space for coalition building or empathetic public opinion.
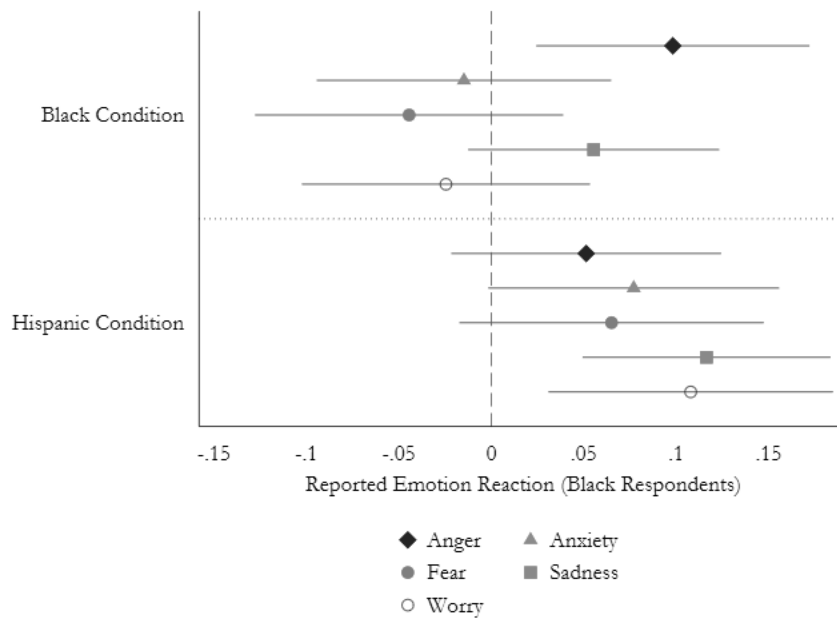
Figure 7: Reported Emotional Reactions to Violence among Black Respondents.
Coefficient plots show the effect of treatment condition on reported anger, anxiety, fear, sadness, and worry, compared to the random violence condition. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals.

Perceived Victimization

Does reading about racially-targeted violence change perceptions of one's own likelihood of personal victimization? I expect that reading about an act of violence targeted at members of the shared racial group will increase the likelihood that a respondent believes that they (or those close to them) will be the victims of a similar attack (H2A). I measured this threat of victimization for five acts of violence: mass shooting, hate crime, terror attack, robbery, act of domestic violence, and act of police brutality.

Among white respondents, no distinction is made between their likelihood of hate crime or terror attack victimization across the treatment conditions. However, their perceived likelihood of mass shooting victimization increases by almost 7 percentage points ($p < 0.06$) in the Black-targeted violence condition. While the former two of those findings highlights the racialized nature of some types of violence, the latter is not intuitive. White respondents also report an increase in their likelihood of police brutality victimization in the Black ($p < 0.08$) and white ($p < 0.07$) conditions by a similar seven percentage points. I find that white participants make no discernible differentiation in the likelihood of domestic violence or robbery victimization across conditions.

For Hispanic respondents, likelihood of domestic violence victimization decreases by eight percentage points in the Black-targeted violence condition ($p < 0.03$). There are no significant changes in likelihood among any of the other forms of violence, apart from police brutality. Here, Hispanic respondents' likelihood of police brutality victimization decreases by seven percentage points in the Black-targeted violence ($p < 0.07$). Perhaps, given the visibility of fatal interactions between police and Black Americans, the decreased likelihood of police brutality victimization is a reflection of the association between the two. It is a markedly different response, however, from that of white respondents, whose likelihood of victimization increased in the Black-targeted violence condition.

Notably, there are no significant changes in the likelihood of victimization – on any of the measures – among Black respondents. Even reading about Black-targeted violence did not alter perceived likelihood of victimizations. This might speak to a ceiling effect on the variable. That is, Black respondents in the random violence condition were already expressing higher levels of victimization likelihood than their white and Hispanic counterparts. For example, remember that their likelihood of police brutality was 42 percentage point, compared to 31 percentage points for Hispanic respondents and 19 percentage points for white respondents. It is clear that Black respondents already have high perceptions of threat, even when not presented with the treatment conditions.

What are the implications of these findings? Importantly, I do not find that there are changes in the likelihood of terror attack victimization, hate crime victimization, or mass shooting victimization for Black and Hispanic respondents in the treatment conditions, though I do find that these conditions do have an effect of white respondents' threat perceptions. As I discuss above, this must be placed in conversation with the baseline comparisons of the random violence condition. Black and Hispanic respondents had more elevated perceptions of threat in comparison to white respondents in that condition, even without being prompted by a racial cue. I propose two explanations for this. (1) Black and Hispanic respondents may hit a ceiling of threat perception in response to a fictional news article. (2) Or we could interpret this as responses to racially-targeted violence are not "strictly" rational, as would be evidence by changes in threat perception, but are more so emotional, as indicated by the findings above. Therefore, it is not necessary to feel personally threatened (or at least have a heightened degree of threat) to feel emotion – this has important implications for mobilization that I discuss below. I do not believe that this should be taken as evidence to discount that threat perceptions are a factor in generating risk. These findings do show, though, that emotional reactions to violence can be prompted by the addition of a racial target and that the reactions prompted differ across racial groups.
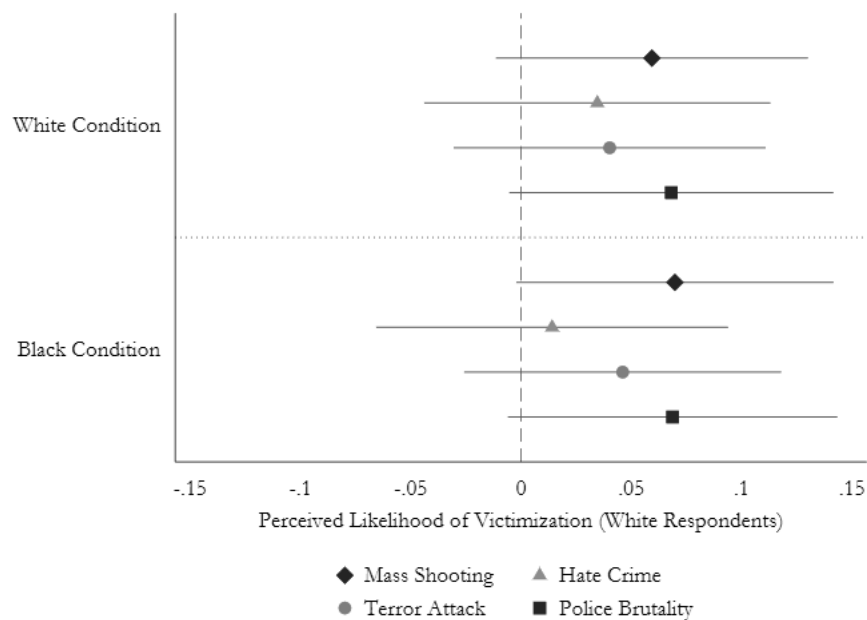
Figure 8: Reported Threat Perception among White Respondents.
Coefficient plots show the effect of treatment condition on reported likelihood of violence victimization compared to the random violence condition. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals.

Racial Importance and Violence

Just because an individual identifies with a group does not necessarily mean there is a strong attachment to that identity. Weaker attachment might mean the pull of collective memory and identity – how can this be accounted for? Racial importance suggests an emotional affect toward the racial group; those who are high in racial importance express that the racial group holds greater significance to them. If racially-targeted violence prompts individuals to respond to violence directed against their own group with distinct emotional reactions (as I find is the case among Black respondents), what if those reactions are a function of the closeness that the individual feels for the racial group? If this is true, then I expect that those respondents who are high in racial importance should have the strongest emotional responses or perceptions of threat in response to violence directed against members of their own group (H2C). In contrast, I would expect respondents who reported lower racial attachment to not be distinct in their responses to their shared racial group condition in comparison to the other conditions.

White Racial Identity

The existence, prevalence, and importance of white identity has been a subject of debate. To be "white" in the United States is to be phenotypically distinguished from Black, brown, and indigenous people who have historically been the target of many forms of subjugation. To be "white" is to be in a dominant group that has not had its own culture, mannerisms, or other characteristics probed, scorned, or erased. Such positionality has thus called into question the existence of a "white" identity – can a group which has not experienced the downward pressures of racial hierarchy, as those on the rungs below it have, formulate a cohesive sense of group identity?

While perhaps normalized or seemingly invisible, there is evidence that white identity exists and that it does bring to bear importance implications for politics and political behavior. Jardina (2019) argues that major events, like the election of Barack Obama, have posed a very visible threat to white people in the United States, making white identity "chronically salient." White people who report higher levels of identification with white identity also report greater support for "white-coded" policies like social security and greater support for federal spending directed toward white people (Jardina 2019, 2021). While also predicting dissent for policies that benefit racial out-groups, like affirmative action, white identity is foremost relevant to the in-group and policies that benefit it, rather than

hostility directed toward members of other racial groups. This work has important implications for the hypotheses I test here. It suggests that if reading about violence targeted against white people prompts white identity, strong white identifiers should react strongly, and distinctly, in this condition.

Remember that prior to treatment, respondents were asked about several traits that may influence their responses to the treatment conditions. One of these traits is racial importance. White racial identity and the importance of that identity likely shapes white respondents' orientation toward the world and toward race. Therefore, there is reason to believe that it may also shape responses to racially-targeted violence. As I examine white identity, I again focus on the dependent variables that represent the central concepts of this study: reported emotion responses and likelihood of violence victimization.

To measure the strength of racial identity, I use a single-item question as a measure of the importance of one's own racial identity. I will refer to this as a measure of racial importance. The racial importance measure serves to supplement the categorical measure of race that was asked of all respondents at the beginning of the survey experiment. The racial importance measure asks respondents "How important is being *white/Black/Hispanic* to your identity?"[45] In regard to emotion and threat perception, I expect that stronger racial attachment will be associated with stronger treatment effects in the shared-race, racially-targeted violence condition (H2C). I show the distribution of white racial attachment in the Appendix. I split the variable into a binary categorization that I distinguish between high-white identifiers (N = 231) – being white is "very important" "or "extremely important" to their identity – and low-white identifiers (N = 191) – being white is "somewhat important," "not too important," or "not at all important" to their identity.

Emotion and Racial Importance

First, I consider the relationship between white identity and reported emotional responses to the experimental conditions. In white respondents, anger is statistically indistinguishable between high and low white identifiers across all conditions. That is, there are no significant differences in how angry high-white identifiers felt about the random violence, white-targeted violence, and Black-targeted violence conditions. This is the same for low-white identifiers. However, I do find some significant distinctions when comparing between the two groups. High-white identity respondents,

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[45] See Jardina (2019) for discussion of this measure's conception and validity.

for instance, were 13 percentage points angrier in response to the white-targeted violence condition than low-white identity respondents in the same condition ($p < 0.10$). Further, low-white identifiers report significantly less anger in the white-targeted violence condition than those low-white identifiers in the Black-targeted violence condition. Here, low-white identifiers who read about white-targeted violence reported anger that was 16 percentage points less than low-white identifiers who read about Black-targeted violence ($p < 0.05$). So far, this indicates that the absence of strong white identity becomes more apparent in the white-targeted violence condition.

I find similar patterns when looking to anxiety and worry. First, there are no statistically significant differences between conditions when comparing among low-white identifiers and high-white identifiers in their expressions of these emotions. Yet, when I compare between high and low-white identifiers, I find that the some of the most substantial differences emerge within the white-targeted violence condition. Low-white identifiers report anxiety that is 18 percentage points lower than high-white identifiers in white-targeted violence condition ($p < 0.05$). Their worry is 23 percentage points lower than high-white identifiers in the same condition ($p < 0.05$).

Figure 9: Reported Emotional Reactions to Violence among White Respondents, Comparison of High and Low White Identifiers.
Experimental conditions are listed along the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals. Significant differences between high and low-white identifiers in the same condition are noted in red.

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Additionally, fear is consistently higher among high-white identifiers, compared to low-white identifiers, across all three conditions. Once again, there are no significant differences when comparing across condition within the high-white and low-white identity groups. Yet, high-white identifiers report fear that is 16 percentage points greater than low-identifiers in the random violence condition and 18 percentage points higher in the Black-targeted violence condition ($p < 0.05$). Notably, and aligned with my expectations, this gap is largest in the white-targeted violence condition – a difference of 22 percentage points ($p < 0.05$). Among the battery of emotion questions, sadness is the only item on which there are no significant differences across condition nor between high and low identifiers.

I expected that those who read about violence against their shared racial group and expressed high racial importance should report heightened emotional responses when compared to the other treatment conditions (H2C). While this finding does not directly parallel that expectation, it does imply that racial importance is a variable to consider further when studying the reactions of white Americans to violence, racially-targeted and otherwise. It seems to be that the absence of strong racial identity is particularly important here and I find that this pattern will reemerge when looking to perceived victimization.

Threat Perception and Racial Importance

Next, I look to the battery of perceived victimization items and their relationship to strength of white identity. Once more, there are patterns of white identity in Figure 7 that suggest a more complex relationship between racial importance, racial violence, and perhaps violence more generally. As with the emotion items, there are no significant differences across conditions within the high nor the low-white identity groups. Just as high-white identifiers were more fearful across all conditions than their low-white identity peers, high-white identifiers were also significantly more likely to report that they, a friend, or a family member would be victimized by a mass shooting. The difference between these groups was, again, largest in the white-targeted violence condition, with high-white identifiers reporting a likelihood of mass shooting victimization 20 percentage points higher than low-white identifiers ($p < 0.05$). A difference of 22 percentage points emerges between high-white identifiers and low-white identifiers in their likelihood of hate crime victimization in the white-targeted violence condition ($p < 0.05$). There is a gap of 19 percentage points between the two groups regarding terror attack victimization in this condition ($p < 0.05$). This difference is 20 percentage points and 16 percentage points in the random violence condition for hate crime victimization and terror attack victimization, respectively ($p < 0.05$ for both). There is no statistical difference between the two groups

in their likelihood of hate crime victimization in the Black-targeted violence condition, however this difference does reach the level of statistical significance for likelihood of terror attack victimization, a difference of 15 percentage points.

I continue to find that differences in the likelihood of victimization exist between high and low-white identifiers among the other items on the battery. Consistently, these gaps in victimization are most distinctive in the white victim condition where high-white identifiers express greater likelihoods of victimization than low-white identifiers. This difference in likelihood is 19 percentage points for robbery, 20 percentage points for domestic violence, and 25 percentage points for police brutality (all $p < 0.05$). There is potential for coalescing around this high-white identity, though note that even when looking only at high identifiers, there is no significant difference across condition. Yet, the intertwining of white identity and extremism might be concerning combination in the context of violence.

Figure 10: Reported Likelihood of Victimization among White Respondents, Comparison of High and Low White Identifiers.
Experimental conditions are listed along the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals. Significant differences between high and low-white identifiers in the same condition are noted in red.

Black and Hispanic Racial Identity

As in experiment one, I consider the moderating effects of racial importance among Black and Hispanic respondents. Again, because racial importance is skewed toward the higher end of its scale, I again create a binary variable dividing the measure into high and low racial identifiers. Those who are high in racial importance noted that being Black (N= 377) or Hispanic (N = 342) was either "very important" "or "extremely important" to their identity. Those who are low in racial importance answered that this was either "somewhat important," "not too important," or "not at all important" (Black N = 54; Hispanic N = 92). The full distribution of racial importance for both Black and Hispanic respondents is shown in the Appendix. For these analyses, I turn back to the emotion battery, asking respondents about their feelings of anger, anxiety, fear, sadness, and worry, and the victimization battery, asking about respondents' perceived likelihood of mass shooting, hate crime, terror attack, robbery, domestic violence, and police brutality victimization.

Emotion and Racial Importance

Again, recall that I expect the strength of racial importance to be most apparent in the shared race condition. High-Hispanic identifiers, though, report anger 17 percentage points greater than low-Hispanic identifiers in the random violence condition ($p < 0.05$). Low-Hispanic identifiers also report fear that is significantly lower than high-Hispanic identifiers in the random violence and Hispanic-targeted violence conditions. This is a difference of 21 percentage points in the random violence condition ($p < 0.05$) and, notably, a difference of 33 percentage points in the Hispanic-targeted violence condition ($p < 0.05$). Among Black respondents, there are no significant differences in anger nor in fear when comparing across condition between high and low-Black identifiers. For both racial groups, when comparing reported anger and fear among the high and low identifiers, there are no significant differences across condition.

Black respondents viewing violence targeted against Hispanic people expressed greater degrees of sympathy – anxiety, sadness, and worry – than they did in the random violence condition and even in the shared race, Black-targeted violence condition. This finding, while counter to the theoretical underpinnings of SIT, is aligned with GET, which predicts that African-American should have a high degree of empathy for the plight of members of other historically marginalized groups (Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos 2021). GET also contends that higher racial importance/attachment

should be associated with greater levels of empathy for members of out-groups, rather than less. The premise guides the next set of findings. There are no statistical differences, at a 95% confidence level, in reported anxiety between Black respondents when comparing across conditions and between high and low-Black identifiers. However, Figure 10 shows that Black respondents in the Hispanic-targeted violence condition – both high and low identifiers – report the highest levels of anxiety compared to the other conditions, including the Black-targeted violence condition. It is in this condition that the difference between high and low identifiers Black identifiers is at its lowest (only one percentage point). Yet, among Hispanic respondents the Hispanic-targeted violence condition is where the largest and the only statistically significant anxiety gap between high and low-Hispanic identifiers emerges. Low-Hispanic identifiers report anxiety that is 25 percentage points less than high-Hispanic identifiers in this condition ($p < 0.05$). There are no statistically significant differences between high and low identifiers in the other two conditions, nor are there significant difference across condition when comparing within the high and low Hispanic identity groups. These predicted probabilities are shown in Figure 11.
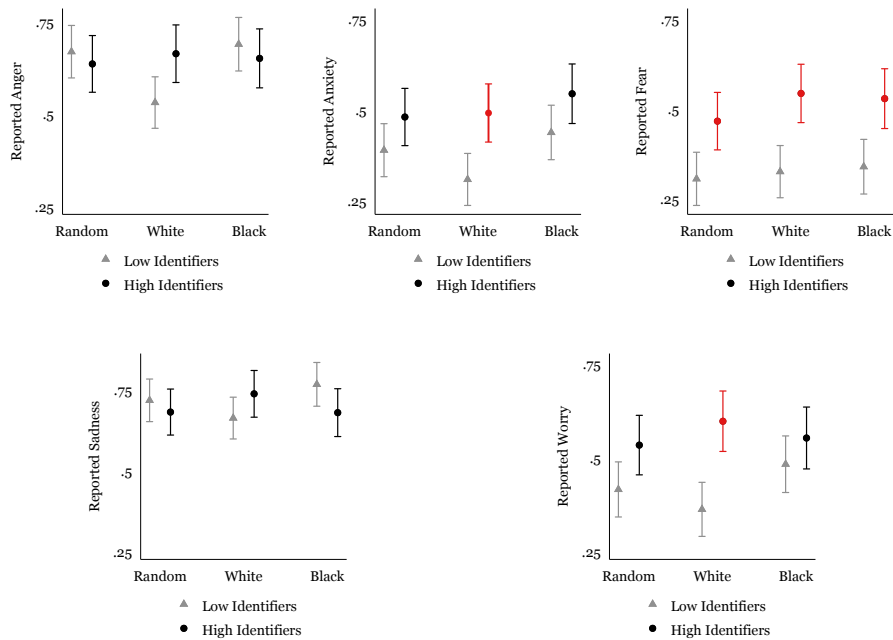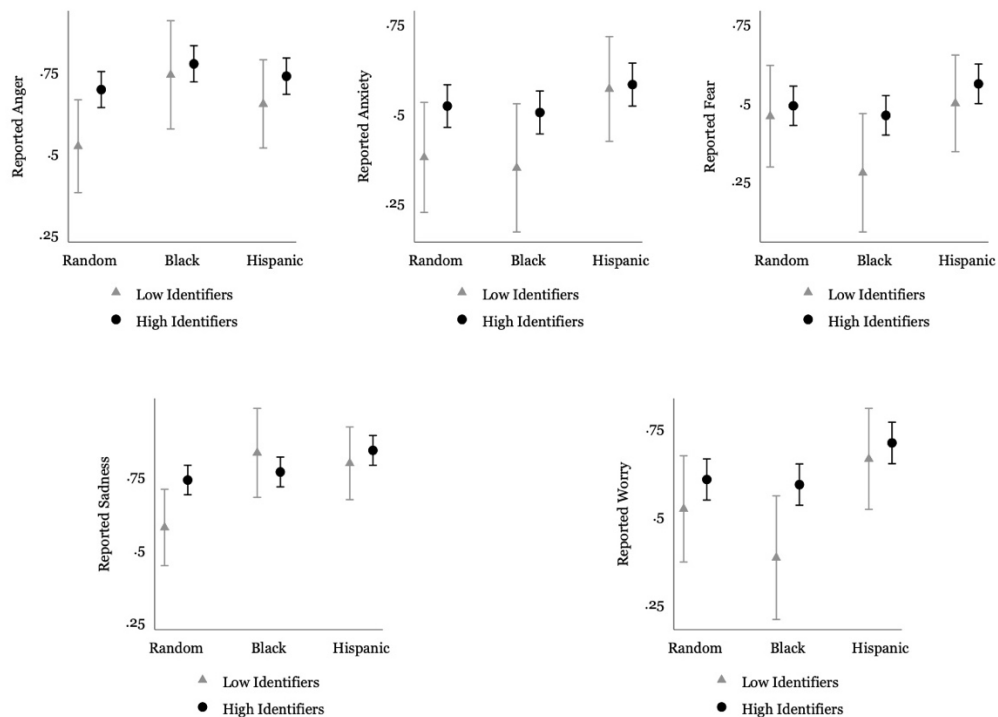

Figure 11: Reported Emotional Reactions to Violence among Black Respondents, Comparison of High and Low Black Identifiers.
Experimental conditions are listed along the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals.
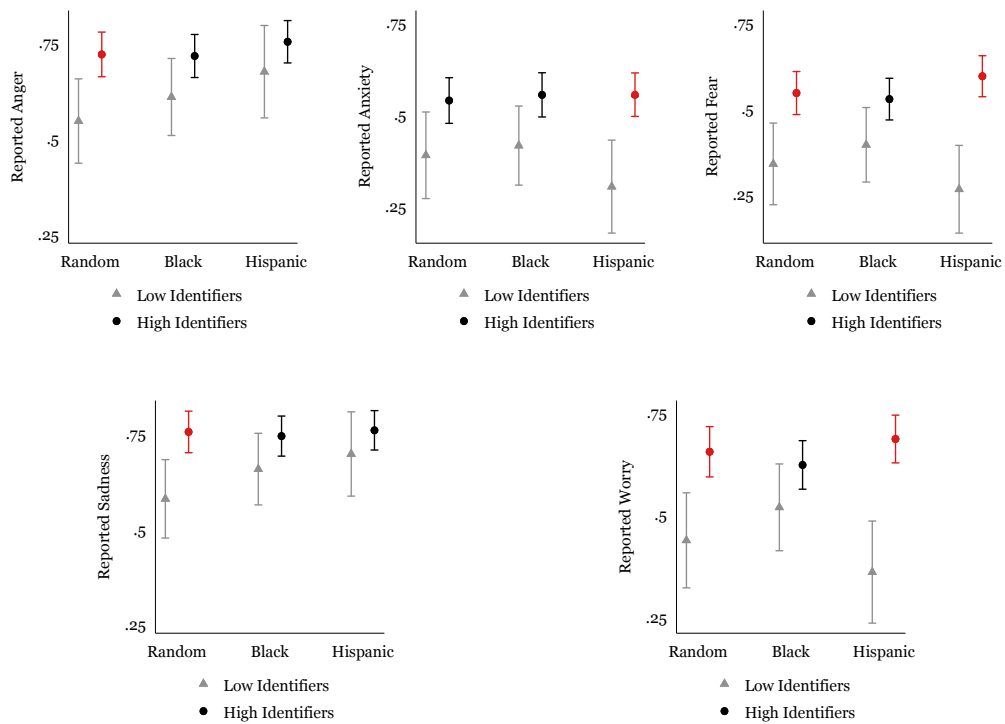
Figure 12: Reported Emotional Reactions to Violence among Hispanic Respondents, Comparison of High and Low Hispanic Identifiers.
Experimental conditions are listed along the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals. Significant differences between high and low Hispanic identifiers in the same condition are noted in red.

What about the other sympathetic emotions? Again, for Hispanic respondents, a statistically and substantively significant gap emerges when comparing the worry and fear of high and low-Hispanic identifiers in the Hispanic-targeted violence condition. Low-Hispanic identifiers are 32 percentage points less worried ($p < 0.05$) than high-Hispanic identifiers in this condition. There is also a statistically significant difference between high and low-Hispanic identifiers in their reported sadness and worry in the random violence condition – representing a gap of 18 and 22 percentage points, respectively ($p < 0.05$). It is in the Hispanic condition as well that high-Black identifiers report their greatest levels of fear, worry, and sadness, supporting Hypothesis 2C. There are no significant differences between the two groups in reported sadness in the Black and Hispanic targeted violence conditions.

Threat Perception and Racial Importance

      If racial importance reveals distinct patterns among Black and Hispanic respondents, does it have similar relationships with perceptions of threat? I find no significant differences in the likelihood of mass shooting, hate crime, terror attack, and police brutality victimization between high and low-Hispanic identifiers in the Black-targeted and Hispanic-targeted violence conditions. For all these items, though there is a significant difference in the random violence condition. There, high-Hispanic identifiers report a mass shooting victimization likelihood that is 19 percentage points higher than low-Hispanic identifiers ($p < 0.05$). This is a difference of 21 percentage points for likelihood of hate crime victimization ($p < 0.05$), 17 percentage points for likelihood of terror attack victimization ($p < 0.05$), and 19 percentage points for likelihood of police brutality victimization ($p < 0.05$). Among Black respondents, however, there are no significant differences in likelihood of victimization, regardless of the form of violence.
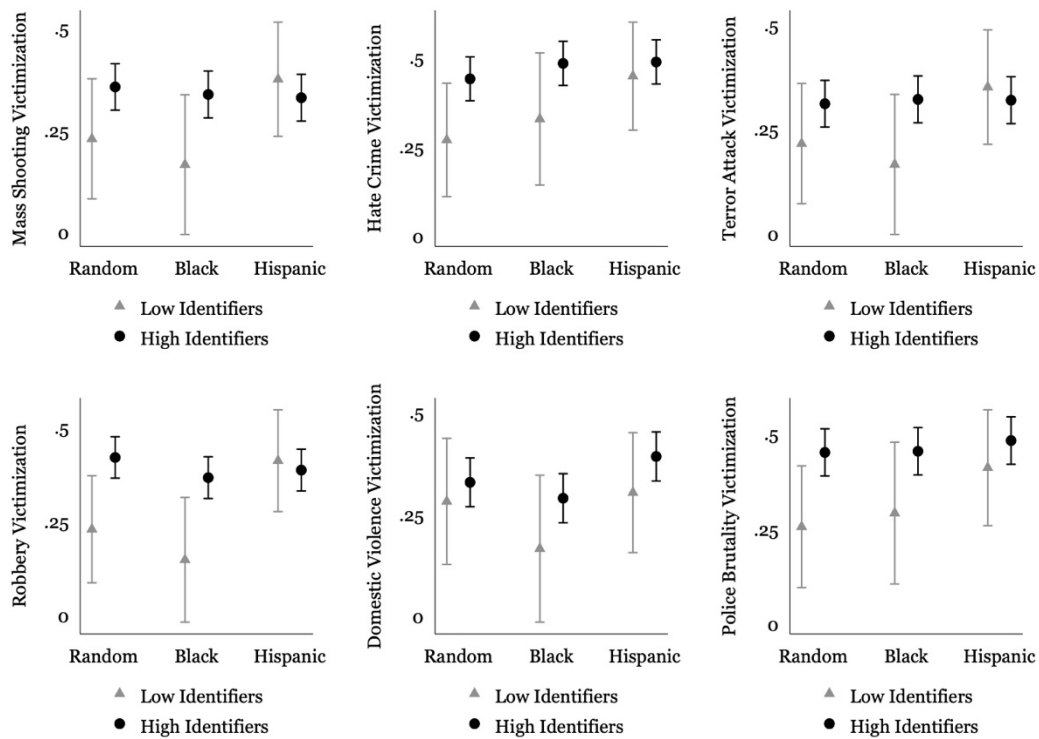
Figure 13: Reported Likelihood of Victimization among Black Respondents, Comparison of High and Low Black Identifiers.
Experimental conditions are listed along the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals.
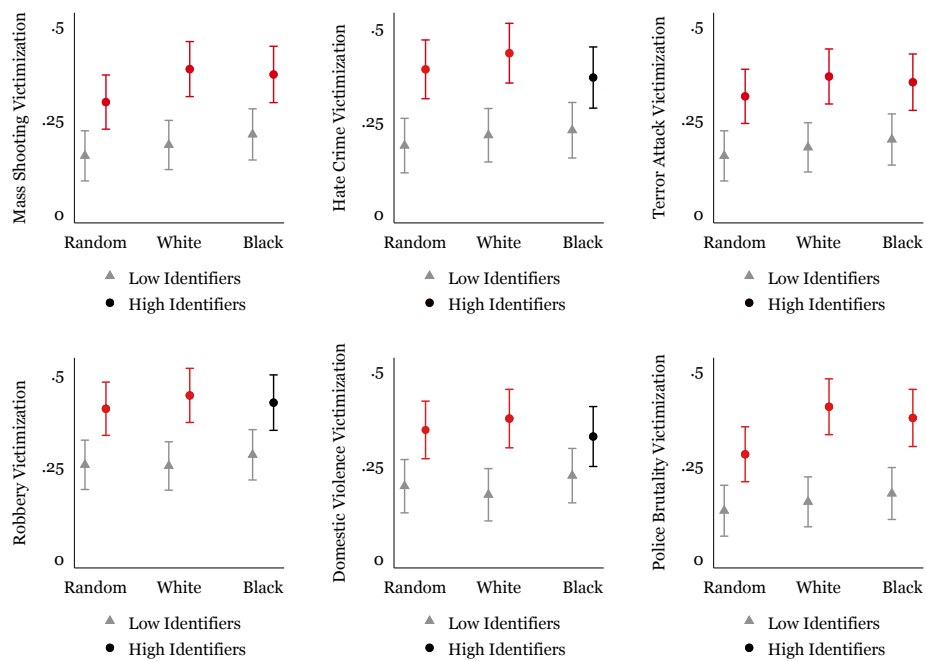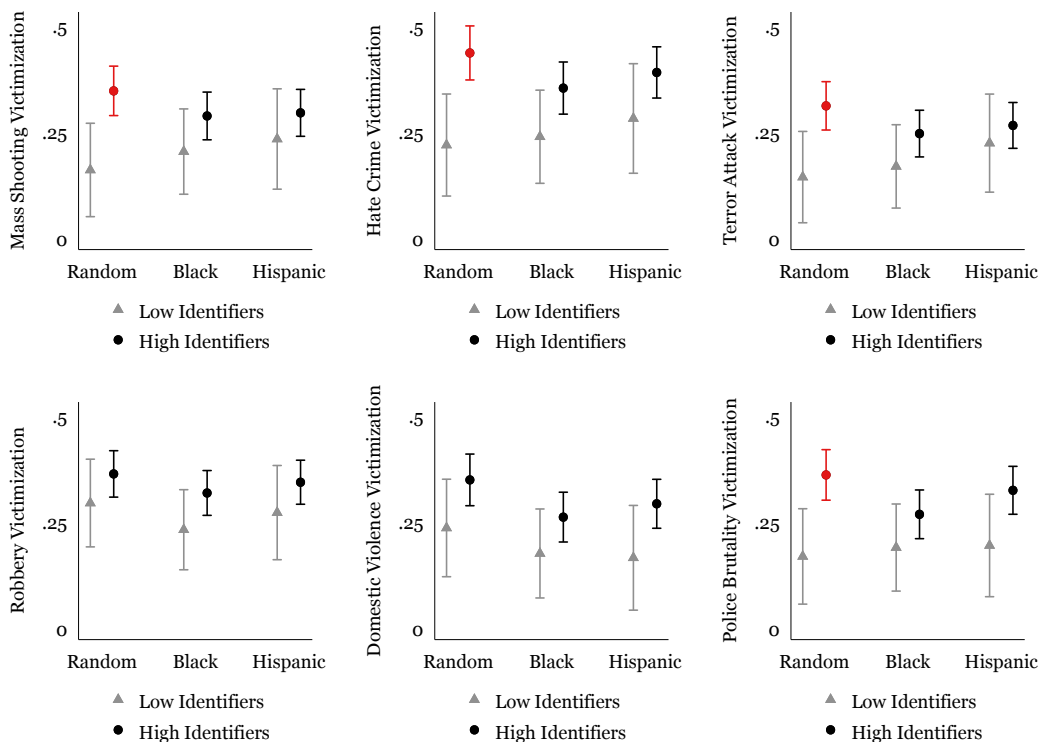
Figure 14: Reported Likelihood of Victimization among Hispanic Respondents, Comparison of High and Low Hispanic Identifiers.
Experimental conditions are listed along the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals. Significant differences between high and low Hispanic identifiers in the same condition are noted in red.

Discussion

The findings of these initial experiments are striking. Evidence from the first experiment provides mixed support for the hypotheses that tie together this chapter. These do not undermine the overarching theoretical framework, but they provide space for additional nuance – the experiences of people of color in the United States have been and continue to be distinctly different. The findings from these experiments create space to flesh out those distinctions further.

Recall that I set forth several broad premises to test: First, that members of historically-marginalized groups have distinctly different responses to random violence than white respondents. (H1). Second, I expected that there should be a distinctly selective effect of racially-targeted violence – that is, when violence is described as targeting respondents' self-identified racial group, responses should be most pronounced. Thus, in the shared racial identity conditions, I expected to see the greatest emotional responses and greatest perceptions of threat (H2A). The third premise suggests that Hispanic respondents might also be sympathetic to the plight of other marginalized groups under

attack (H2B). The fourth premise presumes that the importance of the self-identified racial identity should also be a moderating factor; those with stronger attachment to their racial identity should exhibit the strongest emotional affect and have the highest perceptions of threat (H2C).

First, these experiments reiterate earlier evidence that nationally-representative studies regarding violence have potentially overlooked important variation in the acts of violence themselves – namely racial dimensions. Importantly for the present work, such studies have also ignored important variation that exists between and within racial groups. Just as disaggregation by racial group reveals very distinct perceptions of violence among 2018 ANES respondents, the findings in these experiments show that baselines are distinct when looking at random violence, as are how members of racial groups respond to violence directed against their own racial group. In the 2018 and 2020 ANES, I highlighted that the degree of justification for political violence is distinct when comparing white and non-white Americans. This further fleshes out that the distinctions I find among white, Black, and Hispanic respondents are evidence of diverse perspectives on violence.

While the hypotheses I set forth apply to each of the three racial groups, there is notable variation in support for these hypotheses across the white, Black, and Hispanic sample. The "racially-selective" effect that I expected to be present among white respondents – a distinct effect of conditions in which the respondent shared racial identity with the targeted group – does not emerge. Instead, I find that white respondents show their strongest responses to Black-targeted violence rather than the white-targeted violence. In most instances, the responses that white participants gave in the white-targeted violence condition were statistically and substantively indistinguishable from the random violence condition. These findings suggest that white people do not (indiscriminately, at least) have distinct reactions to violence against other white people. Indeed, like with the measures of threat perception, white participants in this study reacted most strongly to news of a mass shooting targeting Black people. Yet, when taking into account white identity, there are clear effects on threat – this may have concerning implications. These findings complement a growing literature on the topic of police brutality – where white Americans have shown heightened responses to violence against Black people (Walker, Collingwood, and Bunyasi 2020). While the lack of emotional reaction in the Black-targeted violence condition suggests that such responses are not of a sympathetic nature (e.g., expressing sympathy for the Black victims), it is not clear if they are of a defensive or apprehensive nature (e.g., sensing an increased likelihood of their own victimization as retaliation for an attack on Black people). It does become clear through these experiments, however, that white-targeted violence does prompt some reaction, though a moderate one, from high-white identifiers.

I find baseline higher responses to the random violence condition when comparing white and Black and Hispanic respondents, thus supporting the first of the premises above (*H1*). Unlike white respondents, Black respondents *did* react differently to violence directed at their own self-identified racial group when compared to violence directed against members of another racial group. This supports Hypothesis 2A. Black respondents, for example, reported their highest levels of anger when reading about violence directed at their own group. This complements work which has shown that Black people are more likely than whites to express anger in regards to police violence (McGowen and Wylie 2020). It also calls to mind work which emphasized the political power of Black anger, but also the difficulty with which it can be expressed by Black people, and particularly Black women, in political spaces (e.g. Lorde 2012).[46] Among Black people, anger contributes to acts of political participation which are race-related, but not those which are seemingly not related to the racial group (Banks, White, and McKenzie 2019). Such work, therefore, contributes to the expectation that racially-targeted violence should be an influential factor on political behavior and, further, that its impact may be counterintuitive. If racially-targeted violence inspires anger, rather than fear, among Black people, than it may prompt individuals to political action rather than deter them. This point is crucial: Efforts to stymie political and social engagement among Black people through violence may spur Black political participation.

Moreover, this experiment reveals not only the pull of in-group identity in generating anger, it also shows the potential for in-group identity to facilitate a sympathetic outlook toward members of other racial groups, as predicted by GET (Sirin, Valentino, and Villalobos 2021). Black respondents expressed significantly greater anxiety, sadness, and worry in the Hispanic-targeted violence condition. In support of Hypothesis 2B, this indicates that there is something distinctive about racially-targeted violence that sets it apart, and, given the lack of sympathy expressed among the Hispanic sample, something distinctive about the Black experience in relation to violence as well. It also underscores an important conversation about inter-racial solidarity, an important component of which is the ability to oneself in the shoes of another. I speak more to this point below.

A conversation around solidarity emerges because Hispanic respondents do exhibit similar sympathetic emptions in response to the Black-targeted violence condition. Nor do they exhibit

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[46] Additional analyses looking to the interaction of experimental condition and gender are found in the Appendix. In summary, I do not find many significant differences in emotional response or threat perception when comparing male and female respondents within condition.

distinct emotional reactions in response to the Hispanic-targeted violence condition. When taking racial importance into account, we can see that those Hispanic respondents with a lower degree of racial importance express significantly lower levels of anxiety and fear in their shared race condition, refuting Hypothesis 2A and 2B. In some cases, these differences emerge in the random violence condition but never in the Black-targeted violence condition. Similar to the emotions battery, Hispanic respondents did exhibit increases in threat perception in the shared race condition. They did, however, report lower levels of domestic violence and police brutality victimization in the Black-targeted violence condition. I do not find that degree of racial importance is a significant factor in Hispanic threat perception in response to the Black or Hispanic-targeted violence conditions, but it does impact their likelihood of mass shooting, hate crime, terror attack, and police brutality victimization in the random violence condition.

The findings among Hispanic respondents could also be accounted for with an explanation that is more simple than racial hierarchy: the label "Hispanic" is too broad to be significantly meaningful as a treatment. In the design of these experiments, I chose to use the label "Hispanic" because it represents the self-identification of the majority of members of that group in the United States (L. Fraga et al. 2010; Mora, Perez, and Vargas 2022). Unlike "Latino," the "Hispanic" label is also gender neutral. This is also the label most often used in news media. "Latinx," though, provides a more gender-inclusive understanding of the community. There are also age and generational effects on identification with all three of these labels (Mora, Perez, and Vargas 2022)[47] and being American-born is also associated with ascription to pan-ethnic labels (Chong 2019).

Additionally, the use of "Hispanic" in the experiment opens up the question of whether or not the use of a different pan-ethnic label, like "Latino" or "Latinx," or a specific nationality, e.g., Mexican or Mexican-American, would lead to different outcomes. There is evidence that pan-ethnic labels can shift public opinion. For instance, the use of "Latinx" to describe those who fall within the group increases support for pro-LGBTQ policies (Vicuña and Pérez 2021). These inclusive labels have also been shown to be effective appeals to civic engagement (Chong 2019). Further, while research has often asked about labels in a mutually-exclusive fashion (e.g. Fraga et al. 2010), this does not

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[47] The importance of Hispanic identity is negatively correlated with age in this sample (α = - 0.22, as compared to a α = 0.06 correlation between age and Black racial importance). I do not find any significant interaction between age and the Hispanic condition regarding either the emotion or threat perception items. Age does not appear to condition responses to the Hispanic-targeted violence condition among Hispanics.

necessarily reflect reality. People can and do identify with multiple labels and use them in different contexts (Mora, Perez, and Vargas 2022).

While throughout this manuscript I make argument for further disaggregation to understand the implications of violence across racial groups, ultimately, the label of "Hispanic" is still an aggregation. The label lacks specificity and does not offer the degree of detail that it might appear to provide. As Cristina Beltran writes "characterizing a subject as either 'Hispanic' or 'Latino' is an exercise in opacity – the terms are so comprehensive that their explanatory power is limited" (Beltran 2010, 6). Herein may lie the most straightforward explanation for lack of emotional response among respondents who identified as Hispanic. Therefore, these findings should not necessarily be taken as an unequivocal indication of a lack of Hispanic response to violence targeted against people within that ethno-racial group. They should, though, highlight the importance of labels in this regard. If "Hispanic" is the label used in the news media across the country to characterize the people attacked in a mass shooting in El Paso, Texas (which I describe in the next chapter), then the use of that word, while seemingly harmless, could certainly have significant implications for who may see themselves as impacted. Particularly so, if the attack could have been better described as targeting Mexican-Americans, and the emotional affect or threat perception of Mexican-Americans was activated by that description. The labels I use in these experiments reflect reality and so, even if the Hispanic label has different implications from other labels, what I have found reflects how the public is reading about racially-targeted violence and responding to it.

Finally, I believe the findings of this chapter are just the beginning of a substantial conversation about Black and Hispanic solidarity in the aftermath of violence, where others have noted the complex relationship between the two groups as well as their overlap (e.g., Carter 2019). Juliet Hooker's work on racialized solidarity reminds us that some of the oldest foci of political theorists have been questions of "political association" (Hooker 2009). While Hooker is a theorist, and so not necessarily concerned with the measurement or empirics of empathy or sympathy, her conceptualization of solidarity is important here. "Solidarity, in contrast [to sympathy]," she writes, "involves emotion, but it is an emotion that translates into a normative orientation that impels us to collective action on the behalf of others with whom we have established certain kinds of relations" (Hooker 2009, 31). Her understanding of solidarity is built on the ability of individuals to put themselves in the positions of others and to care about the things that they feel and experience.

However, as this chapter has worked to understand the micro-foundations of political mobilization in the aftermath of violence, it does not actually measure behavior. This

conceptualization of sympathy indicates that the foundation may be laid for Black-Hispanic solidarity in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence, among Black Americans, at least. The sympathy that is needed to foster this solidarity appears to be absent in Hispanics in this study. But, as Hooker notes, the sympathy is not the only component that compels us to collective action on the behalf of others. There is a great deal more here to explore about the parameters of inter-racial solidarity in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence, particularly under circumstances of heightened risk.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided experimental evidence that baseline perceptions of violence are not uniform across racial groups, nor are perceptions of violence with an explicitly racial target the same as perceptions of violence that have no clearly specified target. Further, the survey experiments described here give nuanced insights into how acts of racial violence targeted against one's own racial group activate some distinct emotional responses among Black Americans, while they are seemingly less powerful triggers for white and Hispanic Americans. Black people reacted with distinct anger to violence against other Black people, as well as with heightened sympathetic emotions to violence against Hispanics. Additionally, I find that this in-group selectivity is not the case for white and Hispanic respondents, who were not more emotional in response to the shared race condition, nor did they express sympathy at the victimization of other racial groups. White respondents also had greater perceptions of their own threat of victimization in response to violence against Black people than to reading about violence against the shared racial group. Unlike white respondents, news of violence against Black people actually decreased Hispanic respondents' likelihood of violence victimization in some cases. The role of racial importance also varies when comparing Black, Hispanic and white respondents, with racial importance not being a significant factor in the emotion or threat perception of Black respondents. For white and Hispanic respondents, however, lower levels of ethno-racial identity are indicative of lower-levels of threat perception, particularly in the random violence condition. Altogether, this suggests that the orientations which Black, white, and Hispanic Americans have toward racially-targeted violence – and political violence more generally – are distinct, nuanced, and places for further study. Moreover, it also highlights the distinctiveness of Black Americans in this regard and a particularly heightened threat perception baseline.

While this chapter narrows down to an individual level of analysis, the topic is intertwined, without doubt, with the histories and instances of violence against people of color that I discuss throughout this project. The research design I use in this chapter is inseparable from the larger narrative of violence and resistance among the repressed. The findings and discussion I present here

are evidence of continuing legacies of racially-targeted violence in the United States; they are indicative of compounded collective trauma intertwined with racial identity. In the chapters that follow, I make particular effort to contextualize the findings in this chapter within this larger historical discussion, using them to illuminate, extend, and supplement the observational and archival research that will follow.

More broadly, the findings in these experiments reflect a reverberating legacy of racial violence in the United States. The historical record quite clearly lays out for us the long-standing violence, which has taken many forms, directed against non-white Americans who have violated economic, political, and social boundaries. Particularly, boundaries that threaten the superior group positioning of white Americans. Perhaps, then, the distinct responses given by Black respondents are not wholly surprising when considering such a collective history and trauma induced by violence. This study, however, is one of the first to provide evidence of this variation. Comparatively, the lack of response among Hispanic respondents is surprising, because this ethnic group has also been targeted, constrained, and shaped by violence historically and in the present-day. The label of "Hispanic," though, is an over-arching, pan-ethnic term that fails to account for the nuance of ethnicity and nationality contained within this group (e.g. Beltran 2010). Though my measure of ethno-racial importance is an attempt to account for ascription to this label, the relatively neutral responses to the Hispanic-targeted violence condition among Hispanic participants may be due to the generality of the label. It is my intention to undertake a more nuanced study of this within-group variation in the future, specifically looking to nationality.

Stark differences in experience with violence, racially-targeted and otherwise, are descriptively clear in cross-racial comparisons – particularly when comparing Black and white experiences. These disparate histories are inextricably linked with the use of violence to repress minority racial groups perceived as threatening to white group position, white power structures, and white supremacy. And so, while this work is intended to explore responses to different targets of violence and test potential moderators that explain those responses, this individual examination is not the end point. Racial identity, racial attachment, anger, nor perceptions of threat are isolated mechanisms. They are pieces of larger, enduring processes. Differences in anger about "random" violence and racially-targeted violence cannot be fully understood without recognizing the historical and on-going use of violence to punish and repress African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and other historically-marginalized groups. Similarly, the role of racial attachment in the wake of racially-targeted violence must be

discussed in tandem with the role that violence has played in delineating and reinforcing racial group boundaries, even defining and constructing these groups themselves.

I rely on the emotions and political psychology literature to postulate about the relationship between violence and subsequent political participation, while acknowledging the limitations of public displays of emotions in some communities. Emotions cannot always be displayed or acted upon, particularly among Black people and people of color (Brundage 1997; Kelley 1993; Lorde 2012; Phoenix 2019; Scott 1990). While the empirics of this dissertation focus almost entirely on politics and forms of political behavior that are visible and considered traditional interactions with the "first face" of the state (Soss and Weaver 2017), I acknowledge that those political actions which are readily measurable are not always an accurate representation of the infra-politics bubbling beneath the surface. I address the implications of this and ways to engage with this further in Chapter 7. Yet, there are ways to begin measuring the underpinnings of visible political activity and one such foundation is emotional affect.

I continue my focus on emotion – and anger in particular – in the next chapter. There, I engage a different experimental design to take multiple attributes of violence into consideration. By manipulating more attributes that I do in the design presented in this chapter, I seek to understand the degree to which target race continues to impact reactions to violence.

Chapter 5

Deconstructing Racially-Targeted Violence

In the previous chapter, I have established that there are distinct responses to racially-targeted violence depending on who the target of the violence is as well as who the perceiving the act of violence. I find, as the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework expects, that these relationships and the role of racial identity are distinct when comparing white, Black, and Hispanic Americans. This chapter builds on the last with a more intricate survey design that replicates those findings, while showing that they are robust to several other factors. The theoretical contribution of this chapter emphasizes the impact of race – from several directions – on how individuals respond to violence. While there are several hypotheses that I have proposed to test with this study, I focus attention on the importance of racial identity in determining responses to violence.[48] This work also underscores the ways in which these responses and relationships are distinct when comparing Black and white Americans. As I have described previously, in low-information environments, racial cues become a means to interpret violence. Even with additional information about an act of violence, Black respondents still draw on racial cues – namely, the race of the targeted group – to make decisions about violence, whereas racial identity does not serve the same purpose for white Americans.

There are three primary contributions of this chapter. First, I isolate the impact of a racialized target and replicate the findings of the previous chapter – whereby Black survey respondents had the greatest anger in response to violence targeted against their shared racial group and white respondents showed little reaction to violence targeted against other white people. This also means exploring a wider range of identities than those included the experiments in Chapter 4. Second, this chapter looks beyond the racial identity of the target. The scenarios used in Chapter 4 did not disclose the perpetrator's racial identity. Leaving this detail undefined potentially obscures the impact of naming a perpetrator of a particular race. Accordingly, I manipulate the perpetrator's identity, seeking to

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[48] My expectations for this experiment were pre-registered through aspredicted.org (#68061).

understand whether these identities also work as racial cues, if they have similar strength to racially-targeted cues, and how the two interact with one another, if at all.

In addition, the experiments in Chapter 4 held all characteristics of the violent scenario constant – e.g., its location and tactic – with the exception of the description of the targeted group. These incidents are comprised of multiple attributes, and there is far more to know regarding how those attributes influence reactions to violence. In this chapter's experiment, I manipulate multiple aspects of the act of violence at once, with the intention of better understanding how these characteristics influence responses as well as gauging their interactions with race. Together, these contributions have significant implications for the study of political violence in the United States – namely, the disaggregation of the sample and deconstructing attributes of violence to better understand the sum of an incident's parts.

To make these contributions, I use a conjoint experimental design, wherein I manipulate seven different attributes in a description of an act of violence at once. These attributes include target identity, perpetrator identity, motivation, location, tactic, number of casualties, and the label given to the violence. A sample of 959 respondents, approximately half Black and half white, read multiple pairs of these descriptions and rated which made them angrier and which warranted a greater punishment. Reinforcing my findings in Chapter 4, Black respondents in this experiment are angrier when they read about violence targeting Black people, even when taking into account the manipulation and strength of the other attributes. White respondents, similar to those in Chapter 4, do not express the same degree of anger when presented with descriptions of violence targeting other white people.

In the next section, I walk through the expectations for the chapter derived from the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework while also engaging with literatures from political communications and terrorism studies which have laid a foundation for deconstructing the various dimensions of violence in order to grasp more fully the sum of their parts. Then, I describe the conjoint exercise and the findings of the experiment. I conclude the chapter by placing these findings in discussion with Chapter 4 and discuss what lessons this work might offer about conjoint experiments in the context of violence.

Theoretical Expectations – Reorienting from Perpetrator to Target

Who perpetrates violence is particularly influential on how those acts are interpreted. Take for example literature on terrorism. The identities of those who perpetrate violence have been the focus on understanding who is deemed a "terrorist" and how their identities influence what is called "terrorism." A focus on perpetrators, though, overlooks those who are targeted, their role in shaping perceptions, as well as their inherent agency. This dissertation is, in part, a call to reorient studies of political violence in the United States to have greater focus on those who have experienced violence. This chapter provides the opportunity to expand the literature in this regard, expanding our understanding of how the identities of those targeted by violence interact with several other attributes.

Into this literature on terrorism and political violence, I also draw on an extensive literature in American Politics that has examined the role of racial cues and heuristics in politics. I discuss this literature at length in Chapter 3. Just as racial cues are used to understand citizen perceptions of candidates, it is my intention to connect with this idea methodologically. In the American Politics literature (and elsewhere), conjoint experiments have predominantly been used to understand how individuals make selections between candidates and other vote choices in elections (Kirkland and Coppock 2018; Ono and Burden 2019; Schwarz and Coppock 2022; Singh 2022). They have also been used to measure attitudes about immigration and immigrants in the United States and comparative contexts (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2015; Magni 2022; Ward 2019; Zhirkov 2022). Conjoint experiments have been used in other instances to gauge information about violence. Through these experiments, it becomes clear that attributes of violence have consequences for what is deemed terrorism (Huff and Kertzer 2017), the use of force (Dill and Schubiger 2021), responses to electoral violence (Gutiérrez-Romero and LeBas 2020) and retribution in response to violence (Kao and Revkin 2021). In this study, I use this approach to judge the anger and punitiveness that violence evokes from participants.

Target Race

As I describe below, literature in political science and criminology has explored the ways in which the identities of violence perpetrators influence how violence is perceived, what it is called, how it is reported, and even how it is prosecuted. Less is known, though, about how who is targeted might impact these same outcomes. In this regard, this study makes a substantial contribution to scholarship on political violence and terrorism, in addition to race and ethnicity politics. Chapter 4 establishes that

racial identity serves as a cue when measuring reactions to an act of violence. As I argue in Chapter 3, the pull of racial identity when one's racial group is under attack should have implications for the degree to which they view the violence as severe. This theoretical pathway draws on Social Identity Theory, but others have found as well that personal proximity to the target, in addition to physical proximity, has implications for threat perceptions (Avdan and Webb 2018). For Black Americans, the compounded collective memory of racially-targeted violence should have an intensifying effect and provoke responses that are stronger – angrier and more punitive – when they are shown violence targeted against other Black people. Therefore, I expect that targets that are Black people evoke greater anger and greater punitiveness among Black respondents, when accounting for all other attributes (Hypothesis 1). White targets, however, should not evoke greater anger or punitiveness from white respondents (Hypothesis 2).

> **Hypothesis 1 –** Incidents that describe violence targeting Black people evoke greater anger and greater punitiveness among Black respondents.

> **Hypothesis 2 –** Incidents that describe violence targeting white people do not evoke greater anger or punitiveness from white respondents.

Perpetrator Race

A substantial body of literature has sought to understand how it is that acts of violence come to be classified or given certain labels like "terrorism" or "hate crime," as well as the implications of this language. One of the attributes which impacts these labels is perpetrator identity. It is clear that who perpetrates violence has an impact on media coverage, how it is viewed by the public and by those who have the power to condemn and prosecute it. Similarly, different identity characteristics of perpetrators, for example, influences how violence is reported in the media. When perpetrators are Muslim, news outlets given greater coverage to incidents of violence, perhaps creating a feedback loop in which an association between Muslim identity and terror attacks are reinforced (Betus, Kearns, and Lemieux 2021; D'Orazio and Salehyan 2018; Huff and Kertzer 2017; Kearns, Betus, and Lemieux 2019). White perpetrators are less likely to be deemed terrorists (Dolliver and Kearns 2019; D'Orazio and Salehyan 2018). A growing literature, however, is exposing such biases in respect to how perpetrators are viewed, as well as how non-violent protests are perceived (Manekin and Mitts 2022; Peay and Camarillo 2021) and the disproportionate application of state repression in response to

protests (Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong 2011). In light of an established association between people of color and terrorism, as well as with other forms of violence, violent behaviors, and crime (Dixon 2006; Dixon and Linz 2000; Gilliam and Iyengar 2000), I expect that perpetrators who are people of color may evoke greater anger and greater punitiveness from white respondents (Hypothesis 3). Much of this literature, though, is derived from samples which are overwhelmingly white. As I have demonstrated already, racial cues in acts of violence operate distinctly among members of different racial groups. Drawing again on the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework, I expect that the association between acts of violence against people of color and white perpetrators (historical and present-day) will be shown through the experiment. Among Black respondents, therefore, a white perpetrator should evoke greater anger and greater punitiveness. (Hypothesis 4).

> **Hypothesis 3 –** Violence committed by non-white perpetrators evokes greater anger and greater punitiveness from white respondents.

> **Hypothesis 4 –** Violence committed by white perpetrators evokes greater anger and greater punitiveness from Black respondents.

Inclusion of these two attributes in the descriptions of violence given to respondents allows me to engage with a relationship that has had limited consideration thus far – the interaction of target race and perpetrator race. Other work has found that these two dimensions are meaningful when considered together (e.g. Crabtree and Simonelli n.d.; McGowen and Wylie 2020). However, the structure of traditional survey experiments has limited the degree to which these interactions have been considered together. The split Black and white sample also allows me to highlight how these interaction effects may be distinct – as the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework predicts they should be – when comparing white and Black respondents. I also consider how the interactions of perpetrator and target races might spur greater anger and punitiveness among respondents of both sub-groups. Derived from the literature and hypotheses above, I expect that the interaction of interracial dyads (e.g., a white perpetrator and Black target) will garner the greatest anger and punitiveness among respondents. Specifically:

Hypothesis 5 – Violence committed by a white perpetrator against a Black target evokes the greatest anger and punitiveness among Black respondents. Violence committed by a Black perpetrator against a white target evokes the greatest anger and punitiveness among Black respondents.

Experimental Design

The conjoint experiment was fielded in June 2021 using the online survey platform Prolific. 464 white respondents and 495 Black respondents were recruited to participate in the experiment. Demographics of this sample, including age, gender, education, and partisanship are found in this chapter's appendix. The advantages of the conjoint design allow for the manipulation of multiple attributes of what would normally be considered the treatment conditions in a traditional survey experiment. Rather than manipulate attributes in structured ways that would have limited the scope of the experiment, the conjoint design allowed for the random manipulation of seven different attributes at once. Respondents were randomly assigned to see seven pairs of descriptions of violence – a total of fourteen descriptions. The manipulated attributes included: target race, perpetrator race, number of casualties, tactic, location, label given to the violence, and the stated motivation of the violence. The manipulation of all these attributes creates the potential for 135,000 unique descriptions. A full list of all manipulated attributes can be found in Table 1. Figure 1 provides an example of how these descriptions looked in the survey instrument.

Questions asked prior to the conjoint task measured age, racial identity, racial importance, linked fate, feelings of safety, perceptions of the justification for political violence, perceived changes in political violence over the past four years, trust in other people, trust in government, partisanship, ideology, religious affiliation, occupation, highest-level of educational attainment, attention paid to the media.

BREAKING: <u>Black man</u> targeted **<u>Hispanic people</u>** in **<u>a bombing</u>** at a **<u>church</u>**. **<u>Four</u>** causalities have been reported. Officials have called the incident **<u>a random attack and</u>** indicated that **<u>it was motivated by hate</u>**.

Figure 15: Example of description from conjoint exercise.
Emphasis added to highlight manipulated attributes.

Table 2: List of Conjoint Experiment Attributes.

Target Race (6)	Perpetrator Race (6)	Casualties (5)	Tactic (5)	Location (5)	Label (5)	Motivation (6)
Man*	People*	None*	In an act of violence*	[No location given]*	An attack*	No clear motivation*
White man	White	One	By shooting into a crowd	at a community center*	A random attack	Hate
Black man	Black	Four	By detonating a bomb in a crowd	At a house of worship	An act of terrorism	Political ideology
Hispanic man	Hispanic	Seven	By driving a car into a crowd	At a school	Senseless violence	Personal grievance
Asian man	Asian	Fifteen	By slashing a knife in a crowd	In a public area	Hate crime	Mental health issues
Arab man	Arab					Religious ideology

*Indicates baseline attribute.

The independent variables of interest are respondent anger and punitiveness. During the conjoint task, respondents are asked to decide which of the two events would make them angriest if they happened in their community and which they believed deserved a harsher punishment. These are binary questions. A second prong of the latter question asks respondents how strongly they believe the perpetrator of each description should be sentenced to spend life in prison. This question is measured on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 indicates that the perpetrator should absolutely not be sentenced to spend life in prison and 5 indicates that the perpetrator absolutely should be sentenced to spend life in prison. The full text of these questions as they were presented to participants can be found in the Appendix.

For each dependent variable, I calculate the average marginal component effect (AMCE) using an OLS model (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014). This value indicates the degree to which each attribute, on average, impacted respondents' decisions in relation to a baseline attribute. These baseline attributes are noted in with an asterisk in Table 1. Additionally, I also calculate marginal means for analysis of the full sample and when comparing between Black and white respondents (Leeper, Hobolt, and Tilley 2020). Comparisons between subgroups can lead to skewed outcomes with AMCE. Marginal means are less sensitive to the baseline attribute and so make these comparisons in a less biased fashion. Inclusion of these estimates are particularly important here, because – as I have already shown – baseline perceptions of violence are not equivalent when comparing across racial groups. For testing the hypotheses regarding the interaction of different attributes, I also calculate the average marginal interaction effects (AMIE) (FindIt Package).

Results

The central questions of this chapter ask: Does racial identity remain a powerful cue for responses to violence? And does the pattern of responses remain distinct among Black respondents presented with violence targeted against Black people, in comparison to white respondents presented with violence targeted against white people? The Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework argues that racial identity is a powerful force in determining perceptions of violence – both the racial identity of those who are privy to violence and the racial identity of those targeted. Building on the prior chapter's findings, I seek to bolster this argument. Engaging a conjoint experimental design allows me to address lingering questions from Chapter 4. Namely, I am now able to take into account the role of perpetrator race, in addition to other attributes (like motivation) that remained constant in that chapter's experimental treatments.

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First, I show my results without sub-setting the sample by race. While a critical argument of the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework is that there are substantial differences in perceptions of violence when comparing between different racial groups, this exercise is still important. It demonstrates that, even with a sample that is split almost equally, trends within these sub-groups are still obscured. In a nationally-representative sample, it is likely that these findings would be completely obscured. In the chapter's discussion and conclusion, I speak to the significant implications this has for how the study of violence in the United States has been and continues to be shaped. Because my primary interest is to show how Black and white respondents reacted to the varying attributes of violence, I focus on separate analyses of the subsamples. Recall that I expected Black and white respondents' anger to be different, depending on who was described as the target. Therefore, I expect that race identity should continue to be a particularly powerful cue among Black respondents, just as I found in Chapter 4. Finally, after showing the impact of these attributes individually, I also consider the interactions between them, walking through the two-way interactions of target race and perpetrator race.

Full Sample Analyses

How do the stated racial identity of perpetrator and target influence perceptions of the violence? Note that the models in this section take into consideration the entire sample, both Black and white respondents. I report the marginal means in the text, and they are shown in Figure 2.[49] AMCEs are also shown in Figure 3. Of all the perpetrator identities, only the white perpetrator significantly increases respondent anger in comparison to the perpetrator with no racial identity – by seven percentage points. Only targets that are identified as "Black people" significantly increase respondent anger in comparison to "people." This also represents an increase of seven percentage points. The white perpetrator significantly increases the degree of punishment warranted by seven percentage points. As with the measure of anger, this is the only racial identity for which there is a significant change in punitiveness. Targets described as white people decrease the degree of punishment warranted by two percentage points. Targets described as Black people increase the likelihood that respondents believe a harsher punishment for the act is deserved by four percentage points.

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[49] Unless otherwise noted, all reported values are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

While these effects do represent statistically significant shifts in the likelihood of a respondent choosing a description, it is important to note that they are not of considerably large magnitudes. For the most part, these likelihoods hover around 50 percent, meaning that they are not overwhelmingly spurring or impeding respondents' decisions. In some instances, like violence motivated by "mental health issues," the likelihood of a description making a respondent angrier decreases to 41 percent and punitiveness decreases to 40 percent. The magnitude of casualties also has an increasingly substantial effect on anger and punitiveness – compared to an event that has no casualties (28 percent likelihood of making a respondent angrier, and 26 percent likelihood of deserving greater punishment) an event with 15 casualties increases anger by 44 percentage points and punitiveness by 48 percentage points. Changes of this magnitude are not exceedingly common in these models, though.

Before sub-setting the sample, there are several general findings that hold when I stratify the sample by White and Black respondents. For example, among both groups – as the number of casualties mentioned in an incident increases, so does to does the likelihood that incident makes the respondent angrier and that it is deemed to warrant the greater punishment of the two choices. Yet, how do these outcomes change when sub-setting the sample by racial group? My prior work suggests that disaggregating these groups should lead to striking dissimilarities.
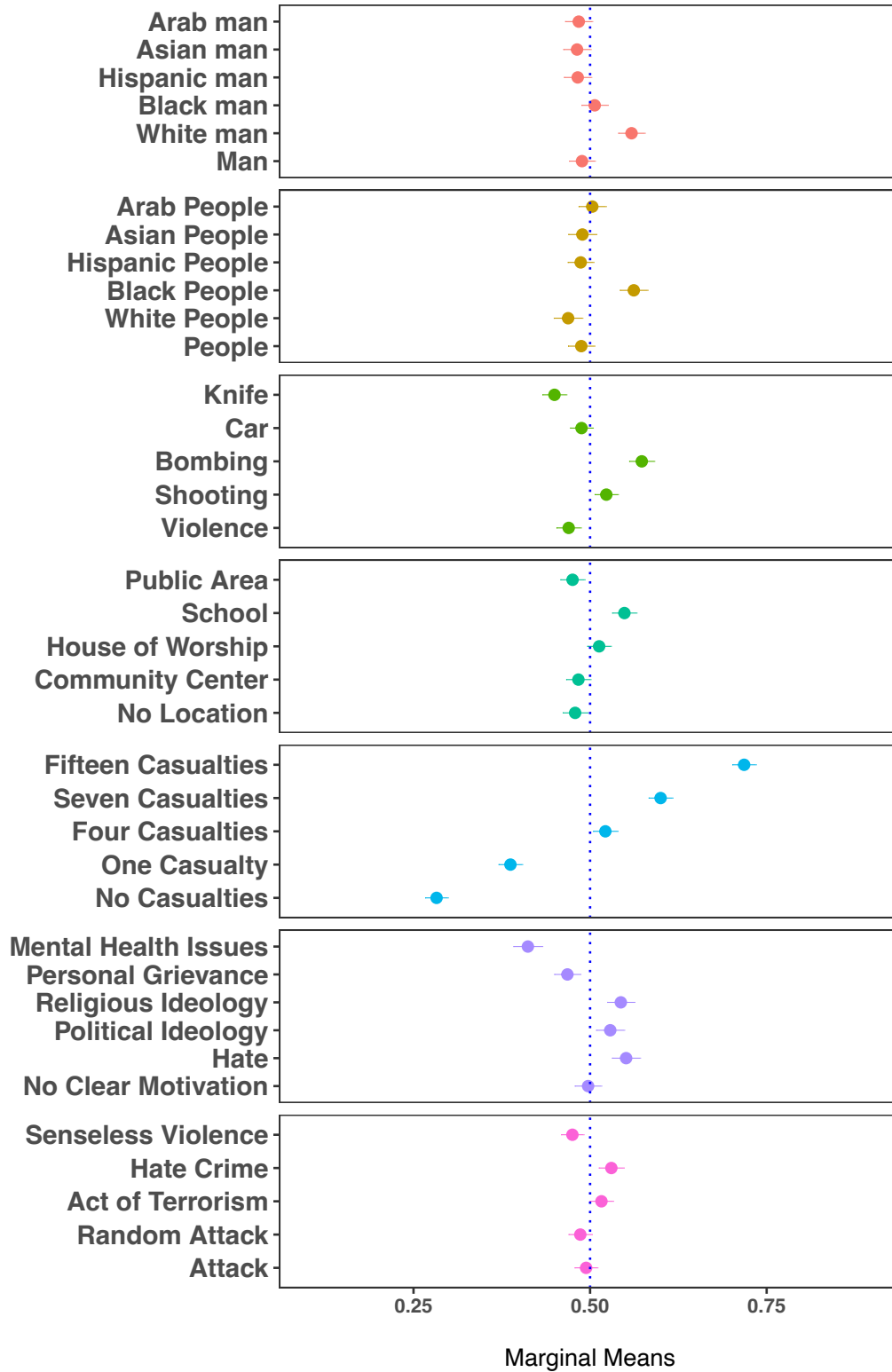
Figure 16: Respondent Anger in Response to Violence.
Among the full sample calculated using marginal means. Shown with 95% confidence intervals.
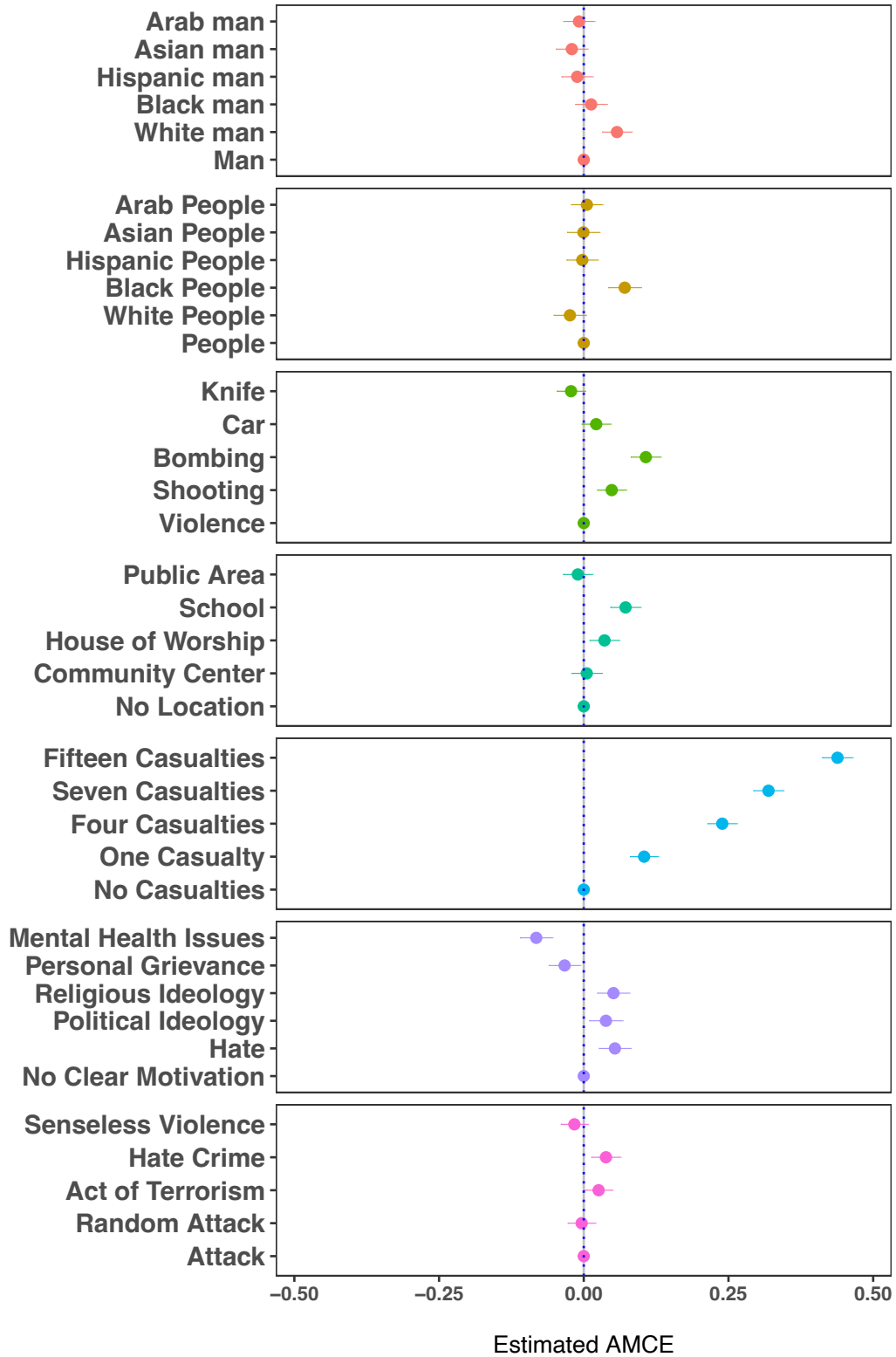
Figure 17: Respondent Anger in Response to Violence.
Among the full sample with average marginal component effects. Shown with 95% confidence intervals.

Sub-Group Analyses

A critical test of the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework asks: Do Black targets continue to invoke anger among Black respondents, even when taking other attributes of violence into account?

In short, the answer is a definitive yes. Figure 4 displays marginal means when sub-setting the sample to compare between Black and white respondents. This comparison reveals several prominent differences between the two groups, particularly so when referring to this chapter's expectations. When examining how Black and white respondents react to descriptions that mention members of their own racial group as the target, the findings are consistent. When people of color are described as the targets of violence, I <u>do not</u> find that there is any increased likelihood of making a Black respondent angrier – except in the case of descriptions which described Black people as the target of the violence. This means, even when accounting for the race of the perpetrator, tactic used, location, number of casualties, motivation, and the label given to the violence, that the racial identity of the target remains an incredibly powerful cue for Black respondents. Here, there is a difference of thirteen percentage points when comparing a description that mentioned a Black target to a description that has no racial identity given to the targeted. There is a difference of 17 percentage points between a Black target and a white target (Hypothesis 1). As in Chapter 4, there is no impact of target race on the likelihood of a description making white respondents angrier (Hypothesis 2).

A significant gap also emerges when considering punitiveness. There is a 12 percentage point gap between Black respondents' choice of description when comparing a Black target (57 percent) and a white target (45 percent). There is a seven percentage point difference between the Black target and the unracialized target (Hypothesis 1). Once again, for white respondents, there is also no significant difference between the likelihood of choosing a description regardless of the target's stated (or unstated) racial identity (Hypothesis 2).

Crucially, these results support my findings from Chapter 4. They lend credence to the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework as well, where I expect to find distinct perspectives of violence when comparing Black and white Americans. I also expect – and I find again – that for Black Americans race is an important cue to interpret violence but it is less so for whites.

Remember that the experiments in Chapter 4 left the racial identity of the perpetrator unknown. The implication of this is that different individuals might infer differently about who

committed the act when information is limited. This is, in fact, what the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework is premised upon. With this experiment, however, I alter the perpetrator's identity to gauge how much their racial identity influences reactions to violence. I find that the perpetrator's racial identity is not as strong of a cue as the target's identity, though the effect of the perpetrator's identity still has some influence when considering the other attributes. The white perpetrator makes both Black *and* white respondents report that they are angrier about an act of violence. Among white respondents, this is a difference of nine percentage points between the perpetrator without a racial identity and the white perpetrator. The gap between these attributes is actually *less* for Black respondents – a difference of six percentage points. Perpetrator race, therefore, is a stronger influence among white respondents than target race. Similarly, when looking to punishment, white and Black respondents are both more likely to choose a description as deserving stronger punishment when there is a white perpetrator – a difference of eight percentage points for white respondents and a difference of five percentage points for Black respondents.

I find support for the expectation that a white perpetrator does evoke greater anger and punitiveness among Black respondents in comparison to the racial identities of other perpetrators (Hypothesis 3). However, there is not support for the expectation that Black perpetrators or other people of color perpetrators evoke greater anger and punitiveness among white respondents (Hypothesis 3). Contrary to my expectation, white perpetrators are the most evocative for white respondents – both in anger and punitiveness.

Interacting Perpetrator and Target Identities

Another aspect left unexplored in Chapter 4 was the interaction between perpetrator and target race. At this chapter's beginning, I laid out the expectation that pairing a white perpetrator and a Black target should garner more anger from Black respondents, while white respondents might show the greatest anger when reading that white people were targeted by a Black perpetrator. The conditional effects of the interaction between *perpetrator race and target race,* when sub-divided by racial group, are shown in Figure 5. Among the full sample, the presence of a Black target increases respondent anger by up to 13 percentage points (when no racial description is given to the perpetrator) in comparison to descriptions that did not identify the target's race.
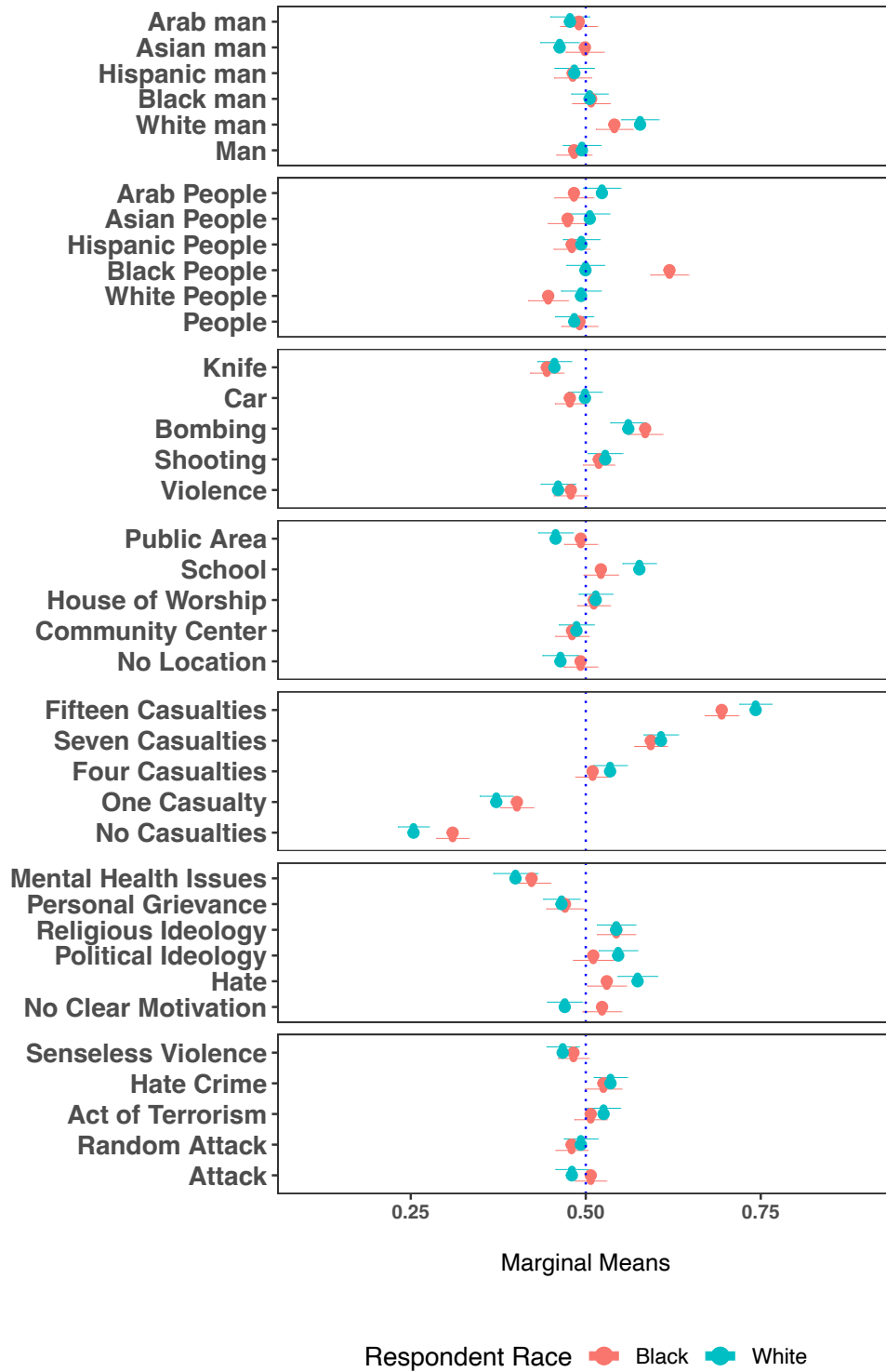
Figure 18: Anger in response to violence for Black and white respondents calculated using marginal means. Shown with 95% confidence intervals.

When disaggregating by race, it is clear that this pattern for the Black target descriptions is driven by Black participants. Among Black respondents only, the interaction of a Black target, conditional on a White perpetrator, increases the likelihood of making a Black respondent angrier by 15 percentage points in comparison to a description that does not identify the target. No other target identities are statistically significant conditional on the target being white. Yet, there is a larger and perhaps more important pattern. The anger of Black respondents increases 18 percentage points when the perpetrator's race is not mentioned and the target is Black. It increases 16 percentage points with a Hispanic perpetrator and a Black target; this increase is 13 percentage points when the perpetrator is Asian and target is Black. Important to the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework, this pattern *does not* hold for white participants. The comparison here is stark. There are no instances in which the interaction between any perpetrator's racial identity and a white target increases the likelihood of a white respondent choosing a description as making them angrier or more punitive. These sub-group analyses are shown in the Figure 5.
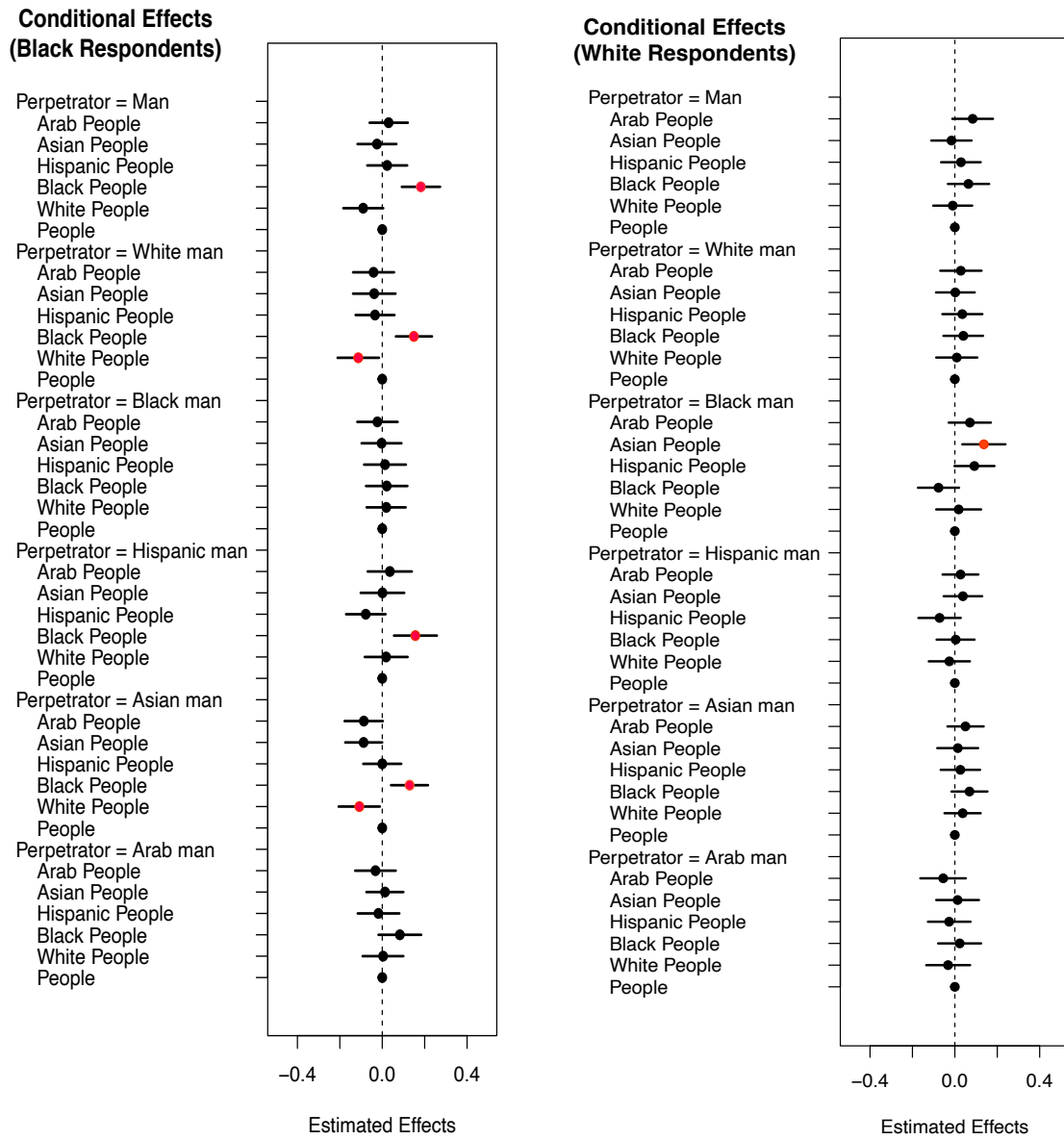
Figure 19: Respondent anger conditional on perpetrator and target identity for Black (left) and white (right) respondents. Calculated using average marginal interaction effects. Significant effects are noted in red, and estimates are shown with 95% confidence intervals

Discussion

Taken together, analyses from this conjoint experiment emphasizes and reiterates the previous chapter's findings. Racial identity matters in the context of violence, and it matters most when we look to the race of the target. This is the foundational argument of the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework. This once again demonstrates the power of race as a cue in the context of violence. Even when taking into account all other attributes, racial cues still shine through clearly and in a manner that distinguishes the power of the racial identity of the target. Moreover, the difference between white and Black respondents is quite clear and further substantiates my previous findings.

The experiments from Chapter 4 left lingering questions about the role of perpetrator identity and the interaction between the identities of perpetrator and target – Do these matter? A large body of work on terrorism say that they do and has focused on the ways in which religious, racial, ethnic, and national identities of perpetrators shape media coverage about these incidents (Betus, Kearns, and Lemieux 2021; Dolliver and Kearns 2019; D'Orazio and Salehyan 2018; Huff and Kertzer 2017; Kearns, Betus, and Lemieux 2019).The findings from this chapter are in agreement that perpetrator matters, but not entirely as expected. Counter to literature which would suggest that perpetrators who are described as people of color should make white respondents angrier and more punitive, I find that descriptions with white perpetrators actually increases anger in Black *and* white respondents by between six to nine percentage points. While this indicates that perpetrator race is an entity of significance, it is still outpaced by the effect of target race, which shifts respondents' responses by thirteen to seventeen percentage points among Black respondents. For white respondents target race did not factor strongly into their decision making and so the presence of a white perpetrator, instead, seems to be a cue to express greater anger.

As I discuss the findings from this study, there are also reflections to be made on its research design. At the conclusion of the survey and after they were debriefed about the survey's purpose, respondents were given the option to provide feedback about the experiment and their experience. 109 respondents took the opportunity to do so. There are two notable trends that emerge from that open-ended feedback, and they warrant discussion here. They speak (1) to the measurement of punitiveness and (2) to the forced choice option in the conjoint exercise. The set-up of the survey required all respondents to answer each question for the conjoint exercise. Two questions asked respondents to choose which description, of each pair, warranted a more severe punishment and how severely each should be punished. Several respondents noted that they were prison abolitionists and did not believe in prison sentences. Others noted that they believed prisons were too soft. Rather than

a life sentence, these respondents believed there should have been the option for the death penalty in some cases. The open-ended feedback points to the need to take this into consideration in the future when measuring punitiveness. Specifically, this might mean using measures that are more sensitive to the breadth of positions that one might hold on this continuum.

Several respondents also noted that they felt uncomfortable choosing between the two descriptions. These participants said that in many instances they felt that both descriptions were bad. They echoed sentiments similar to one respondent who wrote, "I wish there had been an option for tie. Some were equally bad." Survey experiments and conjoint experiments on the topic of violence are not novel, though this design has been more often used when comparing candidates or policy options in a list format. The decision-making exercise in this experiment is perhaps less natural than a participant choosing between two candidates for whom to cast a hypothetical vote. Yet, this experiment is also a test of this methodology in this area of study. I take this feedback seriously in considering how to improve conjoint design in the future. The ultimate point, however, is to compel a choice between the two descriptions with limited information. Normatively, it is possible to conclude that violence is equally bad. But how the public reacts to it is not the same. The variation in findings from this experiment clearly demonstrate this. Violence may be bad, but it is viewed differently depending on its attributes.

Conclusion

This chapter's findings support the premise that racial cues matter for perceptions of violence. There is evidence that target and perpetrator race influence how violence is viewed (along with other attributes that are not the specific focus of this work). Among these three, the race of the targeted group remains the strongest factor in determining respondent anger, especially among Black respondents. The design of this experiment and its findings provide greater support for the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework and the argument that racial identity carries incredible weight as individuals – Black Americans specifically – weigh the impact and severity of violence. This experiment should assuage concerns that the experiment in Chapter 4 were led astray by not mentioning the perpetrator's racial identity. It also adds (post-hoc) support for decisions made in the design of that experiment. Through these findings, the choice of location and number of casualties for Chapter 4's experimental treatments are shown to not significantly alter the likelihood of a

respondent's decision.[50] Figure 4 shows that individual impact of target race exceeds that of perpetrator race. Furthermore, Figure 5 shows that, for Black respondents, a Black target consistently results in heightened anger when paired with a perpetrator of another racial identity.

Beyond the support I have built for my own framework and conceptualization of racially-targeted violence, this chapter also make several substantial contributions to the broader literature on political violence as well as race and ethnicity politics. First, it moves beyond a focus on the identities of perpetrators, where much of the literature on terrorism, its definitions, and perceptions about it have been situated. This reorientation emphasizes how the identities of the targeted and those who are privy to violence further alter perceptions of it. Second, I parse through findings in the existing literature suggesting that samples which are nationally-representative obscure important patterns among sub-groups. Where other work has not disaggregated its findings by racial groups (e.g., Huff and Kertzer 2017), I compare responses to violence in Black and white Americans. Just the comparison between these two groups suggests that there is a need to pursue a more nuanced understanding of the psychology of political violence in the United States as well as how it influences reactions to political violence. Third, this data is valuable for exploring more than just the two dimensions of interest discussed here. For the sake of space, I have omitted discussion in the text about the other five dimensions – tactic, label, casualties, motivation, and location. It is readily clear from the figures in this chapter that these are also important components of our understandings of violence. My focus elsewhere should not be taken as dismissal of their importance, and I hope to pursue further work in that area.

The next chapter moves this project into the real world. While this chapter (and the previous one) have attempted to recreate a scenario in which an individual learns about an incident of racially-targeted violence, it is clear that reading about racially-targeted violence is not the same as direct victimization or proximity to it. As others have argued (Blumer 1958; Jardina 2019), "big events" rouse racial identity and make it salient. I propose that these events need not be limited to electoral politics or changing demographics, but that these events can be actual acts of mass violence that shock the communities in which they occur. The next empirical pieces of this project considers the reality of

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[50] Specifically, there are no significant differences in likelihood of choice between Black and white respondents in reaction to several dimensions of the treatment article, including the location, number of casualties, and tactic.

racially-targeted violence and examine how those victimized and those in close proximity respond politically in real time.

Chapter 6

Fear and Participation: Electoral Participation in the Aftermath of Mass Shootings

While the previous chapter considered the behavior of individuals within an experimental context – operating as if participants had not been exposed to racial violence in the past and that their exposure to news of racial violence represented a potential threat or stimulus to them – the present chapter shifts focus to real-world political behavior in order to further examine the impact of racially-targeted violence on the communities in which that violence occurs.

Once again, race and racial identities are cues in the aftermath of violence, as I describe in Chapter 3. Racial identities pinpoint a target, identify who is threatened, and this can factor into calculations of risk and response among those of shared racial identity. Therefore, drawing on Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework, I expect that violence explicitly targeted against Black people should have distinct effects on those who share that racial identity. Similarly, violence targeted against Hispanic people should have measurable implications for those who identify as Hispanic. In the absence of identity-based heuristics, I suggest that no clear patterns of political mobilization or demobilization should occur if such fluctuations are simply the product of shared identity alone (and not the result of some other coordinating factor, as Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework posits). Thus, as a corollary, I expect that violence without a clear target should not have distinguishable effects on voter mobilization across racial groups. Race (and other identities) are a heuristic for us to interpret violence – providing context and perceived motivation for seemingly senseless and random atrocities.

Just as I tested the power of shared racial identity and racial cues in the previous chapters, I continue to test this premise in this chapter, using a different method, new sources of data, and a traditional understanding of "political behavior" and "political participation" – electoral engagement. Here, rather than an experimental approach, I use a quasi-experimental design that draws on voter registration and voter turnout data from across the United States to understand if measurable changes in registration are detected in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence, and further, if the time of

registration has a discernible impact on subsequent voter turnout. My variables of "political participation" move from the psychological and emotional underpinnings to measures of actual participation: reported voter registration and reported voter turnout.

In the previous chapters, I have shown that there are selective effects of racially-targeted violence on emotion, specifically among Black Americans who are exposed to violence against other Black or Hispanic people. But, in the aftermath of real-world incidents of racially-targeted violence, can this translate into political participation? And what circumstances might impede or facilitate this translation? I address these questions by considering three mass shootings in the United States, incidents that occurred in Charleston, South Carolina, El Paso, Texas, and Las Vegas, Nevada. I leverage these shootings as exogenous shocks to their communities – with two being rooted in racist ideology and having clearly racialized targets, and the other being a seemingly random event. In conjunction with voter files from each of these states, the racial dimensions of the incidents in Charleston and El Paso allow me to test if and how the targeting of a specific racial group may influence that group's localized electoral behavior. As the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework expects, do I see that racially-targeted violence has its most notable effects among those of shared racial identity?

In the aggregate, I observe that a well-established gap in turnout exists between white and non-white registered voters in all three locations (B. L. Fraga 2018). To isolate the potential impact of these shootings on voter turnout in the subsequent years, I estimate the effect of registering to vote in each shooting's immediate aftermath on later turnout. Using a difference-in-differences design, I measure changes in voter registration from the time prior to the time after these shootings, as well as for the entire year in which the shootings occurred. I estimate the likelihood of subsequent voter turnout based on if an individual registered to vote in the time prior or the time after each incident. Contrary to my expectations, I do not find that a 2015 mass shooting at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, South Carolina, in which nine Black parishioners were murdered, had measurable consequences for Black voter registration or Black voter turnout. Nor do I find that voter registration or subsequent voter turnout falls along racially distinguishable lines in the aftermath of a mass shooting targeting Hispanic people in an El Paso, Texas Walmart. In the immediate aftermath of a 2017 mass shooting at a music festival on the Las Vegas Strip, however, I find that there were consequences for voter turnout in the subsequent year. Hispanic residents who registered to vote in the one-month period immediately following the shooting turned out to vote at a rate that was five percentage points higher than those who registered in the month prior to the

shooting, almost ten percentage points higher than the year's average for Hispanic voters. Notably, this is without any clear racial target to serve as a heuristic. While the nature of the data, and the inability to predict when and where these events occur, does not allow me to clearly eliminate alternative explanations, I propose that the community organizations that were activated in the aftermath of the Las Vegas shooting are critical to the findings observed there.

In this chapter, I establish that though a racial target is not a necessary dimension of an act of violence to spur racially-selective mobilization. This points to the interconnectedness between race, capitalism, community, and political mobilization – all of which I speak to in this chapter's discussion. My findings suggest that the aftermath of violence is a critical time for political mobilization, regardless of target, and that local-level organizations may be key places for this work to be done. These findings also inform a more in-depth discussion about the intertwining of electoral politics and racial violence in the United States at the chapter's conclusion, as well as discussion of the need to consider the power of infra-politics and non-institutional forms of political engagement in the aftermath of violence.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, I describe the research design that guides the analyses of each incident's aftermath as well as my expectations. Then, I turn attention to each city of interest, moving west from Charleston, South Carolina to El Paso, Texas and on to Las Vegas, Nevada. Within each of these cities, I outline analyses of voter registration and voter turnout in each place. I conclude with a discussion of the findings in relation to one another, as well as the ways in which they further illuminate our study of violence, mass violence, and racial violence in the United States

Research Design and Expectations

As it currently stands, literature on the politics of mass shootings and violence in the United States focuses predominantly on the impact of these events on public opinion and attitudes, which have little meaning in the absence of political participation. The same could be said of the findings from the previous chapters. There is a theoretical foundation by which we can expect that emotion translates into political participation (e.g. Banks, White, and McKenzie 2019; Valentino et al. 2011). Chapters 4 and 5 suggest that emotional spark does exist in the aftermath of racially-targeted violence. But, is there evidence of actual shifts in political engagement? To answer this question, I measure changes in voter registration and voter turnout after three prominent mass shooting. Specifically, I consider whether the time in which an individual registered to vote in the year prior to an election is influential for their turnout in the next year's general or midterm election. Specifically, I am asking: does

registration in the time immediately following a mass shooting suggest that a voter is more likely to vote in a subsequent election?

The timing of the incidents I describe can be viewed as quasi-experimental, with each incident serving as a treatment. The measured outcomes are voter registration and later electoral participation. I measure each mass shooting's electoral effects by noting changes in voter registration from the pre-to-post treatment periods and comparing likelihood of voter turnout conditional on time of registration. Therefore, I use a difference-in-differences design to estimate the likelihood of voting in relation to the time in which an individual registered to vote. I consider three periods of time for each incident: the week before and the week after the shooting; the month before and month after the shooting; and the entire year in which the shooting occurred, month-by-month. To isolate any relationship between the shooting and subsequent voter turnout in the following year, I estimate a linear probability model,[51] where V_i is the likelihood of voting in the next general election for an individual (i) of each racial or partisan group. This is a function of when the individual registered to vote (*Time*) – before or after the shooting – and a series of covariates (X_i) specific to the individual, including race, partisanship, gender, age, voting precinct distance from the shooting site, as well as average census tract income or estimated household income. In some models I also include the presence of co-ethnic candidates on the ballot.[52]

$$V_i = B_0 + B_1 \textit{Time} + B_2 X_i + \sigma$$

As I discuss the relationships between voter behavior and each mass shooting, it is important to note that I am not considering the shootings' relationship to voter turnout at large. Presumably, the entire population of each location was exposed to the incident, though the ways in which they experienced it may have differed. Taking into account differential registration bias (Nyhan, Skovron, and Titiunik 2017), I propose that registration in the aftermath of the shooting is related to turnout in a way that registration in the time prior to the shooting is not. That is, do those people registering

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[51] I estimate a linear probability model here for ease of interpretation, but all findings are substantively similar when using a logistic regression model.

[52] The voter files used for this chapter's analyses are derived from different sources and election cycles. Some of this data is available to the public and some is proprietary. Some states and localities also collect information from registrants and voters that is not collected in other places. Because of this variation, I will describe each data source and its components in detail as I describe its analysis.

immediately after the shooting – perhaps driven by the shooting itself – have a higher likelihood of voting than those who registered in the time prior? Those people registering in the shooting's immediate aftermath may have done so with an intention specifically related to the shooting or in association with local organizations or through local networks. These civic connections may have later spurred them to turnout in a way that did not drive those people registering in the time prior.

I maintain, aligned with Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework, that members of racial groups who were targeted in an act of racially-targeted violence experience these events differently. Therefore, I expect that members of those groups are prompted to electoral participation in the aftermath. I articulate these expectations more generally below, as well as more specifically to each incident as I address them.

> **Hypothesis 1**: In the aftermath of a mass shooting explicitly targeting a racialized group of people, any measurable changes in voter registration should be seen among members of that ethno-racial group in the incident's vicinity.

> **Hypothesis 2**: Members of that targeted ethno-racial group registering to vote in the weeks and month following the incident have a higher likelihood of voter turnout in subsequent elections when compared to those ethno-racial group members who registered in the time prior.

> **Hypothesis 3**: In the aftermath of a mass shooting without a racialized target, there are no measurable changes in voter registration when comparing among members of different ethno-racial groups.

> **Hypothesis 4**: In the aftermath of a mass shooting without a racialized target, there are no measurable changes in voter registration when comparing among members of different ethno-racial groups.

Gun violence in the United States is inescapably related to two politically polarizing issues: gun control and the Second Amendment. Even as I focus on racial identity, I also anticipate that partisan activation could occur in the aftermath of mass shootings. Even if no single social or racial group is explicitly or intentionally targeted, as in the case of Las Vegas, there may be differential effects of the event among partisans. Malhotra and Popp (2012), for instance, find that perceptions of terrorism and anti-terrorism policies vary by partisanship and such a partisan pathway may be at work. As an example, I suggest the mass shooting in Las Vegas may have made issues of firearms and gun control in the United States salient for the people of Las Vegas, while more widely invoking feelings

of anger at the repetition of such incidents in the United States.[53] Gun control is an issue of importance to the Democratic party and for the Republican Party, the Second Amendment and gun rights is an equally important rallying cry. The prominence of this issue could have encouraged a wave of voter registration and political activity among liberals and Democrats who rally around the cause. Further, with Democrats more likely to be unregistered, the shooting may have encouraged unregistered Democratic-leaning citizens to register to vote, drawing on an unregistered population that may not have existed in the same magnitude for the Republican party (Enos and Fowler 2018; Enos, Kaufman, and Sands 2019). Stronger gun control measures are a perennial staple of the Democratic Party platform. If the shooting mobilized registrants who identified themselves as Democrats, I expect that those who registered to vote in the time immediately following the Las Vegas shooting were also more likely to turnout to vote in 2018 than Republicans or Non-Partisans who registered to vote in that same time period. It is thus possible that the calls for stricter gun regulation in the weeks and months after the shooting created a backlash effect among potential Republican voters, encouraging them to register to vote and turnout in the subsequent year. This is a plausible outcome in each of the cities I examine, and so I also include measures of voter registration and likelihood of voter turnout comparing between parties.

To consider the influence of both racial identity and partisanship, I estimate the difference-in-differences between registrants from the time immediately prior to the time after the shooting, as well as the difference-in-differences between members of different partisan affiliations and racial groups moving from pre-shooting to post-shooting.

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[53] Several pieces of legislation were introduced in Congress to eliminate the sale of bump stocks, which were used in the Las Vegas shooting. The bump stock ban eventually came about by way of Presidential directive.

We do not know whether the killer of Reverend Pinckney and eight others knew all of this history, but he surely sensed the meaning of his violent act. It was an act that drew on a long history of bombs and arson and shots fired at churches, not random but as a means of control, a way to terrorize and oppress…"

- President Barack Obama, Eulogy for Reverend Clementa Pinckney. June 26, 2015.

The Charleston Nine

On June 17, 2015, nine Black parishioners were killed, while in worship, in the Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina.[54] The incident was shocking, and the perpetrator's clear expression of a white supremacist ideology and desire to ignite racial conflagration made it unquestionable that the shooting was racist and targeted at Black people.[55] Beyond the horrific nature of the shooting, the incident was also seeped in historical symbolism. Then-President Obama alluded to this at the funeral of South Carolina State Senator Reverend Clementa Pinckney, suggesting that the perpetrator had committed "an act that he presumed would deepen divisions that trace back to our nation's original sin."

The targeting of the church was reminiscent of the many Black churches bombed and burned in efforts to curb Black political organization and mobilization throughout American history. The church itself holds a unique place in the history of Black resistance in the United States; it was an organizing site of Denmark Vesey's 1822 attempted uprising of Charleston's enslaved Black people (Egerton 2004). The racial and historical weight of this shooting – the clear racial target, frame of racial hierarchy, and historical context – makes it an ideal case to study the consequences of racially-targeted violence on political behavior. Per Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework, these conditions under which I expect to see political mobilization or demobilization among those who share racial identity with the victimized. With this case of Charleston, South Carolina, I expect that any measurable changes in turnout from the time prior to the time after the Charleston shooting will be discernible along racial lines. That is, the clear and undeniable targeting of Black people should have a distinct impact on the political behavior of other Black people in the Charleston area and beyond. I set forth the expectation that voter registration for Black people increased in the aftermath

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[54] "Suspect Captured in Deadly Shooting at Black Church in South Carolina." *The Washington Post.* June 18, 2015.
[55] US v. Roof (2015)

of the shooting (Hypothesis 1). I also expect that Black people registering to vote in South Carolina in the weeks and month following the June 2015 shooting had a higher likelihood of subsequent voter turnout in November 2016 when compared to those Black people who registered in the time prior (Hypothesis 2).

> **H1**: Because the June 2015 mass shooting in Charleston, South Carolina explicitly targeted at Black people, any measurable changes in voter registration should be seen among Black residents.

> **H2**: Black people registering to vote in Charleston in the weeks and month following the shooting have a higher likelihood of subsequent voter turnout in November 2016 when compared to those Black people who registered in the time prior.

These expectations are rooted in literature which considers legacies of political violence against African-Americans and that violence as an enduring tool of political repression, even when that violence is not directly related to electoral politics or political power. While scholarship has emphasized the fluctuation of lynchings in tandem with the economics of the cotton industry, these acts of violence were also responses to political threat posed by African-Americans (Howell et al. 2018). Lynchings, church burnings, bombings, and other acts of intimidation intended to coerce Black people away from socially, politically, and economically threatening behaviors also have political repercussions that extend into the present-day. In addition to the transmission of racially-conservative attitudes (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2018) and the under-reporting of hate crimes (King, Messner, and Baller 2009), such violence has had a lasting impact on Black voter turnout. Counties with higher numbers of reported Black lynchings continue to see lower Black voter turnout in the present day (J. A. Williams, Logan, and Hardy 2021). Thus, not only is there anecdotal evidence to support the use of violence to deter Black people from engaging in electoral politics (as well as other forms of political behavior), but there is also evidence to support that these effects are durable. Given this relationship between racially-targeted violence and Black electoral participation, I suggest that the Charleston shooting had a measurable impact on the voting behavior of Black people in the immediate Charleston area and South Carolina more widely.

Data

To test my expectations, I turn to the South Carolina state-wide voter file, which contains information on more than 3 million registered voters in the state.[56] Voters in this dataset registered to vote between January 1, 1968 and May 26, 2020. The South Carolina file includes the names, addresses and birthdates of registered voters, in addition to their date of registration, last electoral activity, and their last known partisan affiliation. *Registrant race* and *gender* are self-reported for the majority of observations. Registrants may identify as white, Black, Hispanic, East Asian, Native American, Other Undefined, or decline to report their race. Across the state, seventy-four percent of 2015 registrants were white, and 20.5 percent of registrants identified as Black. I limit my analyses to only these two groups that make up the overwhelming majority of the South Carolina electorate. The average age of registrants in 2015 was 39.6 years old. In 2015, 121,288 individuals registered to vote in South Carolina; 103,251 of these individuals registered for the first time.[57]

This dataset also includes *partisan affiliation*. Voters are identified as Democrats, Republicans, or Non-partisans, a designation under which all other third-party affiliations are also grouped. I focus on race and partisanship as I consider any discernible changes in electoral behavior, and I provide the full racial and partisan distributions of these registrants in the Appendix. I append several additional variables of interest to the dataset, including *distance* (in miles) of each registrant's polling place from the shooting site, the average reported household *income* of each registrant's census tract, and the *population size* of each registrant's census tract.

Results: Voter Registration and Turnout

Using June 17, 2015 at the Mother Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina as a dividing point, I define two periods of time that include the week (7 days) and month (30 days) immediately following the shooting. As points of comparison, I also include the week and month before. Across the entire state, a total of 2,108 people registered in the week immediately before and 2,127 in the time after. This does not represent a substantial change in voter registration for either

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[56] The version of the South Carolina voter file used is proprietary data obtained through L2.

[57] Someone might re-register to vote, because they are not sure whether they are still registered. Because these have had prior experience in the electoral system, especially if they have voted previously, I also run my analyses excluding those previously registered individuals. My results remain robust.

time period. Of all 2015 registrants, 81,729 turned out to vote in the 2016 general election. Of these, 1,416 registered in the week prior, and 1,447 registered in the week after. Controlling for demographics of each individual that registered to vote, I calculate the likelihood of voter turnout in November 2016. The likelihood of those registering in the week prior to the Charleston shooting voting in 2016 was 67 percent; this likelihood is 68 percent for those registering in the week after. Thus, leveraging the Charleston shooting as an exogenous shock to the city, I do not observe that the likelihood of turnout for a registered South Carolinian changes substantively depending on whether they registered to vote in the week before or week after the Charleston shooting. Expanding the window of time, I also compare the month prior to and the month after the shooting. 5,286 individuals registered in the 30 days prior to the shooting and 6,383 registered in the 30 days after the election, representing a marginally significant increase from the time prior (p-value = 0.033). The likelihood of voting also remains relatively consistent for those for those who registered in the month immediately before (68 percent) when compared to those who registered in the time after (69 percent). In the next section, I consider whether there are any changes when stratifying the sample by partisan affiliation or self-reported racial identification.

Voter Turnout by Party

When stratifying the sample by partisan affiliation, I consider whether the time of registration – pre or post-shooting – is related to voter turnout in the next general election. For 2015 registrants, turnout likelihood is 67.3 percent for Democrats, 76.6 percent for Republicans, and 44.6 percent for Non-Partisans.

I find that, for those South Carolinians who registered to vote in the time immediately following the Charleston shooting, there is no substantive change in the likelihood of turnout compared to those registering in the time before along any party lines. For Democrats, Republicans, and Non-Partisans, the likelihood of turnout is consistent – these estimations for the entire state of South Carolina are reported by week and month of registration in Table 1 and are displayed in Figure 1. When I narrow this to consider only those who live in immediate proximity to Charleston, South Carolina, these findings remain substantively unchanged.

Voter Turnout by Racial Identity

I expect that the Emanuel A.M.E. mass shooting that explicitly and brutally targeted African-Americans should have had measurable effects of the electoral mobilization of Black South Carolinians in its aftermath. There is a sizable discrepancy in 2016 turnout when comparing non-white and white registrants, which should be expected given a noted turnout gap between white and non-white Americans across the country (B. L. Fraga 2018). Turnout among white voters was 62.7 percent of the registered white population. That drops to 57.8 percent for Black voters among the registered population. Among those who registered in 2015, turnout was 72.3 percent for white registrants and 52.5 for Black registrants.

I calculate the difference in likelihood of turnout between Black and white registrants moving from the time immediately before the shooting to the time immediately after. Contrary to my expectations (Hypothesis 2), I find that there is no statistical difference in likelihood of turnout among Black people who registered after the mass shooting compared to those who registered in the time before. This finding is true of the entire state of South Carolina and also for localized considerations of Charleston. I present these estimates for the entire state in Table 2 and display them in Figure 1. Additionally, I find that this is not related to distance away from the Emanuel A.M.E Church. Nor do I find that the likelihood of voting for those who registered in the month immediately following the shooting is distinctively different from the likelihood of those who registered at other points in the year. These estimates are displayed in Figure 2. In summary, refuting my expectations, I do not find that voter turnout is any higher among Black residents who registered to vote in the time period immediately following the Charleston mass shooting, in comparison to those who registered before.

Table 3: Estimated likelihood of turnout in the 2016 presidential election by time of registration and partisan affiliation in South Carolina.

	One Week			One Month		
	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value
Among All Registrants	67.2 (2,108)	68.3 (2,127)	0.43	**67.6 (7,851)**	**69.1 (9,271)**	**0.05**
Among Democratic Registrants	60.7 (1,001)	61.1 (1,013)	0.85	61.9 (3,756)	63.2 (4,365)	0.19
Among Republican Registrants	81.2 (857)	81.9 (875)	0.85	81.0 (139)	81.7 (126)	0.47
Among Non-Partisan Registrants	43.4 (250)	48.8 (239)	0.25	**44.9 (972)**	**49.9 (1,122)**	**0.03**

Estimated likelihood of turnout by time of registration and estimated race for the entire state of South Carolina. P-values reflect statistical differences in the estimated likelihoods of voting. Models include controls for race, age, gender, distance from the shooting site, average income of census tract, and co-ethnic congressional candidate. Full models can be found in the Appendix.

Table 4: Estimated likelihood of turnout in the 2016 presidential election by time of registration and ethnic description in South Carolina.

	One Week			One Month		
	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value
Among White Registrants	72.1 (1,563)	74.1 (1,588)	0.179	**72.6 (5,823)**	**74.1 (6,964)**	**0.044**
Among Black Registrants	51.6 (410)	51.1 (423)	0.887	51.7 (1,591)	53.9 (1,792)	0.190

Estimated likelihood of turnout by time of registration and estimated race for the entire state of South Carolina. P-values reflect statistical differences in the estimated likelihoods of voting. Models include controls for race, age, gender, distance from the shooting site, average income of census tract, and co-ethnic congressional candidate. Full models can be found in the Appendix.
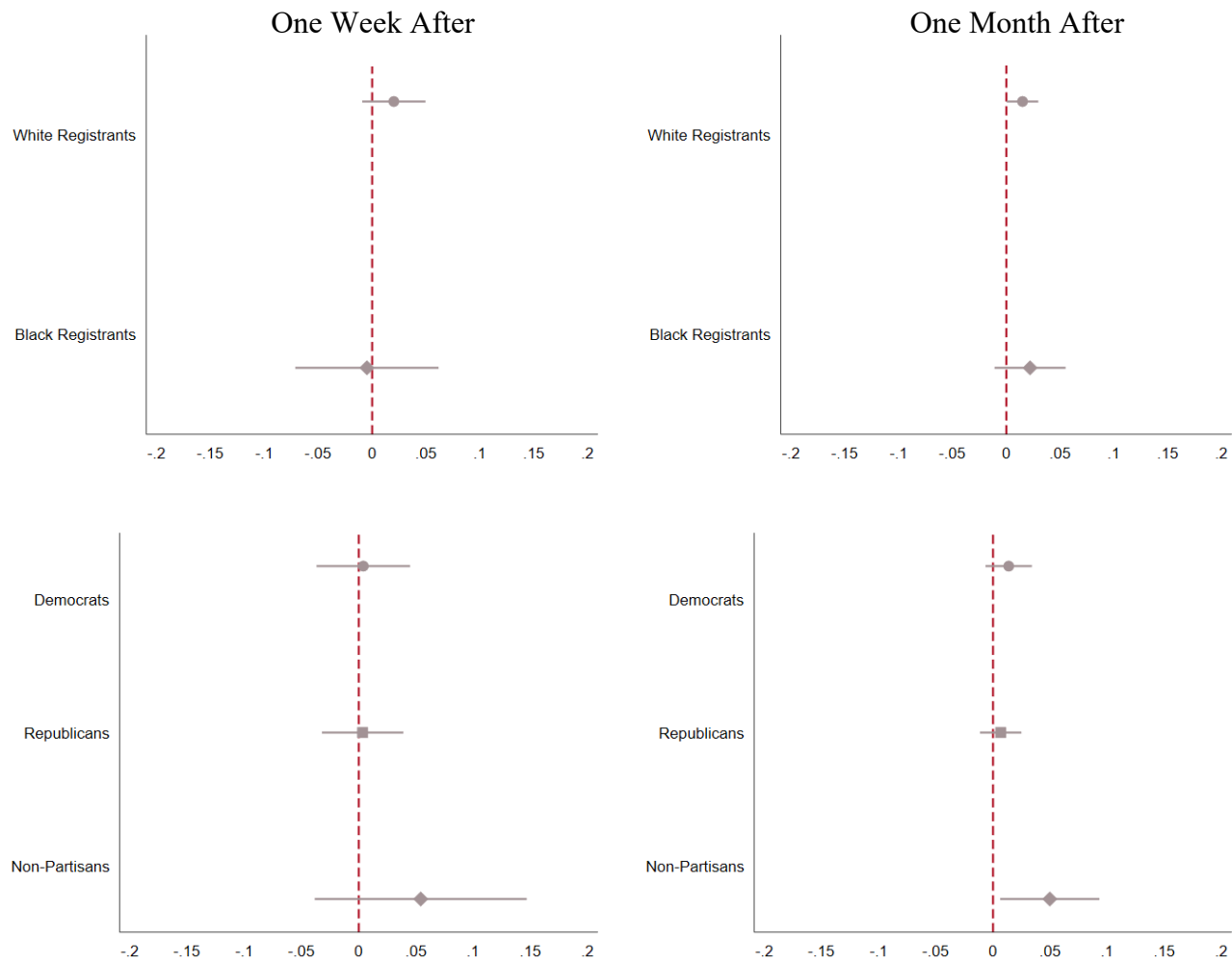
Figure 20: Distinct effects of registration time in 2015 on the likelihood of turning out to vote in the 2016 general election.
All effects are shown as difference from the equivalent period prior to the shooting. Effects are for the entire state of South Carolina.
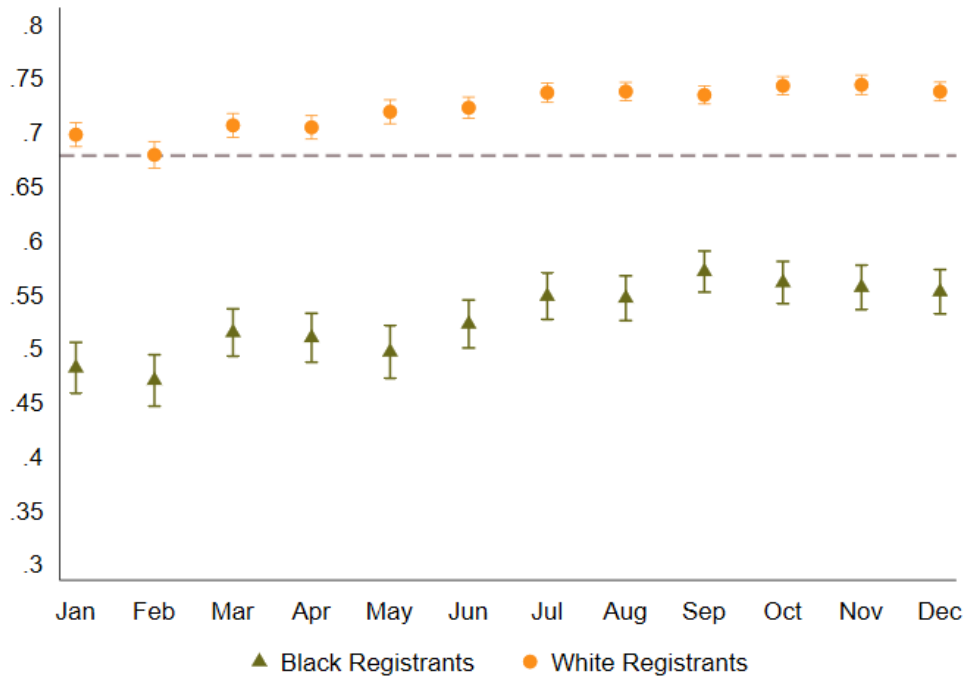
Figure 21: Average likelihood of turnout in the 2016 presidential election by month of registration in 2015, comparing Black and white registrants.
The grey line marks the average likelihood of voter turnout (among 2015 registrants) in that election for South Carolina.

Discussion

Many studies of the political responses to ethnic violence, terrorism, and other forms of political violence consider the psychological mechanisms that inform how the individual responses to those acts, as I have in the previous chapters. While it had been taken for granted that these mechanisms operated uniformly across the population, more recent scholarship contends that emotional reactions to politics are not identical when comparing white and Black Americans. This has implications for the study of psychological mechanisms (Albertson 2020). When we assume that all racial groups have a similar baseline perception of, tolerance for, and understanding of violence, even with all historical evidence to the contrary, we perhaps misestimate the effect that these events have on political behavior. This mirrors the findings of Chapter 4 and 5, in which I find that white subjects are distinctly more anxious after reading about violence targeted against Black people than after reading about violence directed at other white people. Black subjects, however, while expressing greater anger in response to news of Black-targeted violence, do not express greater anxiety and do not show any increased likelihood of engaging in political activity, as some literature would direct us to expect.

What can these null findings tell us in light of the findings from the previous chapters? Work which considers the political behavior of Black Americans must give ample consideration for the infra-politics and the complexities of Black political life, particularly regarding Black history in the United States. While I find null results when looking to electoral behavior, this is not indicative of political apathy or indifference on the part of Black people in Charleston, in South Carolina, or around the country in response to this event. All anecdotal evidence to the contrary, in fact. The scale of protest mobilization after the shooting suggests that Charleston was not lacking in community organizations or social capital, though that is certainly one plausible reason why I might have found this result. It is more likely, I suggest, that the shooting in Charleston highlights a resilience of Black people to such violence, given prolonged experiences with it. It also shows that studies of Black politics must go beyond electoral behavior to the non-institutional forms of engagement, infrapolitics, and the political channels through which Black people have had to historically operate. A rich traditional of this work exists, including those who have studied expressions of grievance (Kelley 1993); protests (Francis 2014; Gause 2022; Gillion 2013; McAdam 1982; Morris 1986; Parker 2009); boycotts (McGuire 2010) and other ways that Black people have operated outside of a political system that has not historically recognized the humanity and citizenship of Black people and other people of color.

Violence on the Border

Next, I turn to an August 3, 2019 mass shooting in which 21 individuals were murdered at an El Paso, Texas Walmart. While shocking on its own, the context revealed around the incident connected the shooting to a wider web of white supremacy around the globe. The shooting's perpetrator drove over 600 miles from Allen, Texas to El Paso with the goal of targeting Hispanic people. Prior to the incident, he wrote online that "This shooting is a response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas."[58] In that post, the perpetrator referenced other mass shootings in New Zealand and Denmark that targeted minoritized groups in those countries. The shooting also came on the heels of another mass shooting in Gilroy, California the week before with white supremacist ties.

As with the Charleston shooting, there were historical similarities with this event that were not simply coincidental. El Paso marks a physical border, between the United States and Mexico, but it also marks an ethno-racial border as well. This is a border which is indicative of a longer history of violence against Mexicans in Texas. Not only has there been violence to annex the land that recognized as Texas from Mexico, but there has also been violence at the hands of the state and vigilantes, namely the Texas Rangers (Martinez 2018). Historian Monica Muñoz Martinez writes that this violence in the 19th and 20th centuries had a "state-building function. It both directed the public to act with force to sustain hierarchies of race and class and complemented the brutal methods of law enforcement in this period" (Martinez 2018, 6-7). The violence that Martinez documents is an extension of expansionist land policies which were means of solidifying white supremacy in new territories in the 19th and 20th centuries (Frymer 2017). Contestation around whiteness has almost defined Texas since its inception. In this incident, the targeting of Mexican-Americans and Hispanic-Americans was made clear in the immediate aftermath of the incident when these revelations were made public.

Following from my study of Charleston, South Carolina, I test the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework, with similar expectations:

H1: Because the August 2019 mass shooting in El Paso, Texas explicitly targeted Hispanic people, any measurable changes in voter registration should be seen among Hispanic residents, and not members of other racial groups.

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[58] "Feds file hate crime charges against defendant in El Paso Walmart shooting." February 6, 2020. NBC News.

H2: Hispanic people registering to vote in El Paso in the weeks and month following the shooting have a higher likelihood of subsequent voter turnout in November 2020 when compared to those Hispanic people who registered in the time prior.

Data

To test these expectations, I use the Texas state-wide voter file, which contains information on more than 15 million registered voters in the state. Similar to the other voter files used in this chapter, the Texas file, provided through L2, includes the names, addresses, geo-coordinates, ages, racial identities, and genders of registered voters, in addition to their *date of registration*, last *electoral activity*, and their last known partisan affiliation. As in my other analyses, I calculate the *distance* between each registrant's residential address and the location of the incident.[59]

When this is truncated to El Paso County, there are 444,626 registered voters in the L2 dataset.[60] Registrants are identified with ethno-racial descriptions of European, Hispanic, "Likely African-American," East and South Asian, Portuguese, and Other. Sixty-four percent registrants were Hispanic, and 20.3 percent of registrants were identified as European. I limit my analyses to only these two groups that make up the overwhelming majority of the El Paso County electorate. In 2019, 25,825 individuals registered to vote in El Paso County; 24,078 of these individuals registered for the first time. The average age of registrants in 2019 was 33 years old among those who registered for the first time as well as those re-registering. Again, I focus on race and partisanship as I consider any discernible changes in electoral behavior. I provide the racial and partisan distributions of these registrants in the Appendix.

With the research design I have described above, I use the August 3, 2019 at a Walmart retail store in El Paso, Texas as an intervention between two "treatment periods" below that include the week and month immediately following the shooting.[61] As points of comparison, I also include the week and month before. Across El Paso County, a total of 558 people registered in the week immediately before and 706 in the time after, a significant increase in voter registration (p-value <

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[59] Converted to miles from meters at 1 mile = 1609 meters. Of the 444, 626 observations, only 38 did not have a distance measured. (Leaving 444,588 observations with *near_mile* variable calculated).

[60] Note that in the L2 file, an "Official Registration Date" variable indicates the last (or most recent) time an individual registered to vote. The "Calculated Registration Date" indicates the first time that the individual did so. The analyses presented in this chapter use the "Official Registration Date" as each registrant's date of registration, though the findings remain substantively unchanged when using the "Calculated Registration Date."

[61] Week Cut-offs: July 27, 2019 – August 3, 2019 – August 4, 2019 – August 11, 2019. Month cut-offs: July 6, 2019 – August 3, 2019 - August 4, 2019 – September 1, 2019. No registrations were processed on Sunday, August 3, the day of the shooting.

0.01). 2,608 individuals registered to vote in the 30 days prior to the shooting and 2,450 individuals registered in the 30 days after the election, a significant decrease in registration (p-value = 0.03)

Recall that this research design looks at voter turnout in the year following the violence and an unignorable occurrence in the time between the 2019 shooting and the 2020 presidential election was the unset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic, which began in the first quarter of 2020, left a lasting impression on the ways in which citizens across the county would cast their votes in the year's primary and general elections (Crabtree and Fraga n.d.). In El Paso County, a number of ballots were cast early and through the mail – a shift from previous elections. Because of this, I make separate considerations of early voting in these analyses, which are not featured for the other cities. Early in-person votes could be cast between Monday, October 5, 2020 and Friday, October 30, 2020, ahead of the November 3, 2020 presidential election.[62] Of the El Paso County registered voters, 192,578 turned out to vote early in the 2020 general election. Of these, 208 registered in the week prior, and 257 registered in the week after (p-value = 0.75).

Results: Voter Registration and Turnout

In the aggregate, I observe that the likelihood of early voting in the 2020 presidential election for a registered resident of El Paso County does not significantly change depending on whether they registered to vote in the week before or week after the El Paso shooting. This likelihood is 39 percent for those registering in the week before and 36 percent for those registering in the week after. Expanding the window of time, I also compare the month prior to and the month after the shooting. The likelihood of voting early in the 2020 general election increases by about three percentage points, when comparing turnout the month prior to and the month after the shooting (p-value = 0.05). In the next sections, I consider whether there are any changes when stratifying the sample by partisan or racial identification.

Voter Turnout by Party

Controlling for individual voter demographics, I calculate the likelihood of early voter turnout in November 2020, stratifying the sample, and considering whether the time of registration – pre or post-shooting – is related to voter turnout in the next general election. For 2019 registrants, 32.1 percent

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[62] Information from the Texas Secretary of State's Office.

of Democrats, 56.4 percent of Republicans, and 29.6 percent of Non-Partisans turned out for early voting in the 2020 presidential election.[63] I measure whether there is distinct electoral mobilization along party lines by considering the relationship between partisan affiliation – Democratic, Republican, and Non-Partisan – and when an individual registered to vote. I find that, for those El Pasoans who registered to vote in the time immediately following the shooting, there is no substantive change in the likelihood of turnout compared to those registering in the time before along any party lines. For Democrats, Republicans, and Non-Partisans, the likelihood of turnout is consistent – these estimations are reported by week and month of registration in Table 3 and effect sizes are reported in Figure 3.

Table 5: Estimated likelihood of early turnout in the 2020 presidential election by time of registration and partisan affiliation in El Paso County, Texas.

	One Week			**One Month**		
	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value
Among All Registrants	39.2 (558)	35.9 (706)	0.23	**33.1 (2,450)**	**35.7 (860)**	**0.05**
Among Democratic Registrants	37.1 (477)	36.4 (586)	0.80	**32.1 (2,218)**	**35.2 (2,054)**	**0.04**
Among Republican Registrants	62.1 (28)	54.0 (40)	0.51	54.2 (139)	59.6 (126)	0.37
Among Non-Partisan Registrants	**41.7 (53)**	**25.1 (80)**	**0.05**	30.1 (251)	27.8 (270)	0.57

P-values reflect statistical differences in the estimated likelihoods in voter turnout. Full models are shown in the appendix. Models include controls for race, party, age, gender, distance from the shooting location, and income.

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[63] Comparatively, 41.47 percent of Democrats, 28.3 of non-partisans, and 64.2 of Republicans turned out to vote among all early voters.

Table 6: Estimated likelihood of early turnout in the 2020 presidential election by time of registration and ethnic description in El Paso County, Texas.

	One Week			One Month		
	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value
Among Hispanic Registrants	36.2 (346)	35.0 (427)	0.73	31.9 (492)	32.7 (478)	0.63
Among White Registrants	47.8 (109)	43.7 (134)	0.54	38.2 (492)	42.1 (478)	0.22

P-values reflect statistical differences in the estimated likelihoods of voter turnout. Full models are shown in the appendix. Models include controls for race, party, age, gender, distance from shooting location, and income.
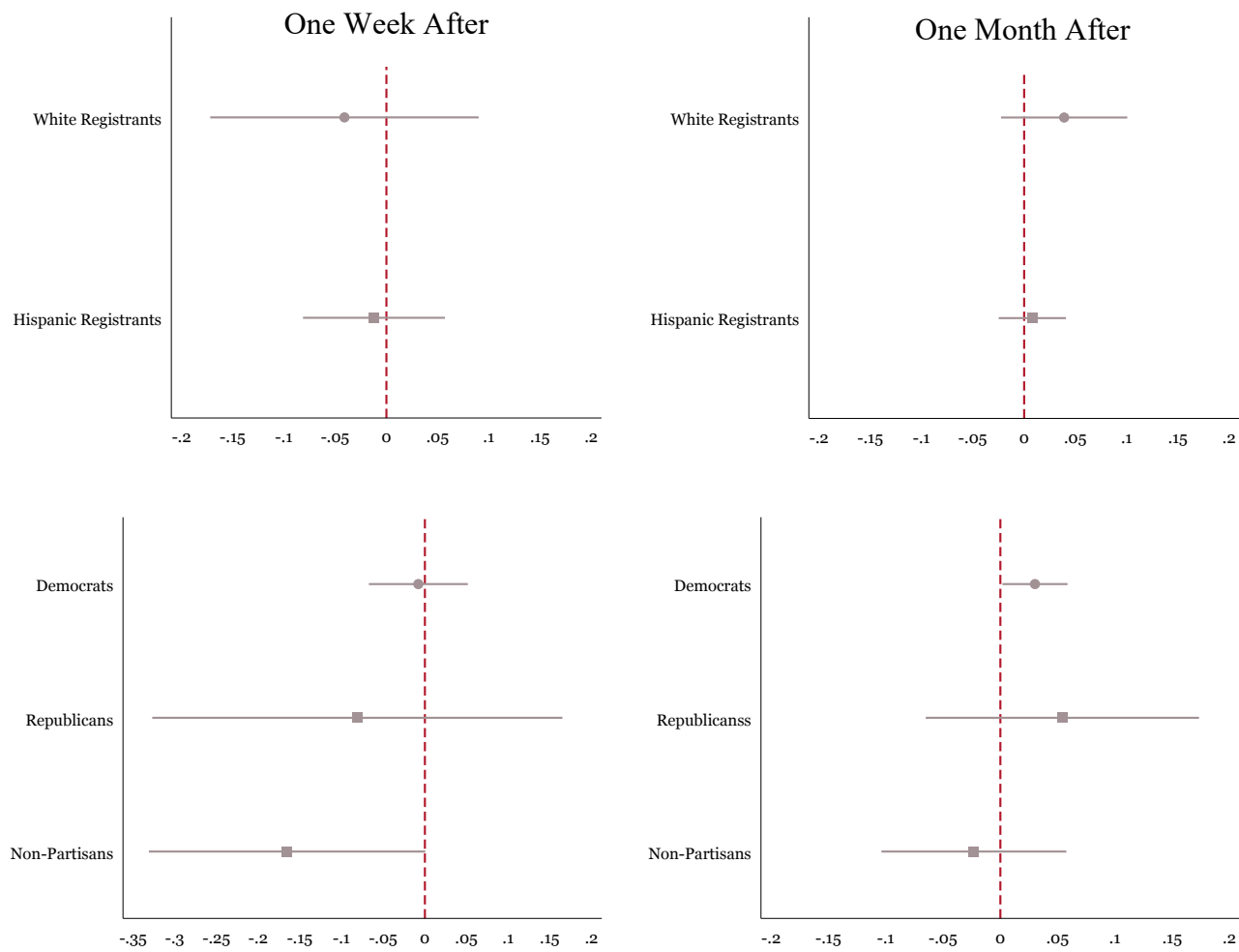
Figure 22: Distinct effects of registration time in 2019 on the likelihood of turning out to vote in the 2020 general election. All effects are shown as difference from the equivalent period of time prior to the shooting. Effects are for El Paso County.
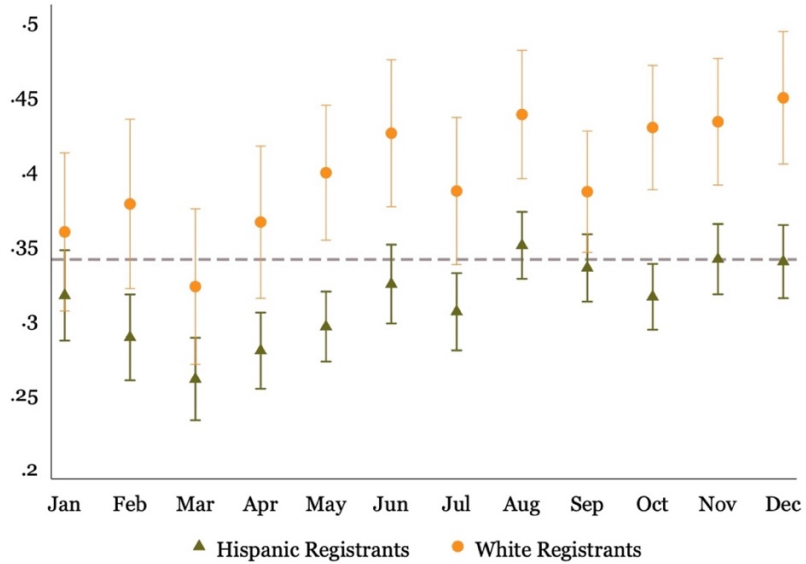
Figure 23: Average likelihood of turnout in the 2020 presidential election by month of registration in 2019, comparing Hispanic and white registrants.
The grey line marks the average likelihood of early voter turnout (among 2019 registrants) in that election for El Paso County (33.8 percent).

Voter Turnout by Racial Identity

Next, I test Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework and the expectation that an act of violence that explicitly targeted Hispanic people on account of their ethnicity should have measurable effects on the electoral mobilization of Hispanic El Paso residents in its aftermath. Across the nation, there is a sizable gap in 2020 turnout when comparing non-white and white registrants. This is true in El Paso as well. Among all registered voters in El Paso, County, 2020 early voting turnout for the 2020 presidential election was 51 percent among white registered voters. That drops to 42 percent for Hispanic registered voters. Among 2019 registrants, 38.8 percent of white registrants and 31.1 percent of Hispanic registrants voted early.

Leveraging the El Paso Shooting as an exogenous shock, I calculate the difference in turnout between Hispanic and non-Hispanic registrants moving from the time immediately before the shooting to the time immediately after. Once again, and contrary to my expectations, I find that there is no statistical difference in likelihood of turnout among Hispanic people who registered after the

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shooting compared to those who registered in the time before (Hypothesis 2). I present these estimates in Table 4 and display them in Figure 3.[64]

Fear, Participation, and Mobilization in Las Vegas

On the night of Sunday, October 1, 2017, a single gunman opened fire on a country music festival near the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. Firing with multiple weapons from hotel room windows tens of stories above the festival, the gunman murdered 58 individuals and left 887 with injuries.[65] Unlike other recent mass shootings in the United States, no manifesto was left behind. The perceived randomness of the place, location, and victims provided no evidence as to what may have motivated the shooting.[66] From my analyses of Charleston and El Paso, I find that a racial target is not a sufficient condition for "racially-selective" mobilization. But does the absence of such a target necessarily mean that racially-selective mobilization will not occur?

This event is an ideal case to study violence rooted in race and other contextual factors, because it lacks such context on several dimensions. First, evident in the press, and also in survey work completed after the shooting, there was a confusion about how to categorize the shooting and how it should be described (Dolliver and Kearns 2019). The inconsistency and confusion of labels in the aftermath of such incidents are not unique to this mass shooting, but the lack of a clear motivation, manifesto, or targeted group created a situation that left how the public and media interpreted the shooting largely undefined. The shooting was not definitively deemed a hate crime, to which there is a strong connotation with racial-minority victims (Crabtree and Simonelli n.d.) nor was it declared a terrorist attack, to which there is a strong labeling bias toward events with a Muslim perpetrator and white victims (Kearns, Betus, and Lemieux 2019). Therefore, there do not appear to be any clear racial dimensions to the shooting.

Second, regardless of its label, the shooting itself was not directed at one specific racial group, though the overwhelming majority of victims were white-Americans.[67] Nor, were many of the victims

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[64] Additionally, as in Charleston, I do not find that likelihood of turnout is significantly associated with distance to the shooting location – that is, voters living in closer proximity to the shooting location are not more (or less) likely to vote in the subsequent year.

[65] "Las Vegas Police Release Final Report on Massacre, With Still No Idea of Motive," *New York Times.* August 3, 2018.

[66] Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Investigative Report of the 1 October Mass Casualty Shooting. August 3, 2018. Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.

[67] I code the presumed racial and gender identification of deceased victims based on demographic information and photos reported in the *Las Vegas Sun* and *USA Today.*

residents of the area itself. Four of the 58 deceased victims were from Las Vegas, and a fifth was from Reno, Nevada. This mass shooting not only lacked a clear target or intention, but it also predominantly victimized people who were not residents of the area itself.[68] The location itself – on the Las Vegas Strip – is a place frequented by tourists and visitors to the area. The family and social ties that connect victims to the place that an act of violence occurs encourage political participation (Hersh 2013). Such ties are limited in a shooting, such as this, that occurred in a tourist center and victimized individuals with limited links to the local community. The personal and physical proximity that are important factors for heightened threat perception in the aftermath of terror attacks are arguably lacking here, at least among those who were present when the shooting occurred (Avdan and Webb 2018). Further, many of the incidents that are the focus of conflict studies in the United States have defining factors that influence interpretation (e.g., terror attacks; violence with perpetrator manifestos) or are endogenous to the communities in which they occur (e.g., riots or uprisings).

I expect that with no clear factor motivating the shooting and no targeted demographic group, there should be no difference in the likelihood of turnout among people who registered in the time immediately prior to the time immediately after the shooting (Hypothesis 4). That is, if this expectation is correct, individuals who registered to vote in the time immediately after the shooting were no more likely to turnout to vote than those registering to vote in the time immediately before. Anger generated by the shooting, may have encouraged individuals to register to vote in an effort to change (or maintain) the existing policies and regulations regarding gun control. However, the sheer randomness of the shooting, the lack of connection the majority of victims held to the Las Vegas area, as well as failure to establish a clear motivation for what occurred may have instead generated fear among the population, depressing political activity. The shooting had no explicitly racial frame nor racial target. I expect that the likelihood of turnout for white registrants and non-white registrants remained constant when comparing those registering in the time before to those who registered in the time after the shooting. I anticipate that with no clear factor motivating the shooting and no specifically targeted demographic group, there was no change in overall voter registration in Las Vegas from the time prior to the time after the shooting. People who registered to vote in the time immediately after the shooting were no more likely to turnout to vote than those registering to vote in the time immediately before. Further, I expect that there was no change in the likelihood of individuals of any specific racial group

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[68] Based on information printed in the *Las Vegas Sun.*

registering to vote, when comparing the periods prior to the shooting to the periods after.

Data

Next, I examine voter registration and voter turnout in the Las Vegas, Nevada area. Las Vegas is a city within Clark County, Nevada, which also encompasses several other cities, including North Las Vegas, as well as unincorporated sections of the county.[69] Clark County provides public access to the entire voter registration file for its population, over one million voters, inactive and active, between 2013 and 2018.[70] This database includes details regarding registered voters – names, addresses and birth years – as well as glimpses of their political activity starting from their time of registration. The file notes if the registrant has affiliated themselves with a political party at the time of registration and the date of their last noted political activity.

Similar to my two previous examinations, I focus on two variables of interest in my analysis, party affiliation and race, with considerations for gender, age, and distance of residence from the Mandalay Bay. *Party Affiliation* is selected by registrants at the time of their registration; they are given the option to identify themselves as a Democrat, Republican, Libertarian, Independent American, or Non-Partisan. Of the 56,922 individuals registering to vote in Clark County in 2017, 35 percent registered as Democrats, 28 percent as Republicans, 30 percent as non-partisan, with the remaining seven percent registering their association with smaller parties. I estimate *Registrant Age* by subtracting each registrant's provided birth year from the year 2017. The average age of new registrants in 2017 was 40 years old.

While the voter files for South Carolina and Texas are proprietary data purchased from L2, the Clark County voter file is publicly available data.[71] Therefore, I must supplement this voter file with additional information. *Registrant Race*, *Registrant Gender*, and *Distance* from the shooting are not provided in the dataset, and I use information in the voter file to generate estimations of each. With

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[69] I make this a county-level analysis for two reasons. First, these cities blend into one another. For instance, the well-recognized "Welcome to Las Vegas" sign is actually located in neighboring Paradise, Nevada. Second, in the data file, there is a self-reported city address and a city assigned by the county clerk. When comparing the two, I find that the distribution of people who identified "Las Vegas" as their city of residence (N = 38,692) does not align with the administrative distribution of residents across cities within Clark County (N = 15,551).

[70] I truncate the file to all registered votes between 2013-2018. The entire file contains information about voters registered as early as 1954, 1,229,957 observations in total.

[71] Available through the Clark County, Nevada website.

the residential addresses provided, I geo-code each registrant's individual address[72] in the file to a specific latitude and longitude, then use these locations to estimate their local voting precinct's distance from the shooting site at the Mandalay Bay. I also use these coordinates to assign each registrant to the U.S. Census tract in which they live. Regardless of whether a residential address is provided, all individuals have their local voting precinct, house legislature districts, and congressional districts reported.

With the *wru* R statistical package, each registrant is assigned a likelihood of racial identification (Imai and Khanna 2016). The package uses the registrant's surname, in addition to information about the Census tract in which they reside, to create a racial estimation. These estimations are provided as percentages, and I assign each registrant the racial classification for which their likelihood of identification is greater than fifty percent.[73] To validate these racial identifications, I compare percentages of voting age populations in Clark County (taken from the American Community Survey) to the percentages within the entire voter file.[74] In the ACS, 60 percent of the citizen voting age population (CVAP) are white, 11 percent are Black, and 18 percent are Hispanic. In the voter file I find that 60 percent are estimated as white registrants, 8 percent are estimated to be Black, and 20 percent are estimated to be Hispanic.[75]

Similarly, I use the gender package (Mullen 2018) to generate a likelihood estimate of each registrant's gender. This process draws upon the comparisons of first name to names in the birth records of the Social Security Administration. For a subset of observations, self-reported gender is recorded in the voter file (15,283 individuals between 2013-2018). I also estimate gender using the *gender* package for these observations. As a validation procedure, I compare the estimated gender with self-reported gender and find that there is a 0.968 correlation between the two. Finally, I include measures of census tract demographics, including population, co-ethnic population, and average household income.

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[72] Some registrants opted to have their residential information excluded from the file. For these individuals, their race is estimated based on name alone. These account for less than 0.5% of the sample – 1,665 people between 2013-2018 and 146 people in 2017.

[73] Racial identification is omitted for those for whom a clear determination cannot be made; 2,889 individuals registering to vote in 2017. Probabilities of accurate racial identification are provided in the Appendix.

[74] This procedure is also used by Fraga (2018), Einstein, Palmer and Glick (2019), and Grumbach and Sahn (2020) to validate estimates from Imai and Khanna (2016).

[75] I also validate these racial estimations against a locally administered Las Vegas Community Survey, and I find comparable results.

Results: Voter Registration and Turnout

Is there a measurable impact of voter registration in the aftermath of the October 1, 2017 Las Vegas mass shooting and the likelihood of turning out to vote in the following year's general election? First, I look at electoral behavior without considering the shooting's effect. The overall turnout rate for the 2018 general election in Clark County was 41.6 percent of the registered population. Among those who registered to vote in 2017, the likelihood of turnout was slightly lower, 43.6 percent compared to a likelihood of turnout of 45.6 percent for 2015 registrants and 49.2 percent for 2013 registrants.

In the Appendix, I show the overall likelihood of general election turnout among all individuals who registered to vote in 2017, 2015, and 2013 by race and party. Given that voting is a habit-forming behavior (Coppock and Green 2016), turnout is more likely among those who registered two years (2015) and four years (2013) prior. Likelihood of voting also increases with age and remains similar regardless of gender. For all findings presented below, full models are provided in the Appendix.

The research design of this study uses an October 1, 2017 Las Vegas mass shooting as an impetus for voter registration and civic activity in Clark County, Nevada. Controlling for demographics of each individual registering, I calculate the likelihood of voter turnout in November 2018 for several segments of the population as a function of the time – pre or post-shooting – that an individual initially registered to vote. In the aggregate, I observe that the likelihood of turnout for any voter does not change depending on whether they registered to vote in the week before or week after the shooting. Expanding the window of time, I also compare the month prior to and the month after the shooting. The likelihood of voting increases for those who registered in October 2017 compared to those registering to vote in September 2017. This increased likelihood is not only distinct from the month prior to the month after, but it is also distinct from every other month of 2017. That is, registrants in October 2017 had a higher likelihood of voting than registrants at any other time of the year, by two percentage points. While not a decisive difference, these models do highlight something distinctive about the month of October 2017. In the following section, I consider if partisan or racial demographic divisions drive this finding.

Table 7: Estimated likelihood of turnout in the 2018 mid-term election by time of registration and partisan affiliation in Clark County, Nevada.

	One Week			One Month		
	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value
Among All Registrants	41.9 (1,658)	43.8 (1,756)	0.256	**43.3 (6,245)**	**45.1 (6,475)**	**0.040**
Among Democratic Registrants	52.4 (539)	55.8 (598)	0.277	53.5 (2,095)	55.8 (2,237)	0.146
Among Republican Registrants	39.0 (533)	37.0 (548)	0.374	41.6 (1,915)	40.9 (1,891)	0.647
Among Non-Partisan Registrants	34.8 (586)	38.6 (610)	0.113	**35.5 (2,235)**	**38.5 (2,347)**	**0.042**

P-values reflect statistical differences in the estimated likelihoods of voter turnout. Models include controls for race, party, age, gender, distance from the shooting site, presence of a co-ethnic congressional candidate, and average census tract income.

Voter Turnout by Party

For reasons that I have outline above, partisanship may have played a role in voter mobilization in the shooting's aftermath. Republicans and Democrats could have different reasons for turning out to vote, having been mobilized by their respective parties, either in defense of gun ownership or in support of gun control.[76] To test that mobilization should occur along clear party lines, I consider the interaction between self-reported partisan affiliation and when an individual registered to vote, making the distinction between Democrats, Republicans, and Non-Partisan and other third parties.

Self-reported identification as a member of either the Democratic or Republican Party was not related to registering to vote in the month immediately following the mass shooting, nor does it align with significant changes in 2018 turnout. Likelihood of turnout is reported by week and month

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[76] There were no ballot initiatives in Clark County focused on gun control in any elections in 2017 or 2018.

of registration in Table 5. Figure 5 also shows the effect of registration time by partisanship, and Figure 6 plots the estimated likelihood of turnout by month.

There is a distinct difference in the likelihood of turnout between 2017 Democratic and Republican registrants in Clark County in the 2018 general election, a difference of eleven percentage points across the entire year. However, there is no discernible change in the likelihood of turnout when I consider whether a Democrat or Republican registered to vote in the week before or the week after the shooting. These results are consistent when compared to those who registered to vote in the one-month period before and after the shooting. Democrats and non-partisans have the highest likelihood of voting in 2018 if they registered to vote in October 2017, these effects are a significant difference from the months prior to the shooting.

Voter Turnout by Race

A more intriguing picture emerges when disaggregating the data by estimated racial identification. I expected to find that distinctions in turnout comparing the time before and the time after the shooting would not emerge along racial lines, because the shooting itself did not have any clear racial motivation or racial group target. While self-reported race is not included in the Clark County, voter file, I use estimated race to differentiate between white and non-white voters. When stratifying 2017 registrants by this binary division, there is a distinct gap in the likelihood of voter turnout. This gap in electoral participation between white, Black, and Hispanic voters is reflected nation-wide (Barreto 2007; Bobo and Gilliam 1990; B. L. Fraga 2018; Lien 2004). For all of 2017, this gap is almost thirteen percentage points, with white registrants having a clearly higher likelihood of voting given that they registered in that year. Does this turnout gap persist for the entire year?

Aligned with the average for the year, a 12 percentage point difference exists in the likelihood of turnout between Hispanic and white registrants in the week prior to the shooting. However, this gap almost entirely disappears among those Hispanic individuals who registered to vote in the week after the attack, whereby the likelihood of voting among Hispanic registrants is three percentage points higher than it is for white registrants. Hispanic people registering in the week immediately following the shooting are twelve percentage points more likely to vote in the 2018 general election than those who registered in the week prior.   These treatment effects are displayed in Figure 5.

Table 8: Estimated likelihood of turnout in the 2018 mid-term by time of registration estimated race for Clark County, Nevada.

	One Week			One Month		
	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value	Turnout Prior	Turnout After	p-value
Among White Registrants	47.1 (991)	44.6 (985)	0.246	47.9 (3,552)	47.6 (3,660)	0.808
Among Black Registrants	26.8 (144)	36.5 (155)	0.097	31.8 (512)	34.0 (572)	0.461
Among Hispanic Registrants	**34.7 (352)**	**47.4 (443)**	**>0.001**	**39.0 (1,407)**	**44.3 (1,539)**	**0.005**

P-values reflect statistical differences in the estimated likelihoods of turnout. Models include controls for race, party, age, gender, distance from the shooting site, presence of a co-ethnic congressional candidate, and average census tract income.

Importantly, when comparing registration across the entire year, October 2017 remains a distinctive time for Hispanic registrants. The likelihood of voting, for Hispanics registering in October 2017, is 41 percent, significantly higher than Hispanic turnout for every other month of the year and higher than the 2017 average for all registrants. In Figure 6, I show that when separating Hispanic and white registrants and estimating their likelihood of turnout in the 2018 general election, those Hispanic individuals who registered to vote in October 2017 have a significantly higher likelihood of turnout when compared to registrants in all other months of the year. While there is a clear gap in estimated likelihood of turnout of Hispanic and white registered voters for all other months of the year, that gap closes for those who registered in October 2017.[77] The likelihood of voting for Hispanics who registered to vote in October 2017 is statistically indistinguishable from white registrants' likelihood of voting.

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[77] However, when I further disaggregate by race and party identification, non-white Democrats and white Republicans have similar likelihoods of turnout. In the month of October 2017, likelihood of turnout increases among non-white Democrats and is statistically indistinguishable from white Democrats.
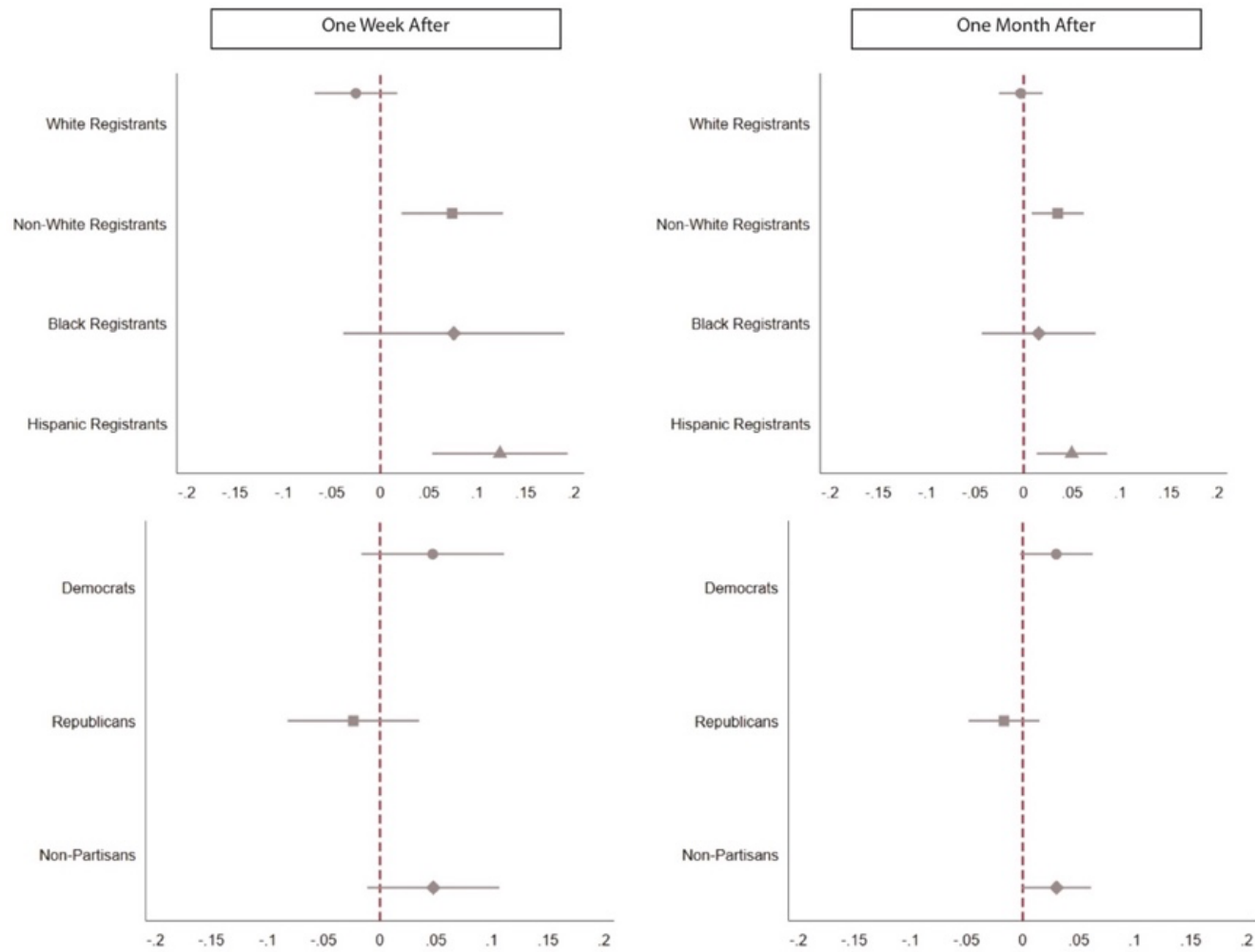
Figure 24: Distinct effects of registration time in 2017 on the likelihood of turning out to vote in the 2018 general election. All effects are shown as difference from the equivalent period of time prior to the shooting.
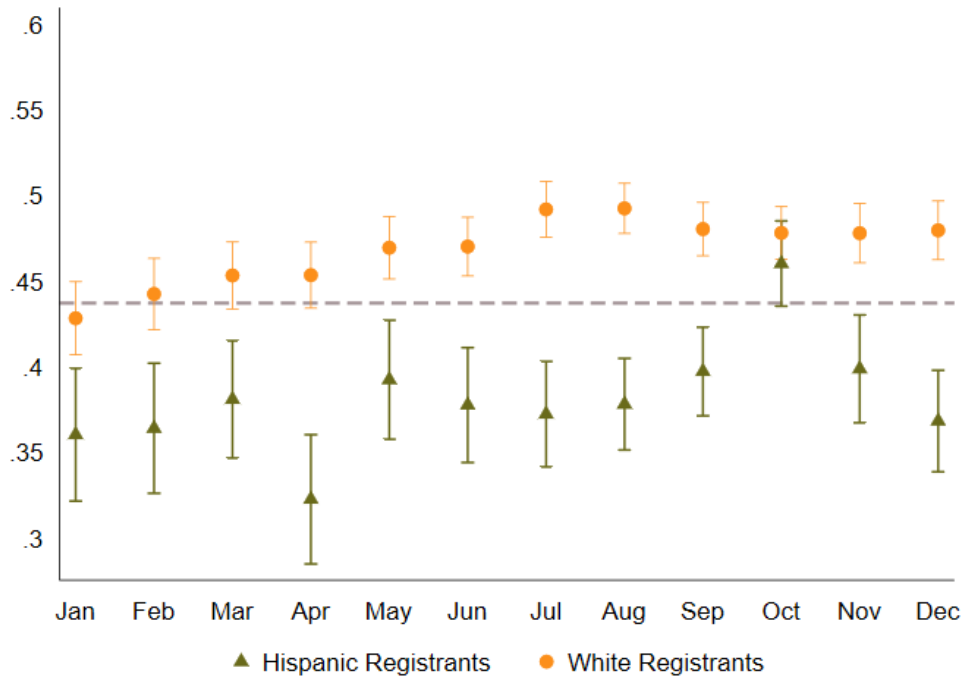
Figure 25: Average likelihood of turnout in the 2018 general election by month of registration in 2017, comparing Hispanic and white registrants.
 The grey line marks the average likelihood of voter turnout (among 2017 registrants) in that election for Clark County (41.6 percent).

Discussion

Beneath the hedonism and excess that define Las Vegas in the work of writers and entertainers, for those who live, work, and remain rooted in the city, it reaches far beyond the Las Vegas Strip. The city is a diverse community with a robust political life that can shed some light on this chapter's findings. While I have provided evidence that political activation among Clark County's October 2017 registrants could be attributed to the Las Vegas Shooting, I am unable to causally identify it as the source without doubt. The interaction between post-shooting registration, non-white voters, and their later voter turnout is particularly striking. I propose that this could be a function of two pathways: co-ethnic candidate driven mobilization and/or mobilization driven by community organizations. Let's consider both for a brief moment.

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Co-Ethnic Candidate Mobilization

Because differences in racial turnout could also be attributed to the presence of a co-ethnic candidate running in a local district (Barreto 2007; B. L. Fraga 2016a, 2016b), I perform the estimations above with consideration for whether or not a co-ethnic candidate was running in an individual's Congressional district. Additional robustness checks also include variables for co-ethnic candidates running in an individual's State Senate or State Assembly district.[78] When considering State Senate and State Assembly candidates, I do find evidence to suggest that Hispanic registrants living in a district where a Hispanic candidate was running for office were more likely to turnout to vote. Further, those Hispanic registrants who lived in such districts and registered to vote in the month immediately following the shooting had an estimated likelihood of voting of 49.1 percent. My overall findings are robust to the inclusion of these variables. These models, as well as a description of these variables, is included in the Appendix.

#Vegas Strong – Union-Driven Mobilization

Another explanation for the distinctive Hispanic turnout I suggest in this chapter is directly linked to organization-driven mobilization. I posit that increased turnout among Hispanic people who registered in the aftermath of the Las Vegas shooting can be connected to the large-scale political mobilization undertaken by the city's local unions.

Unions are powerful, if sometimes overlooked, political organizations in American Politics. Foremost, unions delineate the workplace, a space in which political mobilization often happens and political attitudes are shaped (Leighley and Nagler 2007; Macdonald 2019; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Unions have historically been the site of racial politics, whereby these organizations have shaped attitudes about race (Frymer and Grumbach 2021) and mobilized Black as well as Hispanic people in diverse forms of political engagement (Francia and Orr 2014; Frymer 2008; Vargas 2005). Ultimately, unions are an important, and largely understudied, place for politics in the United States.

Union presence in Las Vegas, Nevada is particularly strong and vibrant, though perhaps surprising. Representing the interests of those who drive the tourist industry in the city – servers,

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[78] Co-ethnic candidacy – a binary variable – is created from a list of all candidates running for Congress, State Senate, and State Assembly in 2018 in Clark County. I include only candidates running in the 2018 general election. I visually approximate race for most white candidates. For non-white candidates, I look to websites, Twitter, and Facebook for clues about racial-ethnic identity. Candidates for whom a clear categorization cannot be made, I do not classify.

chefs, bartenders, gaming workers, room attendants, and other service workers – the Culinary Union, AFL-CIO, and Service Employees Union are significant political entities in this area of a right-to-work state, where Reno, driven by a similar tourism economy, has a much lower union density (Getman 2010; Gray and DeFilippis 2015). Unions are mobilizing players in American politics, increasing political engagement and registration among the marginalized members of society who join into the organizations (Chandler and Jones 2011; Francia and Orr 2014). I propose that the same is true of the unions in Las Vegas. Whereby we know the ability of these structures to increase political activity among Hispanics, I suggest that, by looking to Las Vegas, we can see how local unions mobilized their members in the aftermath of that event. Not only that they mobilized their members, as is evidenced in several anecdotal ways, but that these efforts last beyond the immediate aftermath of the event.

Specifically, I consider the Culinary Union Local 226 (hereafter, the Culinary), a chapter of UNITE HERE. Among other examples of collective action in the Culinary's history, perhaps most notable is its strike of Las Vegas' Frontier Hotel. The Frontier Strike is the longest in American history, beginning in 1991 and lasting six years, four months, and ten days. No strikers crossed the picket line, and the Culinary used a multi-faceted strategy to outmaneuver and outlast its opponent that did not rely solely on the strike itself (Getman 2010). An electoral approach was also used, and the union supported the campaign of a union member to the Nevada State Senate. Once elected to office, this member was able to use her new position to engage Nevada's governor in the battle. His attempts at mediation ultimately revealed that the owners of the Frontier Hotel had not negotiated in good faith (Getman 2010).

With over a membership that is over 54 percent Hispanic, this organization is not only a political entity, but an ethno-racial one as well.[79] The Culinary's Citizenship Project has facilitated the naturalization of immigrants to U.S. citizenship, union members and non-members alike. A political director for the Culinary Union estimated that close to twenty percent of Nevada naturalizations could be attributed to the organization (Chandler and Jones 2011; Gray and DeFilippis 2015). For others, the Culinary's vocational training programs have served as an entry point to the workforce and economic mobility. The Culinary Training Academy offers classes for those who are unemployed or seeking to develop new skills, and in the progress growing the union's reach (C. Alexander 2002; Gray and DeFilippis 2015). A once largely African-American workforce in the Las Vegas service industry

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[79] Culinary Workers Union Local 226 History.

has shifted to one of predominantly Hispanic origins (C. Alexander 2002; Chandler and Jones 2011). Yet, through its engagement in the community beyond the Las Vegas Strip, the Culinary has fostered solidarity across racial and ethnic divides (Chandler and Jones 2011).

The Culinary has used electoral mobilization to its advantage in the past, and I argue that in the aftermath of the Las Vegas shooting, its political activism has striking (and lingering) electoral implications. The Culinary immediately mobilized as news of the shooting broke across the city. The Culinary knew that its members were in harm's way and began a phone-bank effort to contact each of its 60,000 members with the intention of confirming their safety and directing them to counseling and mental health services.[80] The organization sponsored several blood drives in the weeks that followed, in addition to holding community vigils and meetings regarding the shooting.

Perhaps most indicative of the way that the Culinary supported its community in the shooting's aftermath, and also used the event as an opportunity for political engagement, was a November 9, 2017 event held on the Las Vegas Strip. Deemed the "Vegas Strong March," the event included thousands of union members marching in recognition of Vegas' strength and resilience in the wake of tragedy, often tagged on social media with #VegasStrong. The union directed this narrative, though, and also used #VegasStrong to reflect the strength of the union and its workers in the city, many of whom were on the job at the time of the shooting.

Conclusion

How does the interaction of race and violence influence political behavior in the United States? I use mass shootings in Charleston, El Paso, and Las Vegas as exogenous shocks to those localities, using a difference-in-differences design to answer this question. I find strong evidence that registering to vote in the one-month period following a mass shooting in Las Vegas, Nevada increased the likelihood of turning out to vote in the next year's general election among residents of the county. This effect is distinctly strong among the county's non-white and Hispanic registrants, who are 8 and 12 percentage points (respectively) more likely to have voted if they registered in the week after the shooting than in the week before. When comparing across the entire year of 2017, non-white registrants are 5 percentage points more likely to vote if they registered in October 2017 than if they registered in

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[80] October 2, 2017 Press Release from the Culinary Union Local 226

September 2017. This elevated likelihood is distinct in October 2017 and unmatched by any other month of the year. Further, among October Hispanic registrants, likelihood of turnout is statistically indistinguishable from the likelihood of turnout among white people registering to vote during that same period. This effectively closes the turnout gap between the two racial groups. The electoral response of Black residents in Charleston, South Carolina and El Paso, Texas, however, refutes the expectations I put forth in Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework. Rather than seeing distinct changes in voter registration or turnout among Black or Hispanic residents in the aftermath of racially-targeted mass shootings, I instead find that electoral engagement remains steady, neither significantly increasing nor decreasing.

Limitations – The incidents featured in this chapter represent a single tactic and single, mass incidents that were particularly shocking. Beyond experiments, there are considerable limitations in research design on the subject matter to create equivalence across cases. It is important, however, to acknowledge these limitations and how they might bias this chapter's outcomes. The number of casualties in each attack is one potential confounder. With 58 victims and hundreds of casualties, the scale of the Las Vegas far exceeded those in Charleston and El Paso. My findings from Chapter 5 contend that this not an insignificant attribute of the shooting to take into account. Both Black and white respondents expressed significantly greater anger when acts of violence had higher numbers of casualties.

Beyond Electoral Politics – Findings from these three locations run in opposition to my initial expectations, though they are convincing evidence of a more complex relationship between violence and racial identity. They highlight several important points that scholars should build on in pursuing research on racial violence in the United States. While there is more work to do to interrogate the null results I find in Charleston and El Paso, this research further emphasizes the need to challenge assumptions that members of all racial groups react in similar manners to violence and to racial violence. Moreover, while these findings do not find support for the electoral mobilization of Black people after the Charleston shooting, the costs of registering to vote are much lower than engaging in a march or other forms of protest, activities which were undertaken en masse in the weeks following the 2015 shooting at the Mother Emanuel A.M.E church. The question remains, then, as to why costlier political actions were taken.

My focus on electoral politics is derived from historical emphasis placed on the importance of the ballot for marginalized groups. Yet, there is certainly a strong argument for turning to other forms of political behavior outside of elections, particularly given the history of exclusion from the ballot for

many racial minorities. Yet, the electoral franchise has carried a great weight among those who have studied and sought to end racial violence. In a 1910 essay entitled "How Enfranchisement Stops Lynchings," Ida B. Wells wrote that "With no sacredness of the ballot there can be no sacredness of human life itself. For if the strong can take the weak man's ballot when it suits his purpose to do so, he will take his life also… the more complete the disenfranchisement, the more frequent and horrible has been the hangings, shootings, and burnings." (Wells 1910, 45). Her words suggest that through electoral politics, there is power to challenge, if not end, racially-targeted violence.

As I have described above, the analyses in this chapter represent a limited understanding of what it means to be "political" in the aftermath of racial or political violence. In the absence of a robust and established system of community structures (like in Las Vegas), the direction of energy and resources toward electoral turnout may seem unlikely or, perhaps, unfruitful, especially outside of a general election year. It also seems plausible that even in the presence of robust community organizations and networks, if residents are overcome by political frustration or fatalism regarding racially-targeted violence (or violence more generally), then even well-organized and supported campaigns to promote voter registration and voter turnout might be futile.

This is, perhaps, too pessimistic an interpretation. While voter registration and voter turnout represent a traditional understanding of political participation, it leaves many stones unturned in regard to other ways that individuals and communities act politically. Taking this chapter's findings about Charleston without any additional context would suggest that Charlestonians and South Carolinians were apathetic to the terror in their community. This could not be further from the truth – with an eye towards contentious politics, it becomes apparent that organizations around the country turned their energy toward Columbia, the state's capital, and removing the flag of the former Confederacy from the capitol building.[81]

Political Opportunity in Community and Timing – Furthermore, this study emphasizes the role of co-ethnic candidates and community organizations in promoting electoral participation. Co-ethnic candidates invoke feelings of empowerment (Barreto 2007), encourage voter turnout (B. L. Fraga 2016a, 2016b), and political donations (Grumbach and Sahn 2020). Community organizations also facilitate electoral participation, encouraging voter registration and voter turnout, while generating social capital (Putnam 2000). The role of organizations, like the Culinary Union, and co-ethnic

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[81] For example, "Hundreds march in Charleston, Columbia to take down Confederate flag." June 20, 2015. *Washington Post.*

candidates in mobilizing non-white voters in the aftermath of the Las Vegas shooting comes across clearly in this study. Even in the absence of a racial frame, this shooting engaged these factors in Clark County and highlights the multi-dimensional nature of race in the United States. By highlighting these sources of political mobilization, this study also emphasizes the crucial role of community organizations – even those that are not dedicated to issues of violence prevention or gun control – in the aftermath of violence. These findings echo the work of Francia and Orr (2014) who highlight the differential impact of union affiliation on Latino voter registration and voter turnout. Whereas I find no significant effect of registration in the aftermath of the shooting for white registrants, the effect is clear among Hispanic registrants. This indicates that such events, even in the absence of a racial target, frame, or motivation, can mobilize under-represented racial groups to political participation. Violence creates opportunities where non-traditional forms of political activity flourish – blood drives, community meetings, vigils – these build social capital, bring people together, and facilitate political activity. The aftermath of these incidents appears to be a crucial time for political mobilization – both in the streets and in preparation for future elections. The necessary infrastructure must be in place, though. If it does not exist, it can be built and it can emerge from existing networks.

Future Research – Moving forward, both studies point to several places for further study among Hispanic, Black, and other people of color in the United States. Foremost among these, are research designs that consider individual-level reactions to violence, adding finer-grain definition to our understandings of why responses appear as they do in the aggregate. While the initial focus here was on violence targeting Black and Hispanic Americans, future research should consider the political implications of racially-targeted violence against members of other racial groups, like Asian, and Indigenous Americans, whose victimization is unfortunately commonplace. Future research should also consider the nuance of within group response. Rather than assume identical predispositions and reactions within racial groups, researchers can enrich this area of study by considering the individual and psychological mechanisms at work. This rejects the assumption of the monolithic and homogenous "Black community." Just as scholarship has shown that people of color are disproportionately victimized by violence, political scientists should pursue a better-informed understanding of how bearing such burdens influences political behavior.

This area of research inextricable from the past, and there is ample room to considering how histories of violence against people of color continue to influence responses to violence in the present-day. How Black residents of Charleston, South Carolina responded in the aftermath of the Mother Emanuel A.M.E. shooting cannot be separated from the church's long history, the history of white

supremacy in the United States, and histories of Black repression and Black resistance. Nor, can the mobilization of Hispanic voters in Las Vegas be separated from racial capitalism and the labor of those who work in the city's tourism center.

There was brutality and mercilessness in each of these incidents gave them prominence in the media. The Charleston shooting countered the idyllic dreams of a "post-racial" United States that were seemingly embodied by President Barack Obama. The sheer number of casualties of the Las Vegas shooting made it the largest in United States history. And the targeting of people going about their normal daily routines in El Paso made that incident all the more shocking. In short, there are a number of factors that contributed to the large amount of attention paid to these events. That attention is abnormal. The selection of these cases overlooks those incidents which do not garner so much of the national spotlight. It overlooks the acts of violence that do not take place so publicly, the acts which do not appear so particularly devious, the acts whose victims are not posed in such stark and sympathetic contrast to their perpetrators. Other work that focuses on the implications of racial, racist, or racially-targeted violence would be well-served by considering those acts of violence which are not so prominently featured in the news cycle. Media attention should not be mistaken for a measure of impact or trauma. Acts of violence that go uncovered in national news are perhaps impactful in unseen recorded, on account of their latency. Many of these acts, particularly sexual violence, will remain unknown too few beyond the victims and perpetrators. Future work should consider the ways in which scholars can attempt to reclaim such knowledge in order to further explore the repercussions of events that do not attract national attention.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

This concluding chapter is divided into four sections: 1) I briefly summarize the main findings of the previous chapters, 2) I specify what the contributions of these findings and the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework are to the political science literature, and 3) I outline several points for my own future research as well as thoughts for other scholars contributing to this growing area of study. The fourth section is the most important. 4) There, I discuss the real-world implications of this work, what it teaches us about political and racial violence in our society, and also where it can inform those who are working to curb violence, and gun violence in particular, in the United States.

Summary

In Chapter 2, I introduce the concept of racially-targeted violence, the foundation upon which this research is built. I outline the ways in which racially-targeted violence is a political entity unto itself and summarize a body of research that informs my expectation that it should have political consequences. Chapter 3 introduces the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework which furthers our understanding of racial violence and racially-targeted violence in the United States. Within this framework, racially-targeted violence has measurable and non-negligible implications for the political behavior of those who share racial identity with the targeted. I hypothesize, therefore, that acts of violence which directly victimize members of a racial group should have distinct impacts on the political behavior of people who are of the same racial identity.

Then, I move to test my expectations empirically. To do this, I use a series of survey experiments in Chapters 4 and 5 to pursue the political psychology of racially-targeted violence. In these chapters, I measure distinct differences in reactions to racially-targeted violence across racial groups. I find in both studies that Black Americans show significantly higher levels of anger when

exposed to news of violence targeted against their own racial group. Racially-targeted violence is not significantly evocative for Hispanic and white respondents, however.

Chapter 6 turns to actual voter turnout and registration information to measure electoral behavior in the aftermath of mass shootings. There, I conclude that racial identity alone is not enough to spur political mobilization, but it must be paired with community structures that take advantage of political opportunity. Thus, mobilization along racial lines may come to fruition through racialized organizations. Using the example of Las Vegas, Nevada, I point to the ways in which labor union membership may have spurred political participation in the aftermath of a mass shooting in that city.

Contributions

Bridging Subfields – The Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework draws on a wide variety of scholars and literatures in American Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Relations to begin to develop an understanding of how and why we do or do not react to racially-targeted violence. Moreover, it establishes racially-targeted violence as an inherently political concept unto itself. This makes a significant theoretical contribution by taking the work of Race and Ethnic Politics scholars in American politics – who have long recognized the power of racial identity in politics – and placing it in conversation with scholars of International Relations and Comparative Politics, who have studied at length the ways in which networks and ties between people help individuals to navigate complex decisions in the aftermath of political violence.

Pursuing the Intersection of Violence and Identity – We have such a stronger sense of southern identity, of American identity, of Black identity, because of violence. Violence shapes the boundaries from the outside and from within. While I focus on race, I think there are so many other identities to which this can apply, and I hope others will pursue these further. Not only race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender, class, citizenship – but also identities which are not subsumed by social hierarchy, like parenthood.

Looking Forward to Future Research

Beyond Black Politics

I want to take this space to again emphasize that the focus on Black people and Black political behavior should not obscure violence against members of other historically marginalized groups –

racial groups and beyond. If anything, the effort that I have been able to dedicate to the study of racially-targeted violence and its impact on this subset of the population should show that there is much that needs to be studied. There is so much more work that must be done. It is a task that I cannot do alone. Racial hierarchy in the United States is not just Black and white. In her history of state violence in Texas, Monica Munoz Martinez asserts that "The many vestiges of violence, despite efforts to erase them, do leave traces" (2018, 25). It is my hope that other scholars will also engage in this work, illuminating histories of violence and their impact among other marginalized and minoritized communities.

Collective Action Problems and Mobilizing Frames – A Bad Day or A Vicious Hate Crime?

Racial projects take us from a racial identity of a targeted group to some sort of reaction, but they do not necessarily make the connection to political action. In fact, they might let individuals linger in political inaction without the ability to solve a collective action problem. These are links in a chain. Racial identity has us recognize which incidents are salient to us (just as other dimensions of identity might make other incidents salient to us or to others), but it takes other outside forces to channel potential political energy into political action. At times, these forces might highlight the dimensions of an incident which they believe are most salient – emphasizing narratives which will call people into political action, even if those narratives are debatable. Here is where greater work is needed to understand how framing and narratives around violence can be used for political gain – for activists on the ground, for the communities directly impacted, and to be exploited by political elites.

Individuals do not have complete information. Whether they engage in risky political activity is dependent on whether they believe others will also engage (Klandermans 1984). Their sense of risk or threat is higher without assurance that they will not be alone. It is here that social networks and social structures are crucial. Community organizations/social networks serve two purposes: Navigating collective action problems as well as framing collective threats and messaging.

It is essential to highlight the need for greater consideration of the roles of community organizations and social capital in future research. Studies of Mexican electoral politics and organized crime find that there are depreciating effects of violence on electoral turnout (Ley 2017; Trelles and Carreras 2012), and others have argued that social capital may be an important piece in understanding that impact (Dorff 2017; Rojo-Mendoza 2013). Citizens in more violent municipalities of the country are less likely to turn out to vote. Those who were crime victims but indicated higher levels of

engagement and trust in their neighborhoods — a proxy for social capital — were more likely to join a political campaign or protest. The interaction between victimization and social capital suggest that it is a much more powerful force in increasing a crime victim's political participation than it is on non-victims (Rojo-Mendoza 2013). The direction of causality is unclear, though, and those with stronger connections to friends and family showing greater political engagement after crime victimization (Dorff 2017). This research highlights the role that social capital might play in facilitating political participation in the aftermath of violence. This is a crucial dynamic for overcome the costs of engaging in risky behavior or turning risk into reward – there must be a knowledge or reassurance that others will also engage (Klandermans 1984).

Social capital and resilience are key components of mobilization in the aftermath of violence (Aldrich 2012; Rojo-Mendoza 2013). Connections to family and friends and engagement in activist networks and organizations (Dorff 2017; Granovetter 1977; Klandermans 1984; McAdam 1986) are particularly influential on political mobilization in the wake of violence. Narrowing down more specifically on the roles that community organizations play in making sense of violence, mobilizing frames and framing are another crucial component that are due greater consideration. Frames are opportunities for communities to make sense of the seemingly senseless. While an individual may hold certain feelings or beliefs about violence, frames validate, contradict, and ultimately shape those feelings, increasing the salience of political issues and channeling those feelings and attitudes toward specific political goals. Framing is distinct from motivation – frame and motivation represent two separate factors of an act of violence, though they might be synchronous with one another. The motivation is the perceived or stated force, rationale, or ideology driving the action. The frame is the way in which the violence is portrayed and interpreted. The framing and frames around the event are also malleable. They are created and molded by community organizations, leaders, activists, and other political elites. These frames, in effect, are tools to help the public make sense of these acts of violence when they happen, regardless of if they are racially-targeted or not. Thus, one frame might portray an incident as an attack on African-Americans nd a modern-day lynching. Another frame, however, might suggest that it is not only an isolated attack on people who happen to share racial identity but as an act of white supremacy and a threat against people of color more widely.

I turn again to the example of Atlanta, Georgia and the March 16, 2021 mass shootings that resulted in the murder of nine people. This dissertation was completed prior to the 2022 election, which prevents me from conducting analyses of equivalence to those in Charleston, El Paso, and Las Vegas. While there were victims of multiple racial/ethnic identities and genders, the press narrative

turned (rightfully so) toward the shootings as a part of a larger wave of violence against Asian-Americans across the United States. This was in part due to framing efforts on the part of Asian Americans Advancing Justice and others in the Atlanta area. These groups used this moment as time to draw together Asian-American residents of Atlanta, recognize the breadth and strength of that community, and make attempts to mobilize these residents to engage further with the political system. Counter narratives emerged. The perpetrator himself indicated, after the shootings, that he was not motivated by anti-Asian or anti-female sentiment, but instead by his own sex addiction.[82] A local law enforcement official suggested that the perpetrator "had a really bad day."[83] But activists continued to frame the incident as an attack on Asian-Americans and Asian-American women in particular, again making connections to racial capitalism as union workers in Las Vegas did as I describe in Chapter 6.

In further developing the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework, there is room to examine how the use of racial cues and racial framing may be strategic in some cases, particularly when there is a robust community infrastructure already in place. I argue that this is an important difference between Atlanta and Charleston. The Charleston Massacre came at a time of "post-racial" American; Atlanta happened during an upswing in anti-Asian hate crimes. It is plausible that the differences in racial narratives between these two time periods may have influenced different outcomes. In Atlanta, there were organizations already engaged with the topic and ready to move. This extension of the framework will have to be tested in the wake of the 2022 mid-term elections.

Infra-politics

I have found myself drawn to and moved by the work of scholars who challenge the traditional notions of political behavior as defined by political scientists. While the dependent variables in this dissertation have focused on these traditional forms, it is my belief that work on this topic must extend beyond this, particularly given the nature of violence. When engaging in those traditional and public forms of participation becomes dangerous and even life-threatening, perhaps people do not go home and hide. Perhaps, instead, people find new ways to challenge oppression and assert their agency in ways that are not measurable in voter files or financial records. My work in Chapters 4 and 5 are

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[82] "8 Dead in Atlanta Spa Shootings, with Fears of Anti-Asian Bias." March 26, 2021.
[83] Ibid.

attempts to measure this potential. Greater attention must be paid, however, to gauging the everyday means of resistance that might otherwise go unobserved.

Opposition is hard to estimate on the surface, though, because there are a number of incentives to keep true attitudes veiled (Kuran 1991; Scott 1990). "Micropolitics" or infrapolitics can be expressions of discontent or disillusionment that come across subtly – if they are apparent to the oppressor at all – in the everyday activities of the oppressed (Kelley 1993; Scott 1990). These forms of engagement, while not facilitated through formal institutions, are still political. That is, not all political activity requires interaction – contentious or not – with the state. It is important to note that this framework presumes that individuals *want* to engage with the state and that this would be their normal course of action.[84] Work from Desmond, Papachristos, and Kirk (2016), for example, finds that Black residents of Milwaukee were less likely to call police in the aftermath of the fatal police shooting of a Black man in that city. Such a desire to engage with the state should not be taken for granted, and work from Weaver, Prowse, and Piston (2020) underscores the importance of recognizing that race-class subjugated communities do not necessarily see the state as a protector or legitimate actor.

There is another point to be made on this topic of expanding our understanding of traditional political behavior – this is much less infra-politics and much more overt. Moving forward we must also look beyond institutionalized or so-called "legitimate" forms of political participation as "rational" responses to racial violence and terror. As Juliet Hooker calls upon scholars to do, referencing the work of Audre Lorde, we must think beyond "democratic sacrifice" as a response to terror (Hooker 2016). What is an appropriate response to racially-targeted violence? Is it engaging in electoral politics? Is it protesting? Or does the seeming futility of these approaches, even among the historical calls of activists like Ida B. Wells, make them unlikely channels for engagement? We must think broadly about the ways in which compounded Black anger (and the anger of other historically-marginalized groups) reveals itself. Work must be done to challenge what is and is not "legitimate" response to compounded years and memories of violence and terror.

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[84] See the work of Weaver, Prowse, and Piston (2020) for a clear example of when this would not be the case.

Violence and Trauma

Trauma is the heartbeat of this project. Trauma is the sustaining pulse in the Violence, Identity, and Mobilization Framework and the findings I present, whether named or not. It is both the measurable force which drives the work and the intangible echo that reverberates beyond the site of impact. Trauma is central to the story told in this dissertation, and so I take the time to discuss it in the abstract. Sociologist Kai Erikson (1995) writes that the definition of trauma offers two descriptions of it: trauma which is the injury and the impact and trauma as aftermath which keeps us revisiting and replaying the impact in our heads. With this second understanding, trauma goes from a "moment to a season." The moment of trauma is the act of violence, but the season is made up of shockwaves which continue to pulsate outward, keeping us revisiting the original moment. Existing literature in sociology, criminology, and psychology has found that this season can take on many forms, this work argues that the season is political as well. At times, as in Chapters 4 and 5, I talk clearly about the moment of impact.

I have focused on how those of shared racial identity to the targeted respond to racially-targeted violence, but I also wonder how others engage with and use these incidents for gain. There are important streams of research here to understand including how some – political elites in particular – capitalize on the trauma of others for personal gain and how legacies of trauma live on within communities.

Violence and Democracy in the United States

There are a series of questions that I consider in this final section – these are questions that I have asked myself as I have considered the broader implications of the work I have done thus far. As I have described elsewhere, racially-targeted violence is manifested through a number of tactics. Gun violence has been particularly on my mind as I write – for good reason, there have been over 300 mass shootings this year as of July 1, 2022. Therefore, as I make connections between my work and its broader implications, I will focus on how this research can contribute to the reduction of gun violence in the United States.

What do the sum of these parts tell us? Speaking to the academic literature, this work announces quite clearly that race is a powerful and understudied dimension of violence. But what does it say about the politics of violence in United States today? As I have noted in the preceding chapters, the news of mass shootings, political violence, and racial violence have been common occurrences throughout my coursework, the conception of this project, its data collection, and its writing.

"What can I do?"— I ask this as both a social scientist and as an individual who has felt overwhelmed by the enormity of violence and its threat in this country. This is a question that I have asked myself many times in the past weeks and years. I ask this question both in a rhetorical sense and in regard to what can any of us, as an individual, do? This is, once again, a collective action problem. We find ourselves in the middle of it. Not simply free-riding, but unsure which next steps move us forward and which might perpetuate a vicious cycle of violence. Organizing structures, community organizations are essential here. Political elites even. We must be prepared to use effective mobilize frames to frame these events, and this requires more research. What mobilizing frames are activating? Which are deactivating? And do they have longevity? What frames optimize inclusion and solidarity across racial lines? Here, it is critical to follow the example of scholars in the study of violence in a number of different contexts which mobilizing frames work and why (Bonilla and Tillery 2020; Kreft 2019; Shesterinina 2016).

On this topic, audience is important as well. In its focus on understanding if and how those of shared racial identity respond to racially-targeted violence, this dissertation has highlighted a critical, though not immediately obvious point: Americans do not respond to these events in the same way; they are not equally evocative to everyone. On the one hand, I believe my findings emphasize that there is power in historically marginalized communities – it must be unlocked. Not only do I point to the anger and sympathy of Black Americans when exposed to news of racially-targeted violence in Chapters 4 and 5, but my findings from Chapter 6 certainly point to the potential for political mobilization in response to mass shootings among Hispanics, if not in the experimental set-up.

But, on the other hand, what does this research say about white Americans? Is there potential political energy among that group? Or is there only apathy to racially-targeted violence? While my null findings in Chapters 4 and 5 imply an apathy among whites, this, again, points us toward areas for further research, as it does among Hispanic Americans. I do not interpret my findings as definitive evidence of apathy among whites and Hispanics. As I describe at much greater length in Chapter 4, this simply points to the need for a more careful explication than I have had the time to do here. If racial identity can prove to be a significantly powerful cue among Black Americans, then what frames are needed to activate the political interest of others?

Can we stop these incidents from happening? Because my work concerns itself more so with outcomes than onset, portions of the answer to this question may be better suited to scholars of public opinion, gun violence, and polarization in the United States. If the answer lies in significantly shifting American public opinion and political action surrounding gun violence, then this research

suggests that we should not despair entirely. However, if we cannot predict the onset of these events, then we must be prepared for them. Our attention often turns to these incidents when they occur on a massive scale. At the local level, however, these incidents should be used as sparks to encourage people to be upset. There is potential political energy there. But in the absence of organizational structures and leadership to guide us out of the chaos and the overwhelming sense of "what can I do?", there is little political action. Conditions are not ideal for large-scale political action. But the conditions can be optimized. The aftermath of this incidents is a pivotal time – for mobilization in the streets and for preparing for forthcoming elections.

Should we be pessimistic? The findings from this dissertation say… maybe? It is quite an incongruity to attempt to think of positive spin with which to conclude when so many people have died in mass shootings already in 2022. I began this dissertation with the assertion that violence is a defining facet of American democracy. The more I study this topic, the more I become convinced that violence is also an inescapable reality of democracy, the result of tension between order and plurality, though I hope that I may one day be corrected on the matter. Yet, I also believe that this research points to the ability to mobilize around and against violence.

Appendices

Appendix A: Violence in Color

Sample Demographics

Table 9: Demographics of sample in Experiment One (May 2020).

	Total Sample	White Respondents
Number of Observations	615	422
Percent of Sample	--	69%
Percent Female	51%	51%
Percent with a college degree[85]	55%	58%
Average age	46	49
Average income	$55,000-$59,999	$65,000-$69,999
Partisanship	Democrats – 37% Independents – 26% Republicans – 37%	Democrats – 28% Independents – 27% Republicans – 45%
Ideology	Liberal – 38% Moderate – 30% Conservative – 32%	Liberal – 34% Moderate – 29% Conservative – 37%
Passed the Manipulation Check	517 (84.1%)	367 (87.0 %)

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[85] Including those who completed an associate degree, bachelor's degree, professional or graduate degree.

Table 10: Distribution of the sample across treatment conditions in the May 2020 experiment.

	Random Violence	Black-Targeted Violence	White-Targeted Violence
Total Sample	208	205	202
White Respondents	143	135	144

Table 11: Demographics of sample in Experiment Two (November 2020).

	Total Sample	Black Respondents	Hispanic Respondents
Number of Observations	865	431	434
Percent of Sample	--	50.2%	48.8%
Percent Female	65%	63%	67%
Percent with a college degree[86]	47%	49%	46%
Average age	39	40	38
Partisanship	Democrats – 59% Independents – 26% Republicans – 15%	Democrats – 69% Independents – 23% Republicans – 8%	Democrats – 49% Independents – 30% Republicans – 21%
Ideology[87]	Liberal – 43% Moderate – 37% Conservative – 20%	Liberal – 47% Moderate – 38% Conservative – 15%	Liberal – 38% Moderate – 37% Conservative – 25%
Passed the Manipulation Check	818 (95%)	414 (96%)	407 (94%)

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[86] Including those who completed an associate's degree, bachelor's degree, professional or graduate degree.
[87] Collapsed from a 7-point scale.

Table 12: Distribution of the sample across treatment conditions in the November 2020 experiment.

	Random Violence	**Black-Targeted Violence**	**Hispanic-Targeted Violence**
Total Sample	284	290	291
Black Respondents	146	139	146
Hispanic Respondents	138	151	145

Police: Shooting suspect said that he targeted random people in attack

Jordan Hillman STAFF WRITER

Updated 10:28 a.m. ET Feb. 7, 2020

"It's obvious that it's random. What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

USA TODAY – A gunman opened fire Thursday night at a community center outside of Chicago, killing six people before briefly fleeing, police said.

The suspect surrendered to police several blocks away. He was arrested and transported to the Chicago Police Department's headquarters, where he agreed to speak

Mourners left flowers and candles at a memorial outside of the community center on Friday. *Jordan Hillman/USA Today*

about the incident. It was there that the suspect confessed that he planned the rampage ahead of time with the intention of targeting random people.

During a Thursday night press conference, a police spokesman noted that the suspect entered the building earlier in the evening and then ultimately killed six people. Four others were wounded, but survived. No identifying information about the suspect was given.

Several hours afterward, a group of local leaders gathered a few blocks from where the shooting occurred and held an impromptu news conference. A member of the City Council said she believed the suspect had targeted the victims for no apparent reason.

"It's obvious that it's random," she said. "What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

City officials did not release information about the victims and did not say how many people were in the building during the shooting. Hospital officials declined to comment.

This story is still developing.

Police: Shooting suspect said that he targeted white people in attack

Jordan Hillman STAFF WRITER

Updated 10:28 a.m. ET Feb. 7, 2020

"It's obvious that it's race. What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of white people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

Mourners left flowers and candles at a memorial outside of the community center on Friday. *Jordan Hillman/USA Today*

USA TODAY – A gunman opened fire Thursday night at a community center outside of Chicago, killing six people before briefly fleeing, police said.

The suspect surrendered to police several blocks away. He was arrested and transported to the Chicago Police Department's headquarters, where he agreed to speak about the incident. It was there that the suspect confessed that he planned the rampage ahead of time with the intention of targeting white people.

During a Thursday night press conference, a police spokesman noted that the suspect entered the building earlier in the evening and then ultimately killed six people. Four others were wounded, but survived. No identifying information about the suspect was given.

Several hours afterward, a group of local leaders gathered a few blocks from where the shooting occurred and held an impromptu news conference. A member of the City Council said she believed the suspect had targeted the victims because of their race.

"It's obvious that it's race," she said. "What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of white people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

City officials did not release information about the victims and did not say how many people were in the building during the shooting. Hospital officials declined to comment.

This story is still developing.

Police: Shooting suspect said that he targeted black people in attack

Jordan Hillman STAFF WRITER

Updated 10:28 a.m. ET Feb. 7, 2020

"It's obvious that it's race. What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of black people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

Mourners left flowers and candles at a memorial outside of the community center on Friday. *Jordan Hillman/USA Today*

USA TODAY – A gunman opened fire Thursday night at a community center outside of Chicago, killing six people before briefly fleeing, police said.

The suspect surrendered to police several blocks away. He was arrested and transported to the Chicago Police Department's headquarters, where he agreed to speak about the incident. It was there that the suspect confessed that he planned the rampage ahead of time with the intention of targeting black people.

During a Thursday night press conference, a police spokesman noted that the suspect entered the building earlier in the evening and then ultimately killed six people. Four others were wounded, but survived. No identifying information about the suspect was given.

Several hours afterward, a group of local leaders gathered a few blocks from where the shooting occurred and held an impromptu news conference. A member of the City Council said she believed the suspect had targeted the victims because of their race.

"It's obvious that it's race," she said. "What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of black people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

City officials did not release information about the victims and did not say how many people were in the building during the shooting. Hospital officials declined to comment.

This story is still developing.

Police: Shooting suspect said that he targeted Hispanic people in attack

Jordan Hillman STAFF WRITER

Updated 10:28 a.m. ET Feb. 7, 2020

"It seems to be racial. What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of Hispanic people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

USA TODAY – A gunman opened fire Thursday night at a community center outside of Chicago, killing six people before briefly fleeing, police said.

The suspect surrendered to police several blocks away. He was arrested and transported to the Chicago Police Department's headquarters, where he agreed to speak

Mourners left flowers and candles at a memorial outside of the community center Friday morning. *Jordan Hillman/USA Today*

about the incident. It was there that the suspect confessed that he planned the rampage ahead of time with the intention of targeting Hispanic people.

During a Thursday night press conference, a police spokesman noted that the suspect entered the building earlier in the evening and then ultimately killed six people. Four others were wounded, but survived. No identifying information about the suspect was given.

Several hours afterward, a group of local leaders gathered a few blocks from where the shooting occurred and held an impromptu news conference. A member of the City Council said she believed the suspect had targeted the victims because of their race.

"It seems to be racial," she said. "What else could it be? You've got a guy attacking a group of Hispanic people. That's a choice. He chose to go into that building and harm those people. That's a choice."

City officials did not release information about the victims and did not say how many people were in the building during the shooting. Hospital officials declined to comment.

This story is still developing.

How much do you feel each of the following emotions about the article you read?

Randomized Items:
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Sadness
- Worry

Response Options:
- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

In the next 12 months, how likely is it that you, a friend, or a relative will be the victim of each of the following?

Randomized Items:
- Mass shooting
- Hate crime
- Terror attack
- Police brutality
- Robbery

Response Options:
- Extremely likely
- Very likely
- Moderately likely
- Slightly likely
- Not likely at all

How much discrimination do you think there is against each of the following groups in the United States today?

Randomized Items:
- Black people
- Hispanic people
- White people
- Asian people
- Women
- Men
- Transgender people
- Gays and lesbians

Response Options:
- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

On the issue of gun regulation, do you support or oppose each of the following proposals?

Randomized Items:
- Background checks for all gun sales, including at gun shows and over the internet.
- Ban assault rifles.

Response Options:
- Support
- Oppose

- Make it easier for people to obtain a concealed-carry permit.

How often do you believe it is justified for people to use violence to pursue political goals in this country?

Response Options:
- Always
- Most of the time
- About half of the time
- Some of the time
- Never

What do you think is the most important issue affecting the country today? [Open-ended Response]

What was the topic of the article you read?

Randomized Response Options:
- An act of violence
- Pay for college athletes
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- An art exhibit

November 2020 Qualtrics Study

How much did you feel each of the following emotions about the article you read?

Randomized Items:
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Sadness
- Worry

Response Options:
- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

In the next 12 months, how likely is it that you, a friend, or a relative will be the victim of each of the following?

Randomized Items:
- Mass shooting
- Hate crime
- Terror attack
- Police brutality
- Robbery

Response Options:
- Extremely likely
- Very likely
- Moderately likely
- Slightly likely
- Not likely at all

How much discrimination do you think there is against each of the following groups in the United States today?

Randomized Items:
- Black people
- Hispanic people
- White people
- Asian people
- Women
- Men
- Transgender people
- Gays and lesbians

Response Options:
- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- None at all

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Randomized Items:
- Having a gun protects the owner from crime.
- Having a gun is dangerous because it can lead to an accident.
- People should only have guns suitable for hunting or sports.

Response Options:
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- People who own handguns are up to no good.
- I would feel safer with a gun in my house.
- You don't need a gun if your town has a responsive police force.
- You don't need a gun if you live in a safe neighborhood.
- People need guns to protect themselves from government.

- Disagree

- Strongly Disagree

How often do you believe it is justified for people to use violence to pursue political goals in this country?

Response Options:
- Always
- Most of the time
- About half of the time
- Some of the time
- Never

How justifiable do you think each of these actions is to pursue a political goal?

Randomized Items:
- Sending threatening emails.
- Defacing property with graffiti.
- Burning a flag.
- Occupying a public or government building.
- Blocking streets, highways, or bridges.
- Displaying or wearing guns in public.
- Looting local neighborhood stores.
- Making a physical attack on another person.

Response Options:
- Always
- Most of the time
- About half of the time
- Some of the time

- Never

What do you think is the most important issue affecting the country today? [Open-ended Response]

What was the topic of the article you read?

Randomized Response Options:
- An act of violence
- Pay for college athletes
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- An art exhibit

Power Analyses

Based on prior experiments, I expected mean differences of 0.18 (d) between treatment and control groups among non-white respondents ($d = \mu_1 - \mu_2/\sigma$) in the second experiment.[1] Calculating power using a two-tailed test with a 95% confidence interval ($\alpha = 0.05$, ß= 0.80), I needed at least 54 respondents within each treatment condition to test the hypotheses I propose. I increased this number to 75 respondents per racial group, per condition as a precaution. In total, across three conditions (and two racial groups), I planned to engage at least 450 subjects. This meant, at a minimum, 225 Black and 225 Hispanic subjects, block-randomized by racial group to the three conditions, in order to allow for cross-racial and intra-racial comparisons.

Comparison of Responses to Random Condition

Table 13: Regression Estimates for Random Violence Condition – Reported Emotion

	Anger	Anxiety	Fear	Sadness	Worry
Hispanic Respondents	.026	.069*	.121***	.012	.137***
	(.038)	(.041)	(.041)	(.036)	(.04)
Black Respondents	.013	.063	.103**	.008	.12***
	(.038)	(.04)	(.04)	(.036)	(.039)
Constant	.651***	.431***	.373***	.7***	.465***
(White Respondents)	(.027)	(.029)	(.029)	(.025)	(.028)
Observations	427	428	428	427	427
R-squared	.001	.008	.024	0	.032

White respondents are the baseline for comparison. Standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1*

Table 14: Regression Estimates for Random Violence Condition – Perceived Victimization

	Mass Shooting	Hate Crime	Terror Attack	Robbery	Domestic Violence	Police Brutality
Hispanic Respondents	.089**	.114***	.051	.027	.066	.125***
	(.038)	(.041)	(.037)	(.037)	(.041)	(.039)
Black Respondents	.12***	.14***	.073**	.071*	.062	.229***
	(.038)	(.04)	(.037)	(.036)	(.04)	(.038)
Constant (White Respondents)	.214***	.271***	.22***	.318***	.255***	.191***
	(.027)	(.028)	(.026)	(.026)	(.028)	(.027)
Observations	427	427	426	427	427	427
R-squared	.025	.032	.01	.009	.008	.078

White respondents are the baseline for comparison. Standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1*

Full Models for Experimental Analyses

May 2020 Lucid Study

Table 15: Regression Estimates for Main Treatment Effects – Emotional Responses. White Respondents – May 2020 Lucid Study.

	Anger	Anxiety	Fear	Sadness	Worry
White Treatment Condition	-.062	-.039	.05	-.005	.002
	(.038)	(.039)	(.04)	(.035)	(.039)
Black Treatment Condition	.02	.057	.053	.026	.05
	(.038)	(.04)	(.041)	(.035)	(.04)
Constant	.649***	.427***	.369***	.698***	.462***
	(.027)	(.028)	(.029)	(.025)	(.028)
Observations	422	421	421	421	421
R-squared	.012	.014	.005	.002	.005

Random violence condition is the baseline for comparison. Standard errors are in parentheses

*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Table 16: Regression Estimates for Main Treatment Effects – Perceived Victimization. White Respondents – May 2020 Lucid Study.

	Mass Shooting	Hate Crime	Terror Attack	Police Brutality	Domestic Violence
White Treatment Condition	.059*	.035	.04	.068*	.003
	(.036)	(.04)	(.036)	(.037)	(.038)
Black Treatment Condition	.07*	.014	.046	.069*	.011
	(.037)	(.041)	(.037)	(.038)	(.039)
Constant	.208***	.269***	.215***	.191***	.252***
	(.025)	(.028)	(.025)	(.026)	(.027)
Observations	422	422	422	422	422
R-squared	.01	.002	.005	.01	0

Random violence condition is the baseline for comparison. Standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

Table 17: Regression Estimates for Main Treatment Effects – Emotional Responses. Black Respondents – November 2020 Qualtrics Study.

	Anger	Anxiety	Fear	Sadness	Worry
Black Treatment Condition	.098***	-.015	-.044	.055	-.024
	(.038)	(.041)	(.042)	(.035)	(.04)
Hispanic Treatment Condition	.051	.077*	.065	.116***	.108***
	(.037)	(.04)	(.042)	(.034)	(.039)
Constant	.664***	.493***	.476***	.707***	.586***
	(.026)	(.028)	(.03)	(.024)	(.028)
Observations	431	431	431	431	431
R-squared	.016	.014	.016	.027	.029

Random violence condition is the baseline for comparison. Standard errors are in parentheses
*** $p<.01$, ** $p<.05$, * $p<.1$

Table 18: Regression Estimates for Main Treatment Effects – Emotional Responses. Hispanic Respondents – November 2020 Qualtrics Study.

	Anger	Anxiety	Fear	Sadness	Worry
Black Treatment Condition	.008	.015	-.004	.007	-.009
	(.036)	(.04)	(.04)	(.034)	(.04)
Hispanic Treatment Condition	.057	.003	.035	.031	.02
	(.037)	(.04)	(.041)	(.034)	(.04)
Constant	.677***	.5***	.495***	.712***	.602***
	(.026)	(.029)	(.029)	(.025)	(.029)
Observations	432	434	434	433	433
R-squared	.007	0	.003	.002	.001

Table 19: Regression Estimates for Main Treatment Effects – Perceived Victimization. Black Respondents – November 2020 Qualtrics Study.

	Mass Shooting	Hate Crime	Terror Attack	Police Brutality	Domestic Violence	Robbery
Black Treatment Condition	-.019	.049	.007	.012	-.045	-.051
	(.039)	(.042)	(.038)	(.042)	(.041)	(.038)
Hispanic Treatment Condition	-.003	.063	.025	.046	.057	-.005
	(.038)	(.041)	(.037)	(.042)	(.04)	(.037)
Constant	.334***	.411***	.293***	.42***	.317***	.389***
	(.027)	(.029)	(.026)	(.029)	(.028)	(.026)
Observations	431	431	430	431	431	431
R-squared	.001	.006	.001	.003	.015	.005

Random violence condition is the baseline for comparison. Standard errors are in parentheses
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1*

Table 20: Regression Estimates for Main Treatment Effects – Perceived Victimization. Hispanic Respondents – November 2020 Qualtrics Study.

	Mass Shooting	Hate Crime	Terror Attack	Police Brutality	Domestic Violence	Robbery
Black Treatment Condition	-.038	-.062	-.047	-.069*	-.083**	-.05
	(.036)	(.04)	(.035)	(.037)	(.038)	(.034)
Hispanic Treatment Condition	-.022	-.018	-.017	-.017	-.054	-.017
	(.037)	(.04)	(.036)	(.038)	(.038)	(.034)
Constant	.303***	.385***	.272***	.316***	.321***	.345***
	(.026)	(.029)	(.026)	(.027)	(.027)	(.024)
Observations	433	433	433	433	433	433
R-squared	.003	.006	.004	.009	.011	.005

Considering Gender and Partisanship

Gender

Experimental conditions are listed along the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals. Significant differences between men and women in the same condition are noted in red.
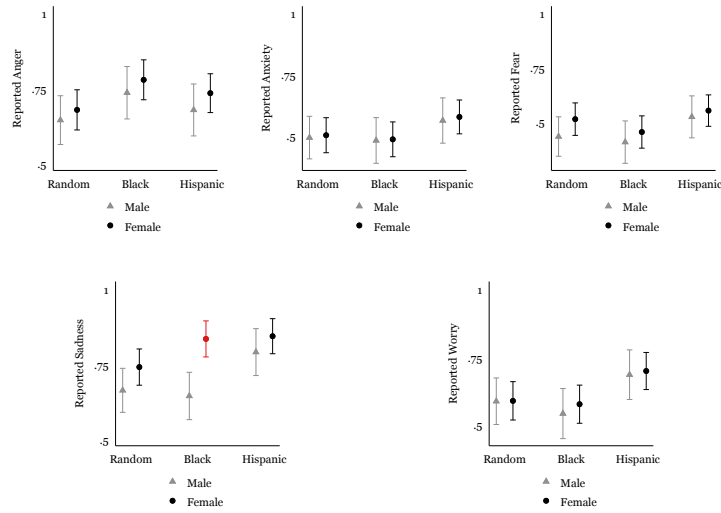
Figure 26: Reported Emotion among Black Respondents, Comparison of Self-identified Men and Women.
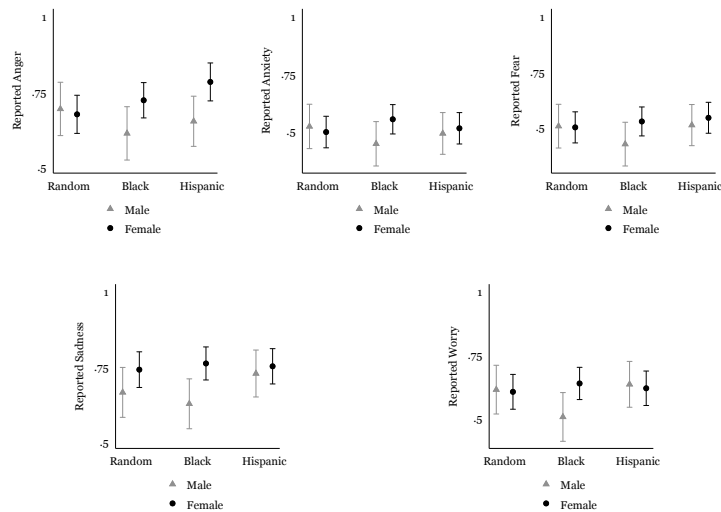
Figure 27: Reported Emotion among Hispanic Respondents, Comparison of Self-identified Men and Women.
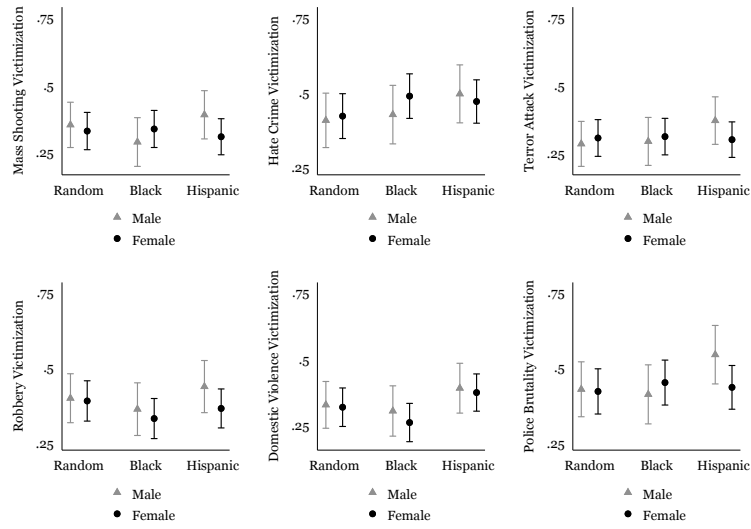
Figure 28: Reported Likelihood of Victimization among Black Respondents, Comparison of Self-identified Men and Women.
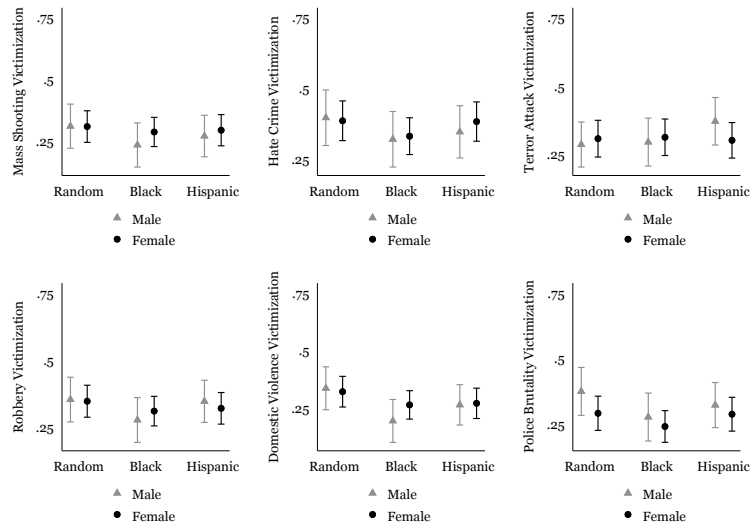
Figure 29: Reported Likelihood of Victimization among Hispanic Respondents, Comparison of Self-identified Men and Women.

Partisanship

Experimental conditions are listed along the x-axis. All values are shown with 95% confidence intervals.
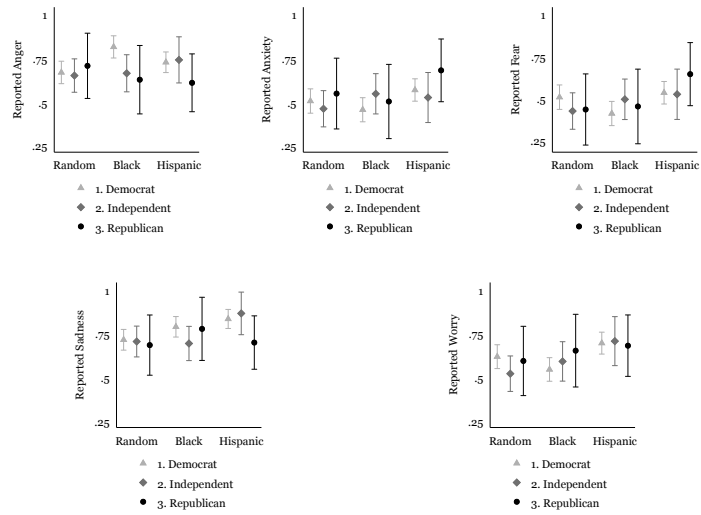
Figure 30: Reported Emotion among Black Respondents, Comparison of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans.
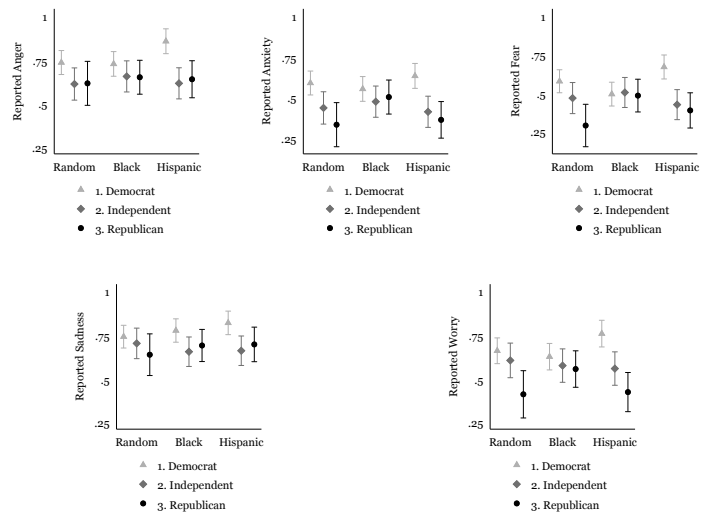
Figure 31: Reported Emotion among Hispanic Respondents, Comparison of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans.
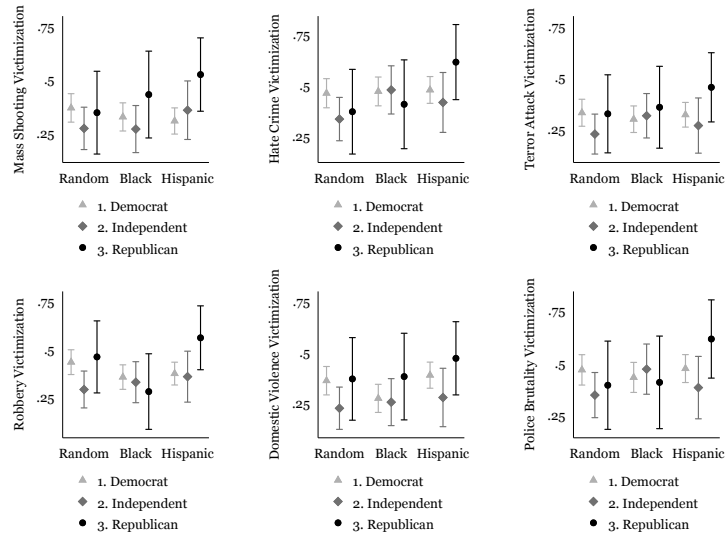
Figure 32: Reported Likelihood of Victimization among Black Respondents, Comparison of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans.
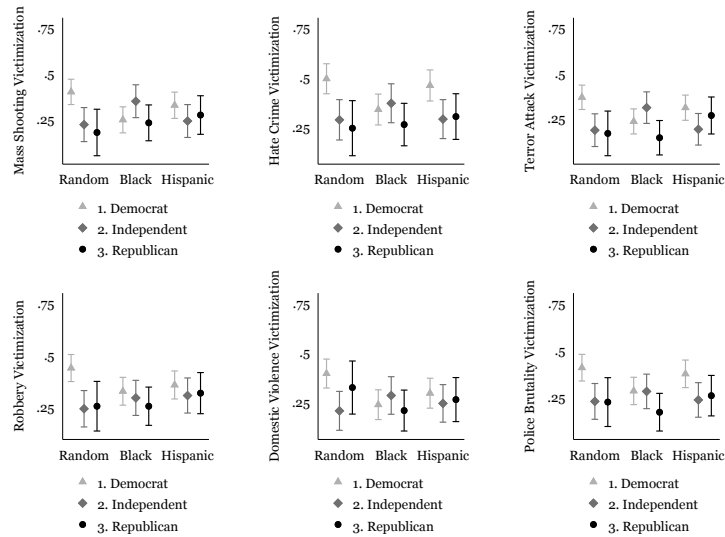
Figure 33: Reported Likelihood of Victimization among Hispanic Respondents, Comparison of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans.

Distributions of Racial Importance

5 indicates that self-selected race was "extremely important" to a respondent's identity. 1 indicates that race was "not at all important" to their identity.
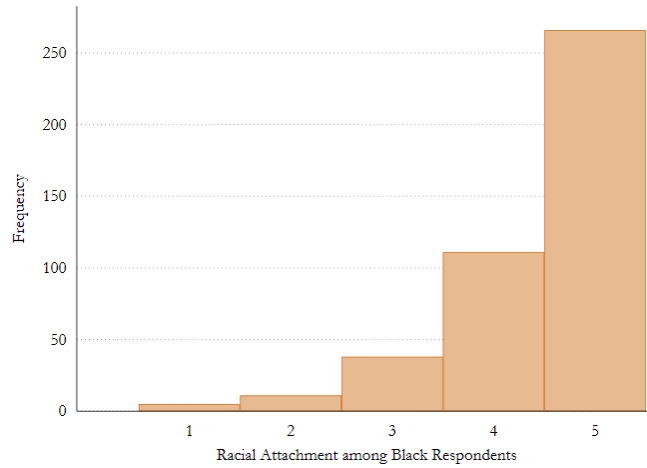
Figure 34: Racial Importance among Black Respondents.
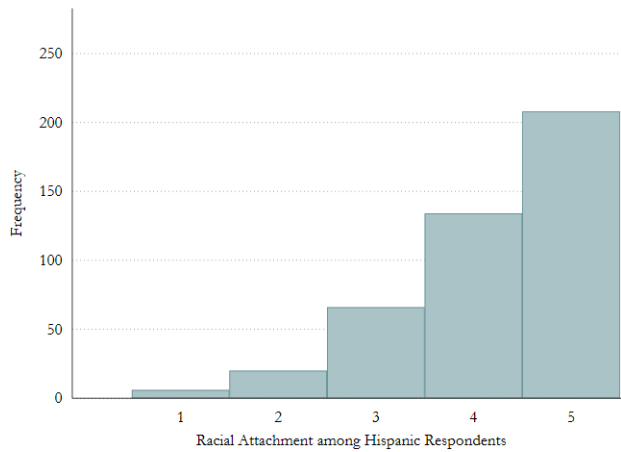
Figure 35: Racial Importance among Hispanic Respondents.
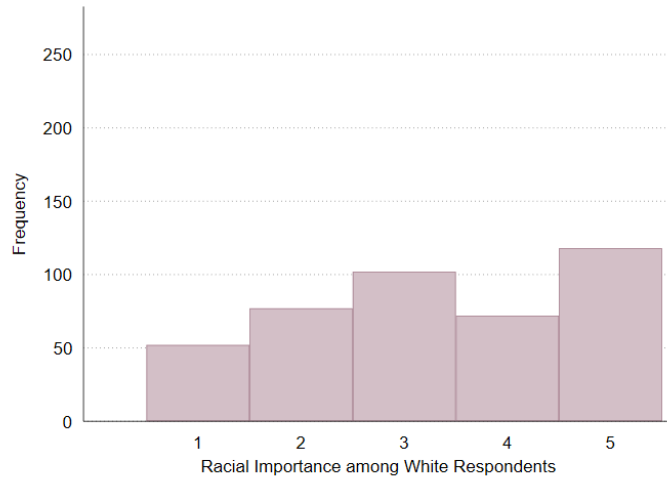
Figure 36: Racial Importance among White Respondents.

Appendix B: Deconstructing Violence

Sample Demographics

Table 21: Conjoint Experiment Sample Demographics.

	Total Sample	White Respondents	Black Respondents
Number of Observations	959	464	495
Percent of Sample	--	48%	52%
Percent Female[88]	51%	58%	44%
Percent with a college degree[89]	67%	72%	61%
Average age	34	35	33
Partisanship	Democrats – 52% Independents – 18% Republicans – 30%	Democrats – 50% Independents – 32% Republicans – 18%	Democrats – 53% Independents – 28% Republicans – 19%
Ideology	Liberal – 59% Moderate – 17% Conservative – 24%	Liberal – 66% Moderate – 13% Conservative – 21%	Liberal – 51% Moderate – 19% Conservative – 30%

---

[88] 1.4 % of the full sample identified as non-binary, gender fluid, agender, or did not disclose their gender identity.

[89] Including those who completed an associate's degree, bachelor's degree, professional or graduate degree.

Description Examples and Survey Instrument

BREAKING: <u>White man</u> targeted **<u>white people</u>** in **<u>a shooting</u>** at a **<u>community center</u>**. **<u>No</u>** causalities have been reported. Officials have called the incident **<u>a terrorist attack and</u>** indicated that **<u>there was no clear motivation</u>**.

BREAKING: <u>Black man</u> targeted **<u>Hispanic people</u>** in **<u>a bombing</u>** at a **<u>church</u>**. **<u>Four</u>** causalities have been reported. Officials have called the incident **<u>a random attack and</u>** indicated that **<u>it was motivated by hate</u>**.

<u>Conjoint Exercise Questions</u>

- Which of these descriptions would make you angriest if it happened in your community?

- Which of these descriptions do you think would deserve the harshest punishment?

- On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates that the perpetrator should **<u>absolutely not</u>** be sentenced to spend the remainder of their life in prison and 5 indicates that the perpetrator should **<u>absolutely</u>** be sentenced to spend the remainder of their life in prison, where would you place the perpetrator in each of these descriptions?

Punitiveness Figures
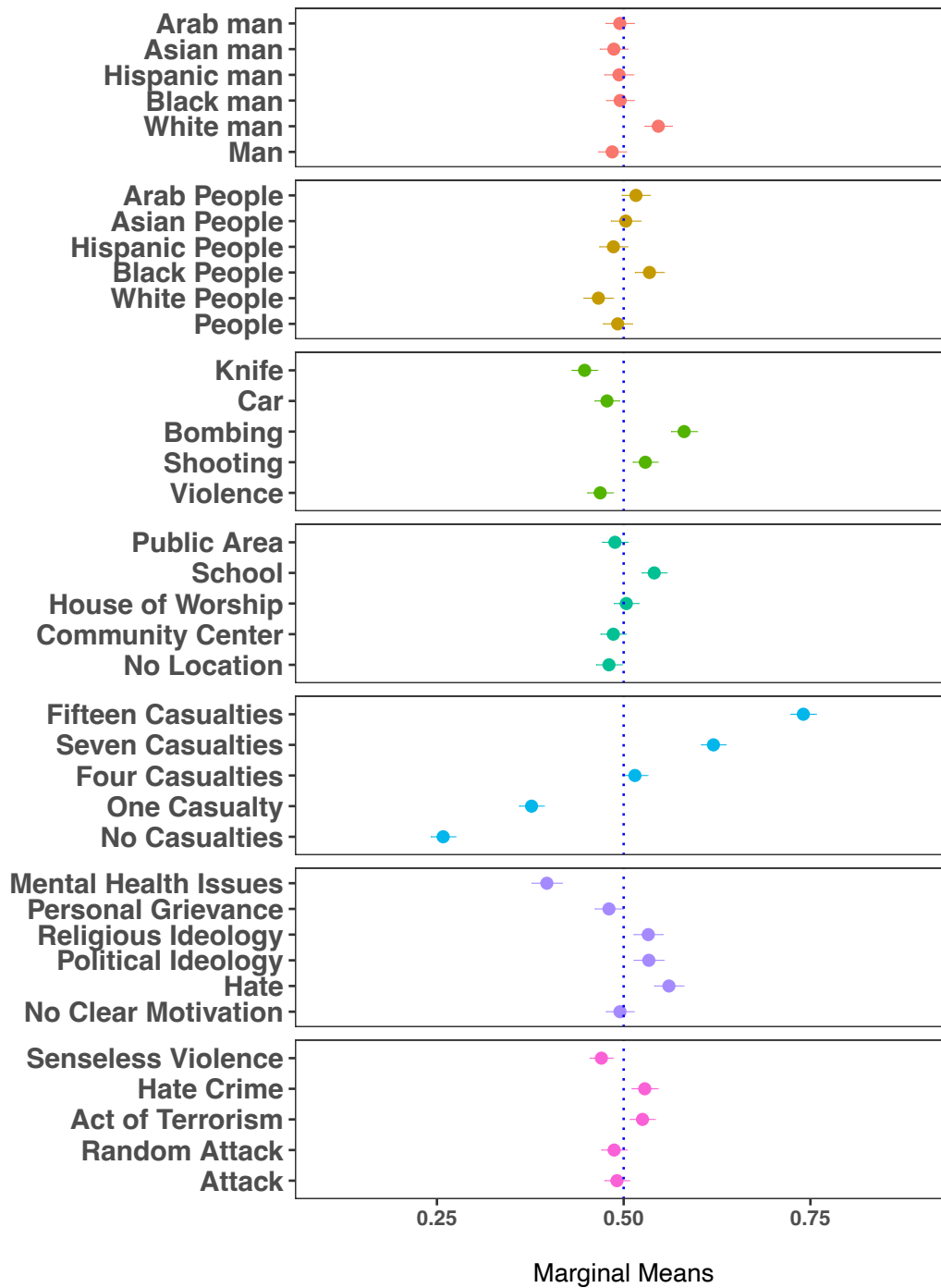
Figure 37: Punitiveness in response to violence among the full sample calculated using marginal means.

Shown with 95% confidence intervals.
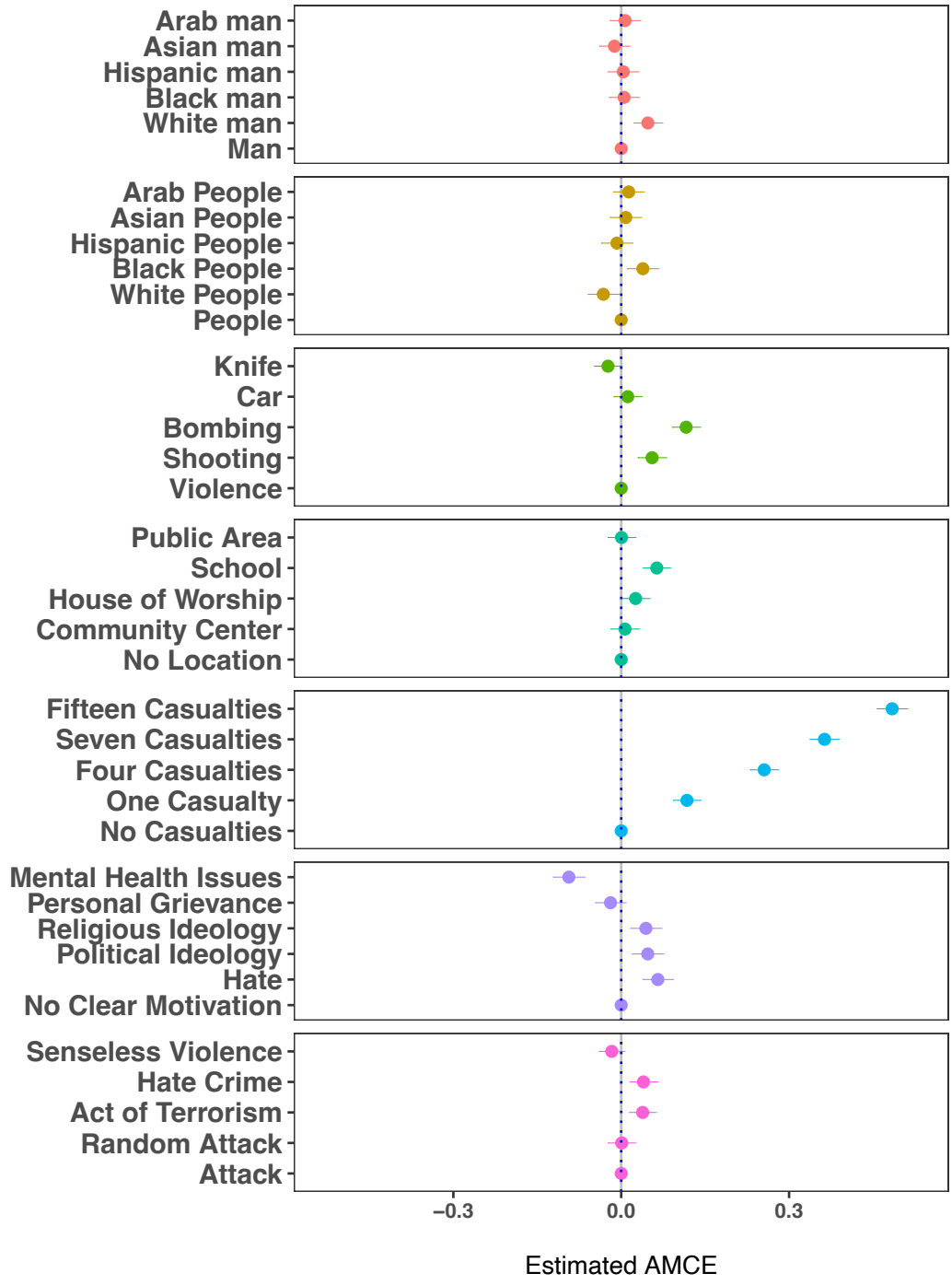
Figure 38: Punitiveness in response to violence among the full sample with average marginal component effects Shown with 95% confidence intervals.
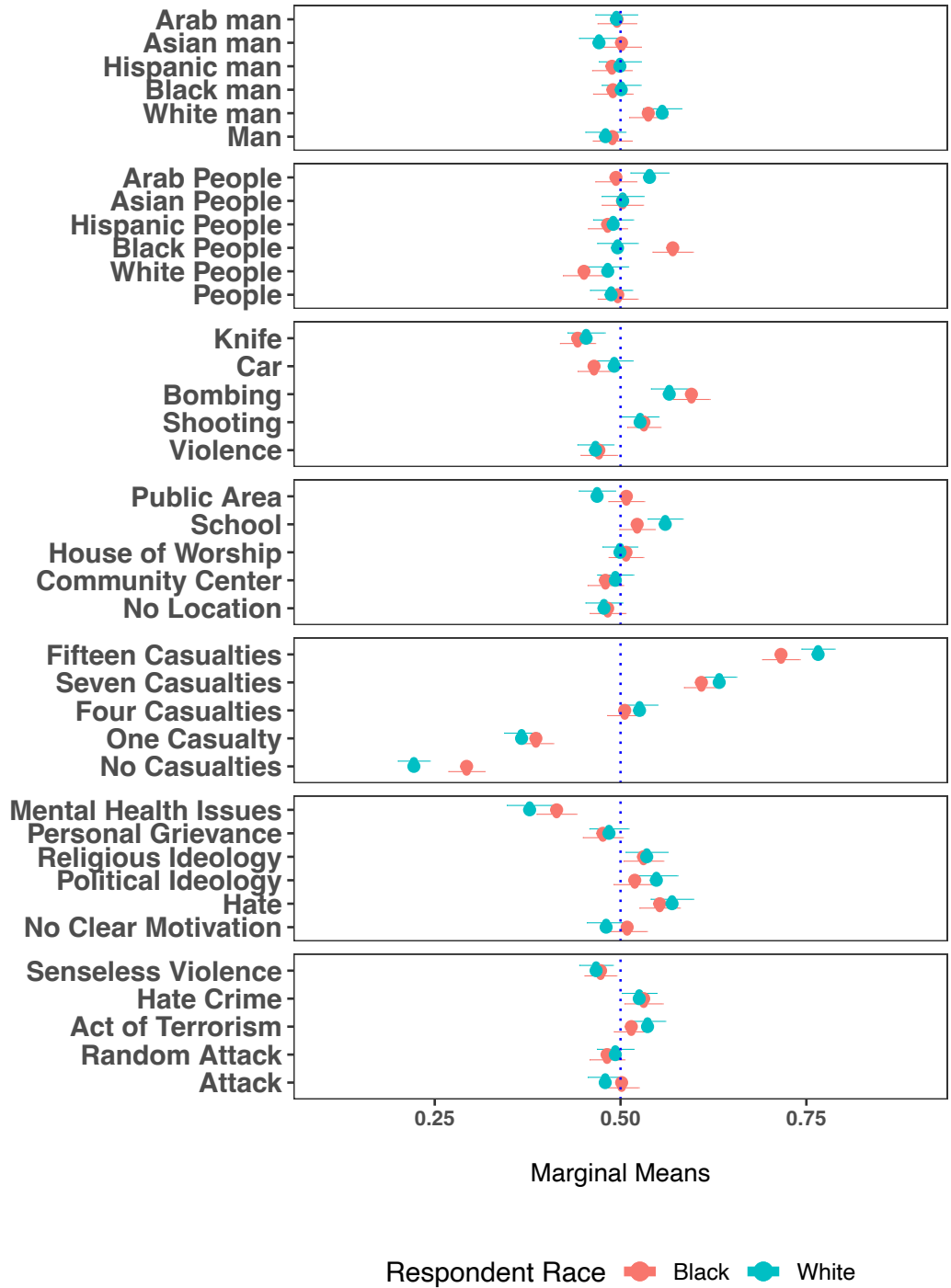
Figure 39: Punitiveness in response to violence for Black and white respondents calculated using marginal means. Shown with 95% confidence intervals.

Appendix C: Fear and Participation

Voter File Descriptive Statistics

Table 22: Racial, Partisan, and Gender Demographics of 2015 Registrants in South Carolina.

Party Affiliation	N	Percentage
Democrats	57,816 (20,484)	48.7
Republicans	48, 499 (2,413)	40.0
Non-Partisans	14,973 (1,181)	12.3
Ethnic Description		
White	89,681	73.9
Black or African-American	24,833	20.5
Hispanic	3,437	2.8
East Asian	1,707	1.4
Other Undefined	1,245	1.0
Native American	288	0.24
Unreported	97	0.08
Gender[90]		
Female	56,809	46.8
Male	64,478	53.2

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[90] One individual did not report gender.

Table 23: Racial, Partisan, and Gender Demographics of 2019 Registrants in El Paso County, Texas.

Party Affiliation	Official N (Calculated)	Official Percentage (Calculated)
Democrats	21,815 (20,484)	84.5 (85.1)
Republicans	2,546 (2,413)	9.9 (10.0)
Non-Partisans	1,464 (1,181)	5.7 (4.9)
Ethnic Description		
European	5,061 (4,531)	20.3 (19.5)
Hispanic	15,883 (14,833)	63.8 (63.9)
"Likely African-American"	257 (236)	1.0 (1.0)
East and South Asian	340 (312)	1.3 (1.3)
Portuguese	3,115 (3,068)	12.5 (13.22)
Other	248 (231)	1.0 (1.0)
Missing	920 (865)	--
Gender		
Female	12,853 (11,984)	49.8 (49.8)
Male	12,971 (12,092)	50.2 (50.2)

Table 24: Racial, Partisan, and Gender Demographics of 2017 Registrants in Clark County, Nevada

Party Affiliation	N	Percentage
Democrats	19,865	34.9
Republicans	16,016	28.1
Non-Partisans	21,041	40.0
Ethnic Description		
White	22,713	67.7
Black or African-American	4,830	9.3
Hispanic	11,598	23.0
Gender		
Female	25,709	51.2
Male	27,015	48.8

Linear Regression Models Estimating Likelihood of Voter Turnout in South Carolina

Table 25: Likelihood of voter turnout in the 2016 general election for South Carolina, by partisanship – One week.

	(1) All Registrants	(2) Democrats	(3) Republicans	(4) Non-Partisans
Post-Shooting Week	-0.0200	-0.00627	-0.0787	0.240
	(0.0455)	(0.0674)	(0.0626)	(0.172)
Black	-0.239**	-0.260**		
	(0.110)	(0.124)		
Republican	0.0693			
	(0.0530)			
Non-Partisan	-0.204**			
	(0.0865)			
Age	0.00552***	0.00700***	0.00442**	0.0113*
	(0.00143)	(0.00223)	(0.00186)	(0.00619)
Female	0.0906*	0.0832	0.160**	-0.206
	(0.0462)	(0.0692)	(0.0624)	(0.216)
Distance from Shooting	0.00297	0.00334	0.00581	-0.0469*
	(0.00490)	(0.00667)	(0.00712)	(0.0275)
Census Tract Income	0.0120	0.00314		
	(0.129)	(0.140)		
Co-ethnic Candidate	5.14e-08	-6.35e-07	1.10e-06	-1.22e-06
	(6.25e-07)	(9.82e-07)	(8.03e-07)	(2.47e-06)
Constant	0.415**	0.429**	0.403***	0.404
	(0.170)	(0.216)	(0.137)	(0.322)
Observations	378	195	156	34
R-squared	0.141	0.125	0.115	0.210

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of voter turnout in the 2016 general election for South Carolina residents registering to vote in the week before or week after the Mother Emanuel AME Church Shooting in 2015. Model 1 includes all registered voters. Models 2-4 are subdivided by party affiliation. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 26: Likelihood of voter turnout in the 2016 general election for South Carolina, by partisanship – One month.

	(1) All Registrants	(2) Democrats	(3) Republicans	(4) Non-Partisans
Post-Shooting Month	-0.00144	0.00587	-0.0314	0.0424
	(0.0216)	(0.0319)	(0.0315)	(0.0702)
Black	-0.172***	-0.183***	0.167	
	(0.0500)	(0.0559)	(0.377)	
Republican	0.0533**			
	(0.0259)			
Non-Partisan	-0.187***			
	(0.0361)			
Age	0.00587***	0.00615***		0.00394
	(0.000683)	(0.00101)		(0.00259)
Female	0.0511**	0.0401	0.0278	0.210***
	(0.0220)	(0.0329)	(0.0313)	(0.0791)
Distance from Shooting	0.00189	0.00355	0.00986***	-0.0204***
	(0.00228)	(0.00328)	(0.00332)	(0.00774)
Census Tract Income	-0.0426	-0.0422		
	(0.0604)	(0.0653)		
Co-ethnic Candidate	5.33e-07*	3.59e-07	1.35e-06***	5.46e-07
	(3.16e-07)	(4.79e-07)	(4.51e-07)	(9.47e-07)
Constant	0.458***	0.455***	0.607***	0.362**
	(0.0809)	(0.101)	(0.0648)	(0.141)
Observations	1,578	813	576	201
R-squared	0.116	0.083	0.029	0.082

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of voter turnout in the 2016 general election for South Carolina residents registering to vote in the month before or month after the Mother Emanuel AME Church Shooting in 2015. Model 1 includes all registered voters. Models 2-4 are subdivided by party affiliation. Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 27: Likelihood of voter turnout in the 2016 general election for South Carolina, by racial identity.

	One Week		One Month	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Black Registrants	White Registrants	Black Registrants	White Registrants
Post-Shooting Time	0.150	-0.0310	-0.0107	0.00136
	(0.150)	(0.0480)	(0.0669)	(0.0228)
Republican		0.0682		0.0543**
		(0.0523)		(0.0255)
Non-Partisan		-0.216**		-0.193***
		(0.0852)		(0.0354)
Age	0.00929*	0.00554***	0.00572***	0.00589***
	(0.00545)	(0.00148)	(0.00211)	(0.000720)
Female	0.301**	0.0605	0.165**	0.0336
	(0.145)	(0.0488)	(0.0664)	(0.0232)
Distance from Shooting	0.0188	-2.63e-05	0.0118*	-7.21e-05
	(0.0129)	(0.00541)	(0.00609)	(0.00246)
Census Tract Income	1.51e-06	8.15e-08	2.01e-06	4.41e-07
	(3.37e-06)	(6.30e-07)	(1.45e-06)	(3.19e-07)
Co-ethnic Candidate	0.0743		0.0162	
	(0.182)		(0.0857)	
Constant	-0.345	0.469***	0.0326	0.447***
	(0.385)	(0.0958)	(0.152)	(0.0474)
Observations	49	329	211	1,367
R-squared	0.168	0.097	0.104	0.100

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of voter turnout in the 2016 general election for South Carolina residents registering to vote in the time before and after the Mother Emanuel AME Church Shooting in 2015. Models 1 and 3 consider Black registered voters. Models 2 and 4 consider white registered voters. Standard errors in parentheses. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Linear Regression Models Estimating Likelihood of Voter Turnout in El Paso County, Texas

Table 28: Likelihood of early voter turnout in the 2020 general election for El Paso County, Texas, by racial identity.

	One Week		One Month	
	(1) Hispanic Registrants	(2) White Registrants	(3) Hispanic Registrants	(4) White Registrants
Post-Shooting Time	-.012	-.041	.008	.039
	(.035)	(.066)	(.017)	(.031)
Democrat	-.471***	.127*	-.335***	.126***
	(.123)	(.066)	(.067)	(.034)
Age	.001	.004**	.001**	.005***
	(.001)	(.002)	(.001)	(.001)
Female	.104***	.091	.081***	.058*
	(.035)	(.065)	(.017)	(.032)
Distance from Shooting	.003	.008	.002	.009**
	(.004)	(.01)	(.002)	(.004)
Household Income	.026***	.033*	.023***	.031***
	(.009)	(.017)	(.005)	(.009)
Constant	.609***	-.026	.442***	-.122*
	(.141)	(.144)	(.077)	(.07)
Observations	738	235	3049	929
R-Squared	.037	.067	.029	.059

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election for El Paso County residents registering to vote in the time before and after the 2019 El Paso Walmart Shooting. Models 1 and 3 consider Hispanic registered voters. Models 2 and 4 consider white registered voters. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 29: Likelihood of early voter turnout in the 2020 general election for El Paso County, Texas, by partisanship – One week.

	(1) All Registrants	(2) Democrats	(3) Republicans	(4) Non-Partisans
Post-Shooting Week	-.029	-.005	-.117	-.167*
	(.028)	(.03)	(.12)	(.086)
White	.081*	.139***	-.248*	.114
	(.044)	(.053)	(.132)	(.088)
Democrat	.044			
	(.046)			
Age	.003***	.003***	.005	.007**
	(.001)	(.001)	(.003)	(.003)
Female	.071***	.077**	.163	-.007
	(.028)	(.03)	(.126)	(.083)
Distance from Shooting	.005	.005	0	.002
	(.003)	(.004)	(.015)	(.012)
Household Income	.031***	.027***	.042	.059***
	(.007)	(.008)	(.033)	(.023)
Constant	.003	.063	.306	-.233
	(.072)	(.06)	(.251)	(.172)
Observations	1209	1018	68	123
R-Squared	.042	.039	.138	.125

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of early voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election for El Paso County residents registering to vote in the week before or week after the 2019 El Paso Walmart Shooting. Model 1 includes all registered voters. Models 2-4 are subdivided by party affiliation. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 30: Likelihood of early voter turnout in the 2020 general election for El Paso County, Texas, by partisanship – One month.

	(1) All Registrants	(2) Democrats	(3) Republicans	(4) Non-Partisans
Post-Shooting Month	.025*	.03**	.052	-.025
	(.013)	(.014)	(.06)	(.041)
White	.05**	.105***	-.166***	.028
	(.021)	(.025)	(.062)	(.046)
Democrat	.021			
	(.024)			
Age	.003***	.003***	.006***	.003*
	(0)	(0)	(.002)	(.001)
Female	.071***	.072***	.011	.065
	(.013)	(.014)	(.06)	(.044)
Distance from Shooting	.004***	.003	.005	.021***
	(.002)	(.002)	(.008)	(.006)
Household Income	.028***	.028***	.008	.017
	(.004)	(.004)	(.013)	(.016)
Constant	.004	.038	.333***	-.116
	(.037)	(.029)	(.128)	(.1)
Observations	4868	4130	264	474
R-Squared	.034	.034	.072	.052

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of early voter turnout in the 2020 presidential election for El Paso County residents registering to vote in the month before or month after the 2019 El Paso Walmart Shooting. Model 1 includes all registered voters. Models 2-4 are subdivided by party affiliation. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Linear Regression Models Estimating Likelihood of Voter Turnout in Clark County, Nevada

Table 31: Likelihood of voter turnout in the 2018 general election for Clark County, Nevada, by partisanship – One week.

	(1) All Registrants	(2) Democrats	(3) Republicans	(4) Non-Partisans
Post-Shooting Week	0.0889	0.141	-0.107	0.186
	(0.0762)	(0.129)	(0.138)	(0.133)
White	0.574***	0.801***	0.310	0.344
	(0.158)	(0.220)	(0.331)	(0.304)
Republican	-0.826***			
	(0.0972)			
Non-Partisan	-0.722***			
	(0.0934)			
Age	0.0265***	0.0163***	0.0357***	0.0290***
	(0.00219)	(0.00372)	(0.00385)	(0.00388)
Female	0.241***	0.131	0.248*	0.361***
	(0.0767)	(0.130)	(0.140)	(0.132)
Distance from Shooting	0.0112***	-0.00316	0.00825	0.0199***
	(0.00369)	(0.00845)	(0.00565)	(0.00639)
Co-ethnic Candidate	-0.537***	-0.762***	-0.128	-0.358
	(0.160)	(0.218)	(0.346)	(0.308)
Census Tract Income	6.39e-06***	7.78e-07	1.11e-05***	9.69e-06***
	(1.67e-06)	(2.74e-06)	(3.01e-06)	(2.99e-06)
Constant	-1.412***	-0.529**	-2.913***	-2.601***
	(0.160)	(0.247)	(0.302)	(0.278)
Observations	3,139	1,026	1,020	1,093

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of voter turnout in the 2018 mid-term election for Clark County residents registering to vote in the week before or week after the 2017 Mandalay Bay Shooting. Model 1 includes all registered voters. Models 2-4 are subdivided by party affiliation. Standard errors in parentheses. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Table 32: Likelihood of voter turnout in the 2018 general election for Clark County, Nevada, by partisanship – One month.

	(1) All Registrants	(2) Democrats	(3) Republicans	(4) Non-Partisans
Post-Shooting Month	0.0181** (0.00883)	0.0228 (0.0157)	-0.00706 (0.0154)	0.0300** (0.0147)
White	0.126*** (0.0171)	0.176*** (0.0263)	0.105*** (0.0350)	0.0629** (0.0298)
Republican	-0.164*** (0.0113)			
Non-Partisan	-0.169*** (0.0107)			
Age	0.00543*** (0.000252)	0.00339*** (0.000436)	0.00773*** (0.000425)	0.00546*** (0.000446)
Female	0.0325*** (0.00891)	0.0312** (0.0158)	0.0295* (0.0157)	0.0325** (0.0147)
Distance from Shooting	0.00226*** (0.000412)	0.00246*** (0.000835)	0.00246*** (0.000638)	0.00152** (0.000695)
Co-ethnic Candidate	-0.104*** (0.0173)	-0.165*** (0.0262)	-0.0291 (0.0363)	-0.0645** (0.0301)
Census Tract Income	1.82e-06*** (1.97e-07)	1.49e-06*** (3.56e-07)	2.59e-06*** (3.38e-07)	1.57e-06*** (3.30e-07)
Constant	0.184*** (0.0184)	0.292*** (0.0306)	-0.151*** (0.0307)	0.0415 (0.0289)
Observations	11,621	3,896	3,586	4,139
R-squared	0.086	0.043	0.128	0.049

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of voter turnout in the 2018 mid-term election for Clark County residents registering to vote in the month before or month after the 2017 Mandalay Bay Shooting. Model 1 includes all registered voters. Models 2-4 are subdivided by party affiliation. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 33: Likelihood of voter turnout in the 2018 general election for Clark County, Nevada, by ethno-racial identity – One week.

	(1) White Registrants	(2) Black Registrants	(3) Hispanic Registrants
Post-Shooting Week	-0.0252	0.0971*	0.126***
	(0.0217)	(0.0582)	(0.0353)
Republican	-0.162***	-0.0421	-0.261***
	(0.0278)	(0.0713)	(0.0469)
Non-Partisan	-0.141***	-0.0821	-0.218***
	(0.0283)	(0.0731)	(0.0397)
Age	0.00811***	0.00341*	0.00318***
	(0.000594)	(0.00179)	(0.00115)
Female	0.0473**	0.106*	0.0910**
	(0.0220)	(0.0588)	(0.0354)
Distance from Shooting	0.00162*	0.0265**	0.00470*
	(0.000859)	(0.0106)	(0.00244)
Census Tract Income	1.90e-06***	1.39e-07	-4.45e-07
	(4.70e-07)	(1.53e-06)	(8.27e-07)
Co-ethnic Candidate		-0.188**	
		(0.0903)	
Constant	0.0915*	0.0566	0.328***
	(0.0498)	(0.144)	(0.0693)
Observations	1,850	251	732
R-squared	0.126	0.085	0.103

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of voter turnout in the 2018 mid-term election for Clark County residents registering to vote in the week before and the week after the 2017 Mandalay Bay Shooting. Model 1 considers white registered voters, Model 2 considers Black registered voters, and Model 3 considers Hispanic registered voters. Standard errors in parentheses. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Table 34: Likelihood of voter turnout in the 2018 general election for Clark County, Nevada, by ethno-racial identity – One month.

	(1) White Registrants	(2) Black Registrants	(3) Hispanic Registrants
Post-Shooting Month	-0.00280	0.0220	0.0520***
	(0.0115)	(0.0299)	(0.0185)
Republican	-0.139***	-0.0644*	-0.258***
	(0.0146)	(0.0389)	(0.0242)
Non-Partisan	-0.169***	-0.0541	-0.213***
	(0.0147)	(0.0354)	(0.0210)
Age	0.00735***	0.00517***	0.00169***
	(0.000321)	(0.000894)	(0.000586)
Female	0.0179	0.0753**	0.0579***
	(0.0116)	(0.0302)	(0.0185)
Distance from Shooting	0.00173***	0.00660	0.00235*
	(0.000447)	(0.00538)	(0.00123)
Co-ethnic Candidate	0.0915	-0.126***	
	(0.272)	(0.0459)	
Census Tract Income	2.36e-06***	3.47e-06***	1.71e-07
	(2.50e-07)	(8.87e-07)	(4.56e-07)
Constant	0.0160	0.0103	0.415***
	(0.274)	(0.0731)	(0.0374)
Observations	6,736	927	2,716
R-squared	0.110	0.086	0.069

Linear regression models estimating the likelihood of voter turnout in the 2018 mid-term election for Clark County residents registering to vote in the month before and the month after the 2017 Mandalay Bay Shooting. Model 1 considers white registered voters, Model 2 considers Black registered voters, and Model 3 considers Hispanic registered voters. Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Racial Identification of Registrants in Clark County
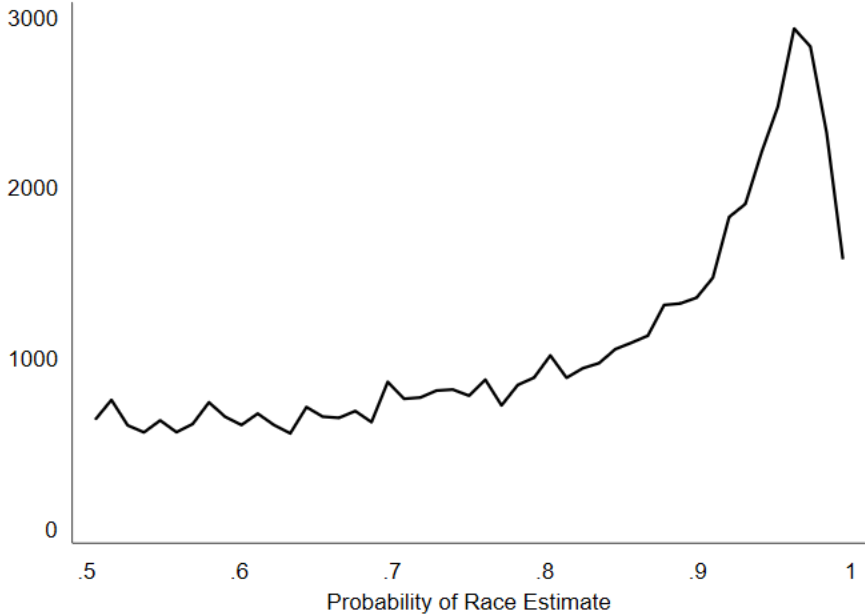
Figure 40: Probability of Racial Identity Estimate.

Probability that a registrant's racial identity was accurately estimated, conditioned on their surname and census tract.

Comparison of Turnout in Prior Years

Figure 41: Comparison of turnout in prior years (Clark County).

Voter turnout in 2018 is higher among individuals who registered to voter in 2015 and 2013. the overall likelihood of general election turnout among all individuals who registered to vote in 2017, 2015, and 2013 by race (top panel) and party (bottom panel).

Employment, Union Membership, and Culinary Event Calendar
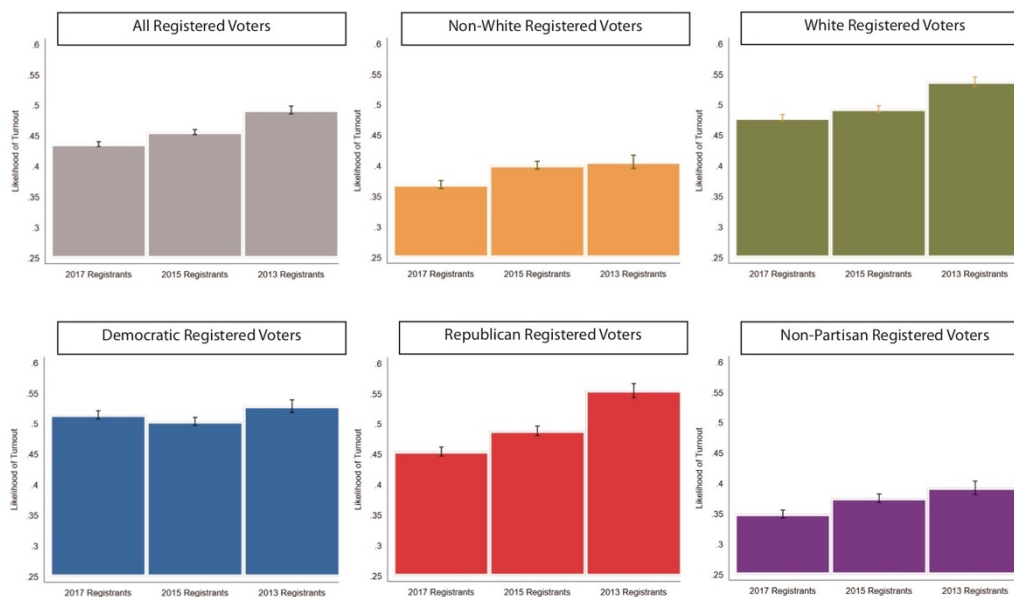
Table 35: Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment in Nevada in 2017.

Sector	Employment (Jobs in thousands)	Percent
Total Non-farm, Employment	977.4	100
Leisure and Hospitality	289.5	29.6
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	174.7	17.9
Professional and Business Services	138.5	14.1
Government	101.7	10.4
Education and Health Services	97.0	9.9
Other Sectors	176.0	19.1

Table 36: Receipts and Union Membership from the Culinary Union (UNITE HERE 226).

Fiscal Year	Receipts	Members
2019	30,410,922	51,133
2018	35,844,369	50,007
2017	33,837,327	49,457
2016	32,851,183	50,141

Table 37: List of events related to the Mandalay Bay shooting sponsored by the Culinary Union.

Date	Activity
Monday, October 2, 2017	The Culinary conducts a phone-bank to confirm the safety of workers on the Las Vegas Strip. The union also encourages members to donate blood (List of blood drive locations).
Monday, October 9, 2017	The Culinary holds a "Service for Workers," the event was a "night of worship and fellowship in remembrance of those who lost their lives in the tragic mass shooting at the Route 91 Harvest Festival."
Thursday, November 9, 2017	The Culinary hosts a march on the Las Vegas Strip. William King, a bellman and member of the union was injured and spoke. Per Facebook posts, it was called the "Vegas Strong March," where "thousands of Nevadans came together for a march of strength, prayer, and healing."
Tuesday, November 28, 2017	The Culinary sponsors a blood drive.
Wednesday, November 29, 2017	The Culinary continues to collect money for union members affected by the shooting. This effort is called the "Vegas Strong Union Fundraiser."

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